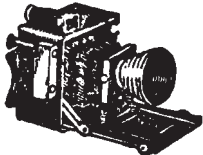




# THE PRINT

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## Final Reckoning

### Unlike TV dramas, real forensic cases don't end in an hour.

BY TOM DWORETZKY

Lead photograph by Paul Taylor/Getty Images

*Published in the July, 2005 issue of Popular Mechanics.*

Shortly before midnight on March 19, a heavyset 24-year-old man was standing outside a Mexican restaurant along West Arrow Highway in San Dimas, Calif., when a brawl broke out. No one is sure how the fight started in this small, affluent city east of Pasadena, but it came to a tragic end. The young man wound up on a stainless steel table in the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office, dead from multiple stab wounds.

Like other victims of violent crime, as well as those who die inexplicably, the San Dimas man was sent to the coroner to be examined for cause of death. Details of such fatalities can become evidence critical to prosecuting--or exonerating--defendants in subsequent trials. The Los Angeles office performs about 6000 of these autopsies each year. One of nearly 4000 such facilities in the United States, it is second in size only to New York's.

Programs like CSI: Crime Scene Investigation--a regular atop the Nielsen ratings--have put the formerly obscure field of forensics at center stage. Since the prime-time drama exploded on the small screen during the 2000-2001 season, universities have been turning out ever-bigger crops of crime-fighting scientists. In 2000, the forensic program at West Virginia University (WVU) graduated four students. In 2004, some 500 students were enrolled.

In TV crime shows, investigators wrap up tidy, high-tech cases in record time, ending each workday with a dramatic arrest. And that kind of neat resolution is increasingly what the public has come to expect. "People watch TV and get the impression that every tiny clue can be discovered, analyzed and sourced in an hour with absolute precision," says Dr. Max Houck, director of the Forensic Science Initiative at WVU, "and that really isn't the way the world works."

## BODY SHOP

When I stop by the Los Angeles coroner's office, it's a good morning for a reality check: The loading dock, or "control area," is particularly busy. Some bodies are wrapped in sheets (arrivals), others in clear plastic (departures, bound for funeral homes or cemeteries). The San Dimas man started out here, too, where he was photographed and issued a matching green toe tag and plastic ID card that is imprinted

on related documents. After a Live Scan machine digitized his fingerprints, his naked body--lying on a steel transport table--was wheeled to the crypt, to be preserved at a cool 42 F until a more extensive examination could be performed.

By the time I catch up with him, the body of the San Dimas man is one of five corpses in a dark gray operating room, smelling faintly of natural body odor, plastic wrap and the preservative formalin. His steel table is locked perpendicular to a stainless steel drop-lipped sink, and tilted so that any bodily fluids flow toward the drain.

The room bears no resemblance to a beautifully lit TV crime-stopper set. Its harsh fluorescent lighting only accentuates the unfashionable green scrubs and disposable apron worn by deputy medical examiner Dr. Pedro Ortiz-Colom.

The position of coroner is typically a political appointment; medical examiners, who are physicians board certified in forensic pathology, conduct the actual autopsies. Their tools are not unlike those used by the great European pathologists of the late 1800s: scalpels, saws, forceps, clamps and large, sharp knives.

Ortiz-Colom inspects the San Dimas man's body and then makes a deep Y-shaped incision to access the internal organs, which he measures and dissects. Unlike his CSI counterparts, he does not recite a monologue of poignant observations into a voice recorder.

"With five autopsies at once, and the saws going and everyone talking, you wouldn't be able to hear a thing on the tape," says Craig Harvey, who oversees forensic autopsies as the chief coroner's investigator in Los Angeles. Instead,

Ortiz-Colom uses an erasable marker to scrawl findings on the steel splash guard of the sink.

## THE GAME OF CLUE

When the San Dimas autopsy is nearly over, criminalist Steve Dowell, who specializes in tool analysis, arrives bearing silicon-based dental-impression material.

He spreads the red substance onto the knife wounds with a paint spatula and then waits for it to dry.

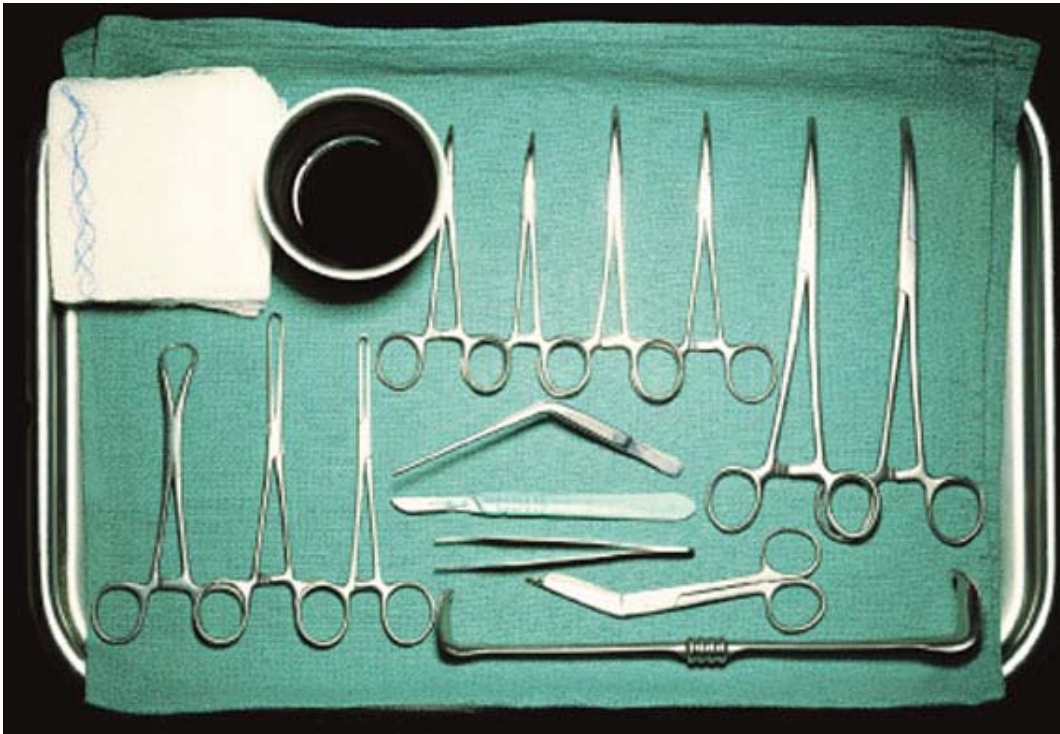
Back in his lab, Dowell will scan the molding's measurements into a database he is creating of wounds left by blunt and edged weapons. Already containing

some 2000 images, the database will eventually be able to match, for instance, the width of wounds with various kinds of blades. It may also make autopsies more objective by identifying and correcting variations between medical examiners.

If the victim had been shot, Dowell might look for gunshot residue in order to rule out suicide. In such cases, he presses a small black disc covered with sticky tape against the victim's hands and inserts it into an electron microscope. If the unique X-ray signatures emitted by atoms in the sample don't match those of lead, antimony or barium--components of gunpowder--the person was probably murdered. "The purpose of physical evidence," Dowell says, "is to stand as a witness independent of everyone's stories."

In cases of a drug overdose or poison, the most important evidence comes from a prepared sample

Continued on page 8



# Contextual information renders experts vulnerable to making erroneous identifications

Itiel E. Dror \*, David Charlton, Ailsa E. Pe'ron

School of Psychology, Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ, UK

(Downloaded from *Forensic Science International* at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com))

## Abstract

We investigated whether experts can objectively focus on feature information in fingerprints without being misled by extraneous information, such as context. We took fingerprints that have previously been examined and assessed by latent print experts to make positive identification of suspects. Then we presented these same fingerprints again, to the same experts, but gave a context that suggested that they were a no-match, and hence the suspects could not be identified. Within this new context, most of the fingerprint experts made different judgements, thus contradicting their own previous identification decisions. Cognitive aspects involved in biometric identification can explain why experts are vulnerable to make erroneous identifications.

*Keywords: Psychology; Cognition; Erroneous identification; Bias; Extraneous information; Contextual influence; Fingerprints*

## 1. Introduction

Being a scientist or forensic expert is rooted in the ability to examine evidence reliably and objectively. To do this, these professionals must be able to dissociate themselves from extraneous contexts and other influences that may interfere with their ability to examine, evaluate, and judge the relevant information. Their decisions should be based on the information relevant to the task at hand and its unbiased interpretation. This involves independent thought that ignores to a large extent extraneous pressures and influences.

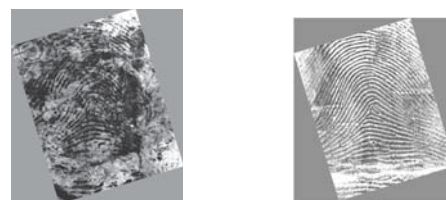
External pressures and influences are many and varied. The history of science is full of examples

of extraneous influences, and today too, scientists work within, and are influenced by, political, economical and other agendas (e.g., global warming, genetically modified crops, and measles mumps rubella vaccine).

Terrorism has brought about a wave of contextual influences. These include, among others, heightened suspicion of Muslims, fear, anger, helplessness, as well as pressure on governments to control (or at least appear to control) such threats. Such contextual influences provide strong and ample opportunities to contaminate objectivity, leading to distortions and errors of judgement beyond the unavoidable. Indeed, within this context we have witnessed major misvaluations and misjudgements by intelligence experts.

Within a similar extraneous context the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) positively, but erroneously, identified a Muslim as the Madrid bomber (see Fig. 1). This incorrect identification was further verified by a number of FBI and other fingerprint experts and led to the arrest of an innocent person. It was only due to rare and exceptional circumstances that this error was ever revealed and eventually acknowledged by the FBI [1]. Errors can occur across forensic science evidence, including DNA [2].

Empirical cognitive research in these areas has been largely neglected (if not basically ignored), partially because professional expert assessment of evidence (as in the criminal justice system) is believed to be relatively objective.



*Fig. 1. The FBI's erroneous identification of the Madrid bomber. The latent print from the crime scene (left panel) and the fingerprint of the innocent suspect who was positively identified by a number of fingerprint experts (right panel).*

With the growing number of anecdotal cases that question this belief and suggest that forensic assessment is far from being as objective as it can

and should be, it is important to conduct cognitive scientific research in this area. Laboratory experiments performed by our group have already suggested that emotional context may bias fingerprint identification. These studies found that university students were more likely to judge that there was a positive match between pairs of fingerprints that were presented within an emotional context than those presented within an emotionally neutral control context [e.g., 3]. However, this vulnerability was apparent only when the prints were ambiguous and lacked clarity. The emotional context had minimal effect when there was a clearly matching pair (or a clearly non-matching pair). These studies, however, were based on non-experts and conducted in a laboratory setting.

The study that we report here presents empirical data on whether actual fingerprint experts in their normal everyday working routines and environment are susceptible to extraneous contextual influences. We employed a within-subject design in which the same experts made judgements on identical pairs of fingerprints, but in different contexts. Our aim was to focus on and to examine the contextual influences themselves rather than reveal possible individual differences between experts. Accordingly, we collected and used pairs of fingerprints from archives that the same experts had examined and judged approximately 5 years earlier as a clear and definite match. These previous identification matches were taken from real criminal investigations.

In this study, we re-presented these very same pairs of fingerprints to the same experts who had originally evaluated them as a match, but we now provided them within an extraneous context that might bias them to evaluate the prints as a non-match. We wanted to test whether their decisions were independent and relatively objective, and thus consistent regardless of extraneous influences. Alternatively, if they contradicted their previous decisions, this would demonstrate vulnerability to bias.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Participants**

Participants were five fingerprint experts. Together they represent over 85 years of experience in examining fingerprints (mean of 17 years). The participants

were taken from our international fingerprint expert pool of volunteers. This pool of participants includes fingerprint experts from a variety of Fingerprint Bureaus, Agencies, and Laboratories from across the world (including the USA, UK, Israel, The Netherlands and Australia). We only used experts who were not familiar with Mayfield's fingerprint and from whom we could covertly access past archival identification matches that they made in the past (see Section 2.3)

### **2.2. Materials**

A different pair of fingerprints was prepared for each of the expert participants. Each pair of prints had been previously identified as a match by that same expert in the year 2000, within the normal course of their work. The latent fingerprints had been obtained from the crime scenes and were all presented again to the experts in their original format.

We further established that all of the pairs of fingerprints were indeed a match by submitting them for verification, 'context free' to two experienced fingerprint experts who were not involved in or aware of our study (each had over 20 years of experience). Both experts independently verified that all five pairs of fingerprints were indeed matches.

### **2.3. Procedure**

Participants signed a consent form a few months prior to the experiment. In this form they consented to being tested sometime within the next 12 months without their knowledge. Thus, we were able to obtain consent but yet test the experts within their normal working environment without them knowing that they were in an experimental situation. We pre-screened our participants and used only participants that were not familiar with the fingerprint of Mayfield.

Participants were asked by one of their colleagues to examine a set of fingerprints, composed of a latent print (from the crime scene) and a print exemplar (a print obtained from a suspect). They were told that the pair of prints was the one that was erroneously matched by the FBI as the Madrid bomber, thus creating an extraneous context that the prints were a non-match.

The fingerprint experts were asked to decide whether there was sufficient information available

in the pair of prints to make a definite and sound decision, and if so, what that judgement was (a match or non-match). They were allowed to evaluate the prints as they would do routinely: handling of the prints, magnifying, lighting equipment, and so forth. The experts were allowed an unlimited amount of time to make their evaluation. The fingerprint experts were further instructed to ignore the context and background information, and to just focus solely on the actual print in their evaluation and decision-making.

### 3. Results

Only one participant (20%) judged the prints to be a match, thus making a consistent identification regardless of the extraneous context. The other four participants (80%) changed their identification decision from the original decision they themselves had made five years earlier. Three of these four participants directly contradicted their previous decision and now judged the fingerprints as definite nonmatches, whereas, the fourth participant now judged that there was insufficient information to make a definite decision (either a match or a non-match) (Fig. 2).

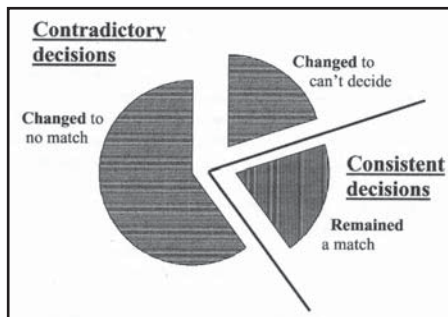


Fig. 2. The covert empirical data showing that most of the expert LPE changed their decisions when the same pair of fingerprints were presented in a different context.

### 4. Discussion

This study shows that fingerprint identification decisions of experts are vulnerable to irrelevant and misleading contextual influences. Our study specifically demonstrates that the extraneous context in which fingerprint examinations occur can determine the identification decision. When presented within a different context four out of five experts

made different identification decisions. One of the four decided that there was insufficient information available in the latent print to make either a 'match' or 'non-match' decision, whereas, the other three fingerprint experts decided that the fingerprints were a definite 'non-match'. This is striking given that all five experts had seen the identical fingerprints previously and all had decided that the prints were a sound and definite match.

This is the first research study to experimentally examine the possible impacts of extraneous context in the real world of biometric and forensic science. One reason for the lack of research in this area is the difficulty in conducting proper scientific research with experts without their knowledge and in their real working environment, while obtaining their consent. We could only use experts for whom we could covertly access and obtain archival files of their own past judgements and who were not familiar with the Mayfield fingerprint. This stipulation further decreased the availability of suitable participants, but had the added advantage of providing a unique opportunity to conduct a within-subject study. The magnitude of the contextual effect and the fact that the experts had judged the same fingerprints in the past enabled the sample to provide clear findings with a high level of confidence. Furthermore, given that we conducted our experiment within the real world conditions of the criminal justice system, even if only one expert out of five was susceptible to such effects that in itself would have serious implications.

Even if we were able increase our sample of expert participants 10-fold (which is unrealistic, given all the constraints detailed above) and assuming that none of the additional participants would have been vulnerable to our manipulation and changed their judgements (which is statistically highly unlikely), our data would still demonstrate that approximately 10% of the experts were susceptible to misleading extraneous contextual information. Thus, our results are striking even though we used five expert participants and a strong extraneous context.

The critical question is what do these results reflect and what do they imply. Are the inconsistent fingerprint identification decisions a reflection of practitioners' errors? Do they reveal deeper methodological and procedural problems in the way that fingerprint experts are trained and identifications are

conducted? Or do the results point out basic flaws in the scientific basis and assumptions underlying fingerprint identification altogether?

The data presented in this study, along with some of the rare examples where erroneous identifications are publicly revealed and acknowledged, do not necessarily indicate basic flaws in the scientific underpinning of fingerprint identification. The fundamental question as to whether fingerprint identification is a science is not addressed in this study, since that raises a different set of issues that pertain to a variety of “sciences” [4]. Our results also do not reflect or reveal practitioners’ errors whereby experts’ negligence, carelessness, and personal fault (intentional or not) produce erroneous identifications. Such causes are often used to deflect deeper scrutiny and discussion.

Rather, it seems that our findings of inconsistent identification decisions may reflect cognitive flaws and limitations in conducting objective and independent processing and evaluation of the information. It is important to note that such problems arise mainly in the more difficult and challenging cases, such as with latent fingerprints collected at crime scenes that are distorted, partially missing, and contaminated. In such cases subjectivity is more pronounced [3,5].

As extraneous contextual effects are more pronounced, greater distortions can arise. The sources of such distortions are many and varied, including emotional context, pressure, contextual information, group think, biases, hopes and expectations, self fulfilling prophecies, and peer pressure. In this study, we used a strong misleading extraneous contextual influence, but such influences do occur.

It is important first to establish empirically that experts can be influenced by extraneous contexts. Now that we have demonstrated such an effect, fur-

ther research can and should use different and more subtle manipulations to examine in greater depth when such factors affect performance and render the experts vulnerable to misjudgements, and when such factors are unlikely to affect performance (and we are currently pursuing such research, see for

The data presented in this study, along with some of the rare examples where erroneous identifications are publicly revealed and acknowledged, do not necessarily indicate basic flaws in the scientific underpinning of fingerprint identification.

example [6]). When vulnerable, these effects can cause a variety of distortions that arise from ignoring parts of the evident information, overemphasizing and over-evaluating other parts of the information, and changing decision criteria, to name but a few.

Vulnerabilities in fingerprint identification can be minimized by better initial selection and screening of fingerprint experts; appropriate training and professional development, and the adoption of methodological procedures that adequately address potential pitfalls. Our results show that even in the face of strong extraneous contextual information one expert nevertheless did maintain their original judgement. That expert was indeed able to focus objectively and consistently on the data, ignoring the extraneous misleading contextual information. This clearly demonstrates that it is possible to be much more objective, and that some experts may not be optimizing objectivity.

The reliability and validity of a scientific method such as fingerprint identification is maintained only when analysis is relatively objective, and hence consistent, across individuals, times, and extraneous contexts. For fingerprint examination to remain a credible forensic science, it must achieve this level of objectivity of analysis. Our study shows that it is possible to alter identification decisions on the same fingerprint, solely by presenting it in a different context. This does not imply that fingerprint and other forensic identifications are not a science, but it does highlight problems of subjectivity, interpretation, and other psychological and cognitive elements that interact and may distort any scientific inquiries [7].

One of the main sources of weaknesses in biometric and other forensic sciences is the lack of research, attention, and application of psychological elements that play a key role in the identification processes. These range from the ways in which perceptual factors (such as similarity and orientation) affect the process of pattern recognition [8] to how we consider decision alternatives and shift response criteria [9]. With new and future statistical tools and technologies the face of fingerprint and biometric identification is changing; however, psychology and cognitive elements continue to play a critical role in their implementation and success [10]. To highlight and address such potential pitfalls, cognitive research needs to be applied systematically to the world of biometrics and forensics. This is all the more necessary in view of our findings that extraneous contextual information is able to determine experts' evaluation of fingerprints. Given that fingerprint is a well-established and relatively objective forensic discipline, then distorting effects are undoubtedly as prevalent, if not more so, in other biometrics and forensic disciplines [11].

## Acknowledgments

We want to thank all the fingerprint experts who are working together with us and support our efforts to try and understand the cognitive elements involved in fingerprint identification, and to thank Arie Zeelenberg, Robert Rosenthal, and Nick Donnelly for helpful comments on an earlier version of the manuscript.

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## Board Positions for 2007

of tissue sent to the toxicology lab. There, scientists using a Gas Chromatograph Mass Spectrometer (GC/MS) can detect compounds, such as heroin or arsenic, that weigh less than a billionth of a gram.

“The GC/MS is one of the most useful tools in forensics,” says Rich Whipple, a chemist at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, Calif. “But using it to come up with answers is much more time-consuming than on TV. On CSI, a GC/MS may say a compound is Fuller Paint pink, but the real instrument would identify the chemical and then a scientist would have to piece together what it may be a component of. CSI is fun to watch,” says Whipple, “but it’s really Hollywood.”

### MADE FOR TV

Another common misconception is that every case requires DNA analysis. The reality: Because of its high cost, DNA testing often isn’t used—even in some cases that might call for it. A report published with funds from the U.S. Department of Justice found that 540,000 criminal cases in the States still awaited biological evidence testing in 2004.

Even solid DNA evidence may not expedite an arrest. Though the National DNA Index System—which currently contains 2.4 million DNA profiles—will accept profiles provided for any convicted criminal, not all states consider the same crimes serious enough to warrant submission. Also, while some states have begun contributing DNA data from crimes committed before 1998, the year the index was established, others have not.

Because TV watchers sit on juries, it’s only logical that dramatization of forensics would begin to affect trials. Heather Vitta, a forensic scientist in the biology and DNA unit of the Michigan State Police, worked on a case that was lost because a juror demanded irrefutable DNA proof. “We don’t find biological evidence at every crime scene, and I shudder to think the public would consider it necessary to prove a case,” she says. “It’s sad, but now when I’m on the stand, prosecutors have to ask me how my work differs from CSI, just to address false expectations.”

As for the San Dimas man, his case may never be solved. According to the Justice Department, even with the best forensic science there’s only a 64 percent chance that an arrest will be made.

With the Annual SCAFO Training Seminar coming up in September, it also means that it is time to look to our membership to fill the vacancies on the board.

SCAFO doesn’t run itself and takes the dedication of it’s members to serve on the board. This could be as a Director, or if you are so inclined and want to eventually hold the President’s position, then perhaps you should look at the Sgt. of Arms position or Secretary. Maybe you would like to be Editor or Historian.

Whichever position you would like to get involved with, you will have the help of the other board members to assist with your duties. I know that we all have hectic lives and getting involved in something else isn’t always easy, but being involved in any organizations board or serving on a committee is also rewarding and looks good on your resume, your Voir Dire in court or with your Department knowing that you are doing more to expand your expertise in the field that we have all chosen.

Also, when you became a SCAFO member, you took an Oath to serve on a committee when asked to do so. Well, I am asking each and every one of you to do so.

Please contact Clark Fogg at [fogg@scafo.org](mailto:fogg@scafo.org) or (310) 285-2116, or any Board member or Director for more information. Nominations can be made by contacting Clark Fogg or if you wish you can nominate someone or yourself at the Business meeting on Saturday, September 30th, 2007.

Sincerely,  
Steven Tillmann  
Editor

# *Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers*

15th Annual Forensic Training Seminar  
Friday, September 29th, 2006  
Saturday, September 30th, 2006

## **FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION 2006 PROGRAM**

Remember the general meeting is on Saturday after lunch. Any readings or swear-ins will be done at that time along with the election of the 2007 SCAFO Executive Board. If you are interested in serving on the board please contact Clark Fogg with any questions at cfogg@beverlyhills.org.

### **Friday, Sept. 29th Registration 0700-0745**

- “Daubert Update & legal Issues Affecting Fingerprints”  
By: William Leo, L.A. Co. Sheriff’s Dept.
- “Persistence of Scars in Friction Skin”  
By: Alice Maceo Las Vegas P.D.
- “Metro-link Train Derailment Disaster”  
By: Randy Adams, Chief Glendale Police Dept.
- “DNA, Facts and Fiction”  
By: Steve Renteria, Senior Criminalist, LASD

### **Saturday, Sept. 30th Registration 0700-0745**

- “Friction Skin Distortion”  
By: Alice Maceo Las Vegas P.D.
- “Hidden Hazards at the Crime Scene”  
By: KJ Kadziauskas
- “AAA-Steam & Clean”  
“Michael Jackson Child-Molestation Case”  
By: T. Sutcliff, B. Spinner, N. Torres  
Santa Barbara Co. S.O.

**0800 to 1630 daily**  
**South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Office**  
**21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA. 91765-4182**  
**(909) 396-3378**

If you would like to reserve a room at the Ayres Hotel, tell them you are reserving a room for the SCAFO seminar.  
Double room occupancy rate is \$92.00 a night.  
This includes full breakfast in morning for both days and a free beer, wine and soda social on week nights.

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Certificates of attendance will be awarded for 8 hours of continuing education training for each day. All materials, continental breakfast and lunch are included.

Mail reservation with check or money order, (NO CASH) to:

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#### **Registration Fees**

Member both days	\$100.00
Non-Member both days	\$125.00
All Reg after 9-9-06	\$125.00
Member single day	\$55.00
Non-Member single day	\$60.00
<b>Single day after 9-9-06</b>	<b>\$60.00</b>

Please Circle which day(s) you will be attending:

09-29-06      and/or      09-30-06

For any questions please e-mail Mari Johnson at M2johnso@lasd.org or Craig Johnson at C2johnso@lasd.org Payment will be accepted at the door, however registration must be made in advance. Reservations made and not canceled by 9-9-06 will be held financially responsible.

# Coroner crowding threatens evidence

(Downloaded from the *sgvtribune* web site) By Troy Anderson  
Staff Writer

Short of space and staff, Los Angeles County Coroner's Office has seen its case backlog surge sharply this summer, leading to autopsy delays and decomposition of bodies that could compromise trial evidence, officials report.

The office had a 3 percent increase in cases from 5,539 to 5,714 in the first seven months this year compared to 2005, but the average number of bodies has jumped by a third, agency officials said. Autopsies now can take up to 10 days to complete rather than the normal two to four days.

Coroner's Office Chief of Operations Craig Harvey said he is not certain what has caused the increase, but noted in recent weeks his office confirmed five heat-related deaths out of 14 suspected cases and there have been several multiple-death cases involving traffic accidents and homicides.

The problems, building for years, has gotten so bad that bodies now sometimes have to be stacked to accommodate them all.

"This summer the Department of Coroner has experienced a drastic increase in the number of new cases it examines," Chief Medical Examiner- Coroner Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran and Director Anthony Hernandez wrote in a letter last week to Chief Administrative Officer David Janssen.

"This increase ... overextended the capacity of staff to handle critical cases in a timely and efficient manner. This situation has resulted in considerable delays in the completion of our forensic examinations.

"These delays have the unwanted affect of accelerating the decomposition process," the officials wrote. "Unfortunately, decomposition affects the quality of the examination and consequently our ability to determine cause and manner of death. In certain situations, such delays could compromise evidence collection for the courts, and expose the county to potential litigation."

The district attorney and judge who presides over the criminal courts could not be reached for comment Thursday on whether they were aware of any botched autopsies that may have compromised homicide cases.

Coroner's officials asked for more investigators and support staff over the next three years to support a second shift of workers.

The letter came a week before the Board of Supervisors is set to vote on whether to spend \$32million to renovate the coroner's facilities on Mission Road.

In a June report to the board, Janssen said the existing facility is too cramped. He also said its heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical and other building systems have significantly deteriorated.

The board requested the report after employees earlier this year decried the conditions, saying some bodies were infested with maggots and workers had been double- and triple-stacking bodies for years due to a lack of adequate space.

Some of the office's crypts, designed to hold about 325 bodies, regularly exceed 400 as a result of population growth, immigration and the difficulty in locating immigrants' next of kin, who often live abroad.

In June, the supervisors gave the Coroner's Office \$645,000 to hire more investigative and support staff, pay for another transport van and provide funding for three crematory services contracts.

Anna Pembedjian, justice deputy to Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, said Thursday the supervisor is very concerned about any potential compromises of evidence in homicide cases.

Harvey said county officials have already told him they don't have sufficient funding to give his office the \$3 million it requested for a second shift.

"We are going to do some internal adjustments to see if we can pour some more resources at the problem to see if we can get caught up, rearrange some schedules to address the problem more directly," Harvey said.

# MINUTES OF JUNE MEETING

**DATE:** June 3, 2006  
**LOCATION:** Old Spaghetti Factory, Riverside  
**HOST:** Amy Hines and Marvin Spreyne  
**SECRETARY:** Mari Johnson  
**PROGRAM:** Fingerprints on Thermal Paper  
**CALL TO ORDER:** Business meeting, 1410 hours by President Susan Garcia  
**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Lead by Past President Dell Freeman  
**ATTENDANCE:**

**PAST PRESIDENTS:** Dell Freeman (1973), Alan McRoberts (1991), Steve Tillmann (2002). Dennis Uyeda (2005)

**EXECUTIVE BOARD:** Dennis Uyeda, Sarah Watson, Mari Johnson, Lisa DiMeo, Marvin Spreyne, Amy Hines, Debbie Stivers, Steve Tillmann, Craig Johnson, Susan Garcia, Sue Baker Clark Fogg., (Absent: Clark Fogg (due to Beverly Hills PD being on tactical alert) and Bill Leo.)

**Members and guests present:** 55

## OLD BUSINESS:

### Second Readings:

Lawrence Rodriguez (Active)  
David Martinez (Active)  
Motion to accept: Marvin Spreyne  
Second: Sue Baker

### Swear Ins by Past President Steve Tillmann

Barbara Maestas, Riverside District Attorney  
Cindee Lozano, Fullerton Police Department  
Emily Schum, Glendale Police Department

## NEW BUSINESS:

### First Readings:

Yesenia Figueroa-Diaz, Riverside County Sheriff's Department  
Recommended by: Marvin Spreyne  
Lacy Johnson, Hemet Police Department  
Recommended by : Amy Hines

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The SCAFO 2006 Seminar flyer is ready to be distributed and will be sent out to the membership via mail no later than June 17th. The seminar is going to be held at the AQMD building in Diamond Bar this year and can hold up to 300 people so remember to make copies and get the flyer out to all you work with. We will be going back to sending out the future meeting information by mail since so many have not been getting the e-mail version. The secretary will continue to send the information out via e-mail also so you might want to check your spam mail to see if the information has been getting blocked.

The Print has been slow in getting out and Steve Tillmann the new Editor has been working hard to learn the software. This is a very time consuming job with getting The Print set up and out to the printer then sent out in a timely manner. The suggestion was made to the board about have The Print go out quarterly. This would give Steve time to get The Print set up and to the printer. The executive board voted with a unanimous of a yes vote for The Print to be sent on a quarterly basis.

Alan McRoberts announced that SWIGFAST has posted a draft for comment in the JFI and on the SWIGFAST web site. The draft is on Quality Assurance Guidelines for Latent Print Examiners. Please take a look at the article and comments of course are welcome.

The August meeting will be held at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's STARS Center in Whittier on August 5th. The museum will be open and kids are welcome. This will be an afternoon barbeque event and there will be dog handlers there to demonstrate how the department uses out scent dogs.

The last but not least. The raffle for the shredder was won by Serena Walsh. Congratulations to her and the shredder will be delivered to her.

## ATTENDANCE DRAWING \$25.00:

Lomita Armendariz

## DOOR PRIZES:

Provided by Bob Goss and Marvin Spreyne.

## MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Ann Tankersley  
Second: Dennis Uyeda

## MEETING ADJOURNED: 1445 hours

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*"Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere."*

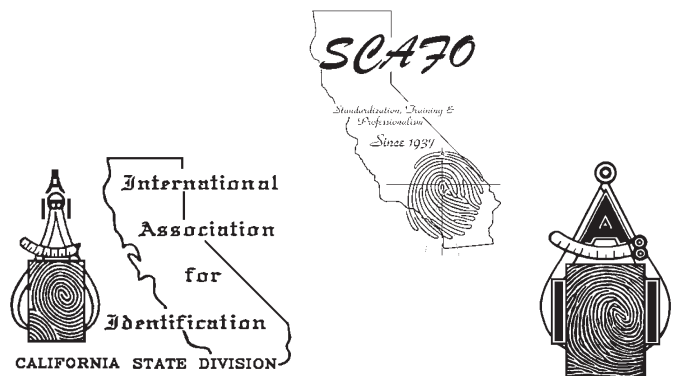
*- President Theodore Roosevelt, 1908*

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**AVAILABLE TRAINING**

**DECEMBER 4-8, 2006**

**EXAMINATION OF TIRE IMPRESSION AND TIRE TRACK EVIDENCE  
TO BE HELD AT MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S TRAINING BUREAU**

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**SCAFO Members:  
Get "yourname@scafo.org".  
See instructions on the  
website's email page.**

**-- Upcoming Events/Schools/Seminars--**

September 29 - 30, 2006

S.C.A.F.O. Annual Training Seminar  
Diamond Bar, Calif.

December 4-8, 2006  
Miami Dade Police Dept

Examination of Tire Impression and Tire Track Evidence

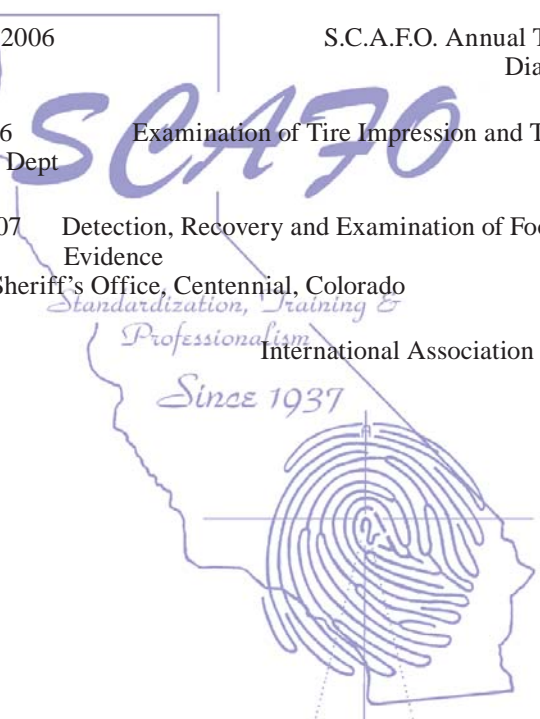
February 12-16, 2007

Detection, Recovery and Examination of Footwear Impression  
Evidence

Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office, Centennial, Colorado

July 22 - 27, 2007

International Association for Identification  
San Diego, CA



***Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers***  
***An Association for Scientific Investigation and Identification Since 1937***