



3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MISSING CHILDREN AND ADULTS

14 - 16 JUNE 2017, ABERTAY UNIVERSITY, DUNDEE, SCOTLAND

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Day One - 14 June 2017

Opening and Welcome



Professor Steve Olivier
(Vice-Principal Research, Abertay University)

Keynote Speakers



Professor Dame Sue Black
(Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification, University of Dundee)

Professor Dame Sue Black is Director of the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification and Director of the Leverhulme Research Centre at the University of Dundee. She is a forensic anthropologist and an anatomist, founder and past President of the British Association for Human Identification, and advisor to the Home Office and Interpol on issues pertaining to forensic anthropology in disaster victim identification (DVI). She is a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians (Edinburgh), a Fellow of the Society of Biology and a certified forensic anthropologist. She was awarded a Damehood in the 2016 Queen's Birthday Honours list and an OBE in 2001 for her services to forensic anthropology in Kosovo. She has also been awarded the Lucy Mair medal for humanitarian services and a police commendation for DVI training in 2008, Hon Prof of Anatomy for the Royal Scottish Academy in 2014 and the Fletcher of Saltoun award for her contribution to Scottish culture also in 2014. She was awarded both the Brian Cox and the Stephen Fry awards for public engagement with research and in 2013 her Centre was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education. Her research was shortlisted for the Times Higher Education research project of the year.



Dr Susan Hitchin
(DNA Unit Co-ordinator, Interpol, France)

Dr Susan Hitchin is the Coordinator of the DNA Unit in INTERPOL's Forensic and Police Data Management Sub-Directorate in Lyon, France, and Secretary of the INTERPOL DNA Monitoring Expert Group. INTERPOL hosts the world's only international law enforcement DNA database allowing for DNA data exchange compliant with 190 member countries' legal and data protection standards. Since 2002, Susan has been representing INTERPOL in various meetings, working groups and incident response teams related to DNA in criminal investigations, disaster victim identification and wildlife trafficking.

Susan is currently working on a project to assist international missing person investigations through the development of an INTERPOL missing persons data platform that will include a missing persons DNA database for family matching. Susan obtained her PhD in molecular biology from Coventry University, United Kingdom.

Plenary Session 1: Families Lived Experiences of Missingness

The Necessity of Status Vermist, the Complexities of Missing Abroad, and the Power of the Internet

Inger de Vries (Family member, Netherlands), Medea Moons (Family member, Netherlands) and Loren O’Keeffe (Family member and MPAN, Australia)

Abstract: Having lived experiences of missingness, we will each tell our stories, drawing upon the difficulties and breadth of the impact of ambiguous loss. It will be an up close and personal knowledge exchange panel of people who have been directly affected by the disappearance of a loved one. We will discuss the challenges of communication (including the role of social media) and administration as well as the emotional, mental and financial toll of long term searching. We will also discuss the work that we are currently doing in this space, in our respective organisations, cities and countries. Attendees will be encouraged to ask questions after the session. We aim to inspire policymakers, police and researchers alike, so that lessons that were learned in each of our cases can reach an even wider audience.



Inger de Vries is a 24 year old student from Gouda in the Netherlands. Inger’s father disappeared in November 2013, leaving behind her stepmother and two younger siblings. The family’s media efforts made it a high profile case and police, along with the family, believed it to be suspicious. Without a single lead, the police investigation was deemed no longer viable in May 2014. Two months later, a volunteer search team with dogs located her father’s car. He was inside; the circumstances were not suspicious. Having seen the practical and financial challenges faced by her stepmother whilst her father was missing, Inger launched national petition ‘Status Vermist’ in 2015. Having a status for ‘missing’ (when it is not known if an individual is alive) would place certain obligations on hold. The petition garnered a lot of momentum – 50,000 signatures – and

Inger is working with the Dutch government and corporate entities to remove obstacles and minimise financial burdens when a loved one is missing. Already implemented by some organisations, Status Vermist was taken to parliament in 2016 and is under review.



Medea Moons is a 34 year old fashion designer from Paris. Medea’s sister disappeared in January 2015, when the boat she was travelling on capsized en route to the Kalimantan jungles of Indonesia. She is one of three passengers who remain missing. The family has travelled to the region to search, and relies on their own personal international connections, as both the Indonesian and Dutch government have been unwilling and unable to offer information or assistance. Although authorities have stopped their search, Medea works with media to highlight the complications of international cases, as well as meeting with authorities, successfully having missing abroad protocol rewritten. Since their last search, Medea has been giving presentations to Dutch authorities to provide much-needed insight into the impacts on families, as well as the additional challenges

that they face (including job loss due to search, missing loved ones’ identity theft, and intrusive ‘helpers’ with ulterior motives). Medea is currently writing her story.



Loren O’Keeffe is director of Missing Persons Advocacy Network (MPAN), Melbourne, Australia. Loren’s brother disappeared in July 2011, sparking a nationwide search that led to unprecedented public support and subsequently the biggest social media campaign of its kind in the world; Dan Come Home. Loren left her job to maintain the full-time search that encompassed frequent traditional media commitments, billboards, bumper stickers, t-shirts and a lot of domestic travel. Other families started making contact seeking advice, which led Loren to found MPAN in 2013. MPAN is a registered charity that creates awareness for missing people, and provides practical support for their families and friends. The foundation project is missingpersonsguide.com, and along with partnerships in media and advertising, MPAN runs a variety of campaigns that humanise missing

loved ones. Another key objective of the organisation is to frame missing persons as a community issue, rather than solely a police task and thus encourage a collaborative approach; harnessing the collective efforts of the media, corporate sector, all levels of government, emergency services and the public. Dan’s remains were found in March 2016, reinforcing Loren’s commitment to this cause; MPAN is his legacy.

Readings from My Memoir 'Twenty-Six Hours: The Vanishing of Tom Drew'

Allison Drew (Family member and Universities of York, UK and Cape Town, South Africa)

Abstract: Allison Drew's elderly father Tom Drew vanished without a trace from his Salisbury, Connecticut home in July 2007. Her memoir is the story of her efforts to uncover the truth about what happened to him during the twenty-six hours between the last time a family member spoke to him on July 20 and the time his employees reported him missing to the Connecticut State Police on July 21. She confronts police incompetence, prejudice and abuse of power on a personal journey that brings her face-to-face with the moral decay of American society and the erosion of its democratic institutions. Reflecting the conference themes of responding to missing person incidents and supporting missing people and their families, she will read extracts from chapter 3, in which she learns that her father is missing and makes an initial attempt to find out what happened, and chapter 11, in which she considers the psychological consequences of having a missing family member.



Allison Drew is the daughter of a missing person. Her father, Tom Drew of Salisbury, Connecticut, was reported missing to the Connecticut State Police ten years ago. She is writing a memoir of her efforts to find out what happened to him. She is also a historian of twentieth-century Africa, focusing on South Africa and Algeria and the relationship of socialist and national liberation movements.

Session 1: Correlates and treatment of psychological distress in relatives of missing persons

Symposium Abstract: Worldwide, thousands of people go missing every year. Very few studies have yet explored the psychological consequences for relatives of missing persons; and the majority of these few studies focused on disappearances in the context of armed conflict (see for an overview Lenferink, de Keijser, Wessel, de Vries, & Boelen, in press). These studies indicate that experiencing an ambiguous loss is a risk factor for elevated emotional problems. However, little is known about correlates and treatment of emotional problems among relatives of missing person. In the Netherlands about 1500 persons are registered as missing. The consequences for Dutch relatives of missing persons may differ from relatives of victims of enforced disappearances in armed conflict. The current symposium aims to summarize results from 1) a survey-study about cognitive-behavioural correlates of emotional problems among Dutch relatives of missing persons (n = 134), 2) an interview-study among non-clinical Dutch relatives of missing persons (n = 23) that examined helpful coping strategies, 3) a cross-cultural survey-study that aimed to explore differences in levels of distress and coping strategies among Dutch (n = 70) and Pakistani (n=87) relatives of missing persons, and 4) a literature review that was focused on identifying empirically based interventions applicable for ambiguous loss. The overarching aim of the symposium is to present current research focusing on the phenomenology, correlates, and treatment of emotional problems among relatives of missing persons.

Cognitive-Behavioral Correlates of Psychological Symptoms among Relatives of Missing Persons

Paul Boelen (Utrecht University and Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, Netherlands), **Lonneke Lenferink** (Universities of Groningen and Utrecht, Netherlands) and **Jos de Keijser** (University of Groningen, Netherlands)

Abstract: The disappearance of a close relative is associated with an elevated risk of emotional problems. Commonly observed problems include symptoms of prolonged grief (PG), posttraumatic stress (PTS), and depression. There is a need to enhance our understanding of psychological factors underlying these problems. From the perspective of cognitive behavioural theorizing, it has been postulated that maladaptive appraisals and avoidant coping behaviour are involved in the maintenance of emotional problems following bereavement. No studies have yet tested whether cognitive-behavioural variables are also related to distress among relatives of missing persons, i.e., those confronted with ambiguous loss. The current study, conducted in the Netherlands, aimed to do so. To this end, we gathered data from 134 relatives of missing persons. They all completed self-report measures of maladaptive appraisals and avoidant coping, and measures of PG, PTS, and depression. Multilevel analysis was used to analyse the data. Findings indicated that the cognitive-behavioural variables explained significant amounts of variance in symptom levels of PG, PTS, and depression. Considerable associations were found, even when controlling for sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender) and characteristics of the disappearance (e.g., time since disappearance, assumed cause). These findings indicate that pervasive negative thinking and avoidant ways of coping renders relatives of



missing persons prone to emotional problems. This suggests that cognitive-behavioural interventions may be fruitful in the treatment of these problems.

Paul A Boelen is a full professor at the Department of Clinical Psychology at Utrecht University and Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group in the Netherlands. He also works as a psychotherapist and scientific director at an outpatient facility for mental health care at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Utrecht University.

Coping Strategies and Psychological Distress: A Cross-Cultural Perspective

Lonneke Lenferink (Universities of Groningen and Utrecht, Netherlands), **Aisha Zubair** (Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan), **Jos de Keijser** (University of Groningen, Netherlands) and **Paul Boelen** (Utrecht University and Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, Netherlands)

Abstract: Two studies were conducted to explore the association between coping strategies and psychological distress among relatives of missing persons. In study 1, nonclinical Dutch relatives of long-term missing persons ($n = 23$) were interviewed to enhance understanding about how people adaptively deal with the disappearance of a loved one. Participants were asked to select five out of fifteen cards referring to coping strategies distinguished in the COPE (i.e., well-known self-report measure tapping coping strategies), which they considered most helpful in dealing with the disappearance. Acceptance, emotional social support, mental disengagement, and venting emotions were most frequently chosen. In study 2, Dutch ($n = 70$) as well as Pakistani ($n = 88$) relatives of missing persons completed self-report measures of coping strategies (i.e., the Brief COPE) and psychological distress (i.e., the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale) in order to examine cross-cultural differences in 1) levels of psychological distress and 2) use of coping strategies to deal with the disappearance of a loved one. Preliminary results showed that Pakistani relatives of missing persons reported significantly higher levels of distress compared with Dutch relatives of missing persons. In addition, both groups differed with respect to use of coping strategies. Both studies provided some indication of coping strategies that could be strengthened in treatment and indicated that cultural background matters.



Lonneke I M Lenferink is a PhD student at the University of Groningen and Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Her PhD project aims to study the correlates and treatment of psychopathology in relatives of long-term missing persons.

Ambiguous Loss in Relatives of Missing Persons

Geert Smid (University of Groningen and Foundation Centrum '45, Netherlands); **Lonneke Lenferink** (Universities of Groningen and Utrecht, Netherlands), **Jos de Keijser** (University of Groningen, Netherlands), and **Paul Boelen** (Utrecht University and Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, Netherlands)

Abstract: Ambiguous loss is characteristic of the situation faced by relatives of missing persons. Symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and prolonged grief disorder may accompany ambiguous loss. No treatment guidelines are available on how to address these symptoms. We performed a literature review aimed at identifying empirically based treatment interventions applicable across a variety of settings. In relatives of missing persons with high levels of distress, holding on to hope that the loved one will return may be seen as a strategy to avoid emotions associated with the thought that the separation is permanent. However, pressure for closure paradoxically leads to increased resistance and may in the context of enforced disappearance serve politically repressive aims. Symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and prolonged grief may be addressed using empirically supported interventions, including psycho-education, mobilizing social support, exposure, and behavioral activation. Exposure-based interventions for ambiguous loss should not focus on closure or coming to terms with the irreversibility of the loss, but on tolerating the ambiguity surrounding the loss.



Geert E. Smid is a psychiatrist, trauma therapist, and senior researcher at Foundation Centrum '45 / Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group. His research focuses on the prevalence, diagnosis, and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic grief, and stress sensitization across different groups and cultures.

Session 2: Organisational Challenges

Is a Dedicated Missing Person Unit an Effective Use of Police Resources? A Mixed Methods Evaluation of LOCATE, West Midlands Police Force, United Kingdom

Dr Susan Giles (University of Liverpool, UK), Dr Siddartha Bandyopadhyay (University of Birmingham, UK) and Neha Prashar (University of Birmingham, UK)

Abstract: Current police management of missing persons has been identified as an area in need of improvement. For example, a recent HMIC (2016) report on missing children noted 'inconsistencies in properly assessing risks, managing investigations, and providing support and help to the child'. The aim of the dedicated LOCATE team was to overcome some of these barriers and improve outcomes in reducing harm and demand created by frequent missing persons in Birmingham, UK. Adopting a realist evaluation approach (Pawson & Tilly, 1997), this study presents the findings of a mixed methods impact and process evaluation of LOCATE compared to 'business as usual' approaches. In addition to quantitative estimation of outcomes across Birmingham and other non-LOCATE areas pre- and post-intervention, six focus groups and ten individuals interviews were conducted with a wide range of police officers, to gather information on context (factors that may influence implementation and success of LOCATE), mechanism (how LOCATE is proposed to work based upon what it delivers) and outcomes (measurable benefits and how they are achieved). Interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings are presented in the form of a logit model that reveals explanatory mechanisms, specifically how key aspects of LOCATE helps to achieve outcomes (e.g. more efficient use of resources due to continuity & familiarity, developed specialism, understanding risk & proportionality, improved quality of intelligence, improved partnership working & problem solving). Potential barriers, next steps and implications for police forces are also discussed.



Dr Susan Giles is a Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Liverpool, where she teaches on the MSc Investigative and Forensic Psychology. She was recently funded by West Midlands Police to undertake a process evaluation of LOCATE, Birmingham's dedicated missing person police unit. She is the principle investigator for the CASPER project and was awarded funding by HEFCE's Police Knowledge Fund to undertake further 'proof of feasibility' studies with colleagues in Computer Science and Mathematics at Liverpool John Moores University.



Neha Prashar gained her Bachelor's degree in Mathematics with Economics at University College London and went onto do her Master's degree in Development Economics at the University of Birmingham. She is currently undertaking her PhD in Economics at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on the labour market in India, assessing the impact of affirmative action policies in public employment on targeted groups. She is presently a research assistant for the Police Knowledge Fund.

A Job Well Done? Framing Police Conceptualisations of Success in Missing Person Investigations

Amy Humphrey (University of Dundee, UK)

Abstract: Policing success in missing persons is a complex, multi-dimensional concept which necessitates consideration of the role of policing beyond traditional response team enquiries. Drawing on mixed qualitative data from the ESRC funded PhD Project 'Networked Geographies of Search: Coordination, mobilisation and success in policing contributions to missing persons', a framework of success will be presented here which for the first time brings together the expertise of those working across policing networks to identify a shared understanding of 'working well' in missing persons. Geographical diversity in policing concepts of success have been found, with different prominent success themes in the narratives of two comparative case study forces. Implications of this will be discussed. This framework acts as an evaluative tool for further research findings within the current project and could be applied as such in future academic endeavours, as well as informing the development of police organisational practices or project evaluations. This project has focused in depth on one statutory agency with responsibility for missing persons, and constitutes a key early step. Missing persons however is a multi-agency concern. Future research is recommended to explore success from different partner perspectives towards establishing a collaborative framework of good practice in this area.



Amy is a final year ESRC funded PhD researcher at University of Dundee, supervised by Professor Nick Fyfe, Dr Jon Mendel & Dr Penny Woolnough. Amy's thesis explores the networks of policing across missing persons work, with a focus on coordination and good practice. Recently, Amy was a visiting scholar at the Norwegian Police University College, sharing early findings and exploring Nordic models of missing person police work. Amy holds a first class (hons) in Psychology from UoW, Bangor and MSc Investigative Psychology from University of Liverpool.

Advancing Partnerships between Law Enforcement and Subject Matter Experts in the Area of Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains

Roberta Sinclair (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada)

Abstract: Over the past few years, advancing the policies and practices surrounding missing persons (MPs) and investigations has become a central priority for law enforcement agencies. The Government of Canada (2010) began a 5-year initiative to enhance the criminal justice system's response and approach to handling Missing Persons (MP) cases (Department of Justice 2012). As part of this initiative, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) established the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR), a national program housed within the Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children/Behavioural Sciences Branch (CPCMEC/BSB). A key priority for the Centre is the linkage between current innovative research and policing practice. The mandate of the Program Research and Development section within CPCMEC/BSB is to conduct operationally relevant research in the areas of missing persons and unidentified remains, Internet-facilitated child sexual exploitation, and behavioural sciences. The proposed presentation focuses on the first area of specialization and incorporates the following:

- 1) Provide a brief overview of the CPCMEC/BSB highlighting the role of research within the Centre and specifically within the NCMPUR;
- 2) Summarize key findings of the current Environmental Scan specifically addressing areas of research focus (academic, policing, governmental, non-governmental); and,
- 3) Discussion on the initiatives that the NCMPUR has engaged in that incorporate various partners and disciplines and that prioritizes the development of law enforcement practices.

The development of multi-disciplinary partnerships and collaboration across law enforcement, academia, victim advocates, government/non-government agencies and other key agencies is an underlying theme of this session.



Roberta Sinclair manages the Program Research and Development team, which engages in operationally-relevant research, of the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) - one of the national programs within the Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children/Behavioural Science Branch. She is also an adjunct professor in the Sociology/Anthropology department and the Institute for Criminology and Criminal Justice at Carleton University. Recent NCMPUR initiatives and the importance of merging academic and police perspectives in creating an international research agenda will be highlighted.

Day Two – 15 June 2017

Opening



**Assistant Chief Constable Andy Cowie
(Police Scotland)**

Plenary Session 2: Missing in Migration? European and National Perspectives on the Disappearance of Unaccompanied Children

The necessity of Status Vermist, the Complexities of Missing Abroad, and the Power of the Internet

Plenary Abstract: In 2015, almost 90 000 unaccompanied migrant children applied for asylum in the European Union. Today, 30% of all people seeking protection in Europe are children. More than half of them are under the age of 14. More than half of them are under the age of 14. According to Europol, at least 10 000 unaccompanied migrant children have disappeared in Europe in 2015 within hours of being registered, and only a handful have been found since. While comprehensive data is lacking, available evidence confirms the importance of the situation: in the last three and a half years, 1829 asylum-seeking unaccompanied children have disappeared in Sweden. In Italy, Oxfam reported in September 2016 that 28 unaccompanied children go missing in Italy every day. In Germany, the Federal Criminal Police (BKA) reported in August 2016 to have lost trace of 8.991 children registered entering the country as unaccompanied asylum-seekers, including 867 aged 13 or younger. This symposium will look at evidence collected through European (7 Member States) and national research in the UK and Sweden, to understand challenges and best practices in preventing and responding to the disappearance in unaccompanied children. It will focus on interagency cooperation between the different stakeholders involved (LEA, hotlines for missing children, guardians, social services) as well as the changing European context, putting the issue at the cross-roads between migration and child protection policies.

Missing Children in Migration: Findings from European Research

Delphine Moralis (Missing Children Europe, Belgium)

Abstract: The project Safeguarding Unaccompanied Migrant Minors from going Missing by Identifying Best Practices and Training Actors on Interagency Cooperation (SUMMIT), launched in October 2014, addressed how the issue of the disappearance of an unaccompanied child is tackled in seven different Member States and promoted successful strategies and behaviours related to the prevention and response to these disappearances. The project specifically looked at combining the experience of both the actors which primarily deal with the care of unaccompanied children and those which focus on disappearances of children, including law enforcement and hotlines for missing children, and from that combination examine how to cooperate better and on what issues. In doing so, the project produced research results covering 7 EU member states (Toscano & Shalev Greene) as well as a handbook for practitioners (Toscano, Moralis, Murk, O'Donnell).

Findings of the SUMMIT project will be discussed in the light of the 'Lost in Migration' conference organised in parallel with the JHA meeting in Malta on 26 & 27 January 2017, as well as the ongoing policy developments responding to migration challenges faced in the EU. The conference resulted in a set of operational and policy recommendations to EU and national authorities, endorsed by organisations from across the EU.



Delphine Moralis is Secretary General of Missing Children Europe. Delphine's work over the past 11 years has focused mainly on contributing to effective cross-border child protection solutions to prevent and respond to the disappearance of children as well as their sexual exploitation. She was appointed Secretary General of Missing Children Europe in 2013, prior to which she was responsible for the organisation's operations

as Deputy Secretary General. Before joining Missing Children Europe, Delphine held positions including at Child Focus (BE) and at the European Youth Forum. Delphine is a member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for the Study of Missing Persons from the University of Portsmouth (UK), as well as of the network of Lawyers in Europe on Parental Child Abduction (NL), and a member of the Steering Group of Europol's European Financial Coalition against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Online. Delphine has a Master's degree in Philosophy as well as an Advanced Master's Degree in European Studies.

Missing Unaccompanied Children in Sweden

Amir Hashemi-Nik (National Coordinator at the County Administrative Board of Stockholm, Sweden)

Abstract: In January 2016, the County Administrative Boards of Sweden were given a government assignment to conduct a national study on missing unaccompanied minors and propose measures to the government to prevent unaccompanied minors from going missing. The study that was conducted is primarily based on an exhaustive survey in the form of a questionnaire sent to the social services in all of Sweden's 290 municipalities. Statistics from the Swedish Migration Agency were also collected and compiled. Interviews were also conducted to map the scope of the disappearances of unaccompanied minors and to understand the profile of children who go missing.

The study shows that in the past 3,5 years, 1829 asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors have disappeared in Sweden. As of 31 May 2016, statistics show that 4 per cent of all unaccompanied minors assigned to a municipality by the Swedish Migration Agency were registered as "missing". 4% of all the boys who applied for asylum went missing, while 2.5% of all the girls disappeared. The lack of statistics on missing children in the initial phases of the process is something that the report is raising as a deficiency in the system at the moment. The report also highlights that 70% of all the children that went missing, did not return back into the system. Children with Moroccan and Afghan citizenships are the largest groups registered as missing, followed by children from Somalia, Algeria, Eritrea and Syria. According to the municipalities, reasons for why unaccompanied minors go missing are asylum application rejections, the perceived risk of such a rejection and the fear of being deported. The study also points at the recent changes to legislation in Sweden as push factors that create uncertainty and results in greater number of disappearances.

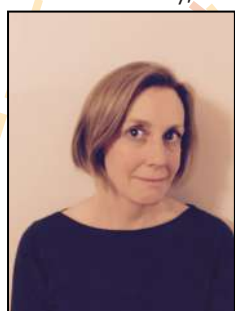


Amir Hashemi-Nik is Development Manager at the County Administrative Board of Stockholm, working at the moment with coordinating the national assignment (from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs) on missing unaccompanied children in Sweden. Previously, Amir managed an EU funded project on Human Rights education for newly arrived young refugees. He has also worked together with the Council of Europe on organizing events for and by young refugees addressing related issues on European level. Amir has also worked with refugee issues on UN level, particularly with a social development project for Palestinian refugees in Aleppo, Syria. Amir acquired both his political science degree, and his masters degree in International Social Development, in Sydney, Australia.

Heading Back to Harm

Susannah Drury (Missing People, UK)

Abstract: Missing People conducted a joint research study with ECPAT UK into trafficked and unaccompanied children going missing from care in the UK in 2016. The research involved data requests to 217 local authorities in the UK who are responsible for all children in care, workshops with children and young people who had been victims of child trafficking, and a survey and roundtable discussion with practitioners and policymakers. The presentation will outline the key findings of the research regarding the number of trafficked and unaccompanied children who go missing from care, how long they remain missing for and their nationality, as well as their reasons for going missing. The presentation will also outline the key recommendations from the study, which focus on creating a culture of trust, responding effectively to risk and taking a co-ordinated approach to safeguarding and supporting these vulnerable children and young people.



Susannah Drury is Director of Services and Advocacy at the national charity Missing People. She has oversight of the charity's policy and research work including the Heading Back to Harm research conducted with ECPAT UK, the charity's national 24/7 helpline services for missing children and adults and support services for families with a missing loved one. Previously, Susannah had research and policy roles at the Greater London Authority, Nacro, a social justice charity and Scottish Human Services, a social inclusion charity.

Session 3: Child Abduction

The Role of Guardianship in Preventing Stranger Child Abduction: A Comparison of Attempted and Completed Cases (Craig Collie, University of Portsmouth, UK)

Abstract: Key child safety lessons communicate that, in addition to children themselves taking preventive action, being accompanied by others and being in areas with high levels of surveillance can prevent or mitigate stranger child abduction and that children ought to remain in situations where these elements are present. This communicates that the level of “guardianship” can influence whether an instance of stranger child abduction is attempted or completed. In order to study this relationship, the Routine Activity Theory construct of capable guardianship was used to examine the features of 78 cases of stranger child abduction, gathered from publically available sources. An outcome based approach was used to establish the effectiveness of various potential sources of guardianship in preventing abduction attempts from becoming completed, and to test widely held and taught beliefs on this subject. These include whether the child is accompanied by an adult or by other children, whether there are third party witnesses, and whether there are other surveillance features such as CCTV or “natural surveillance”, e.g., overlooking windows. Results showed that only direct oversight provided by an adult who sees themselves as personally responsible for a child to be a very effective means of abduction prevention, both dissuading and disrupting offences. Guardianship provided by other actors, such as peers and third party passers-by, were not disruptive. Accompaniment by other children could dissuade offending, but failed to disrupt offences in progress. Sources of natural surveillance were ineffective in general. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings will be discussed.



Craig is a lecturer at the University of Portsmouth's Institute of Criminal Justice Studies. His main research interests on missing people are focused on the issue of stranger child abduction, in particular comparing attempted and completed cases of such abductions. Craig has recently completed his PhD on this topic, and his next project involves interviewing stranger child abductors in order to evaluate their key decision points while offending. Craig is also an active member of Hampshire Search and Rescue.

Living in Uncertainty: Parents' Perceptions about Child Abduction

Ana Tavares, Carla Crespo & Maria Teresa Ribeiro (University of Lisbon, Portugal)

Abstract: Parental child abduction occurs when the child is removed from the custody of the other parent or legally appointed guardians. Most of the children abducted are with the abductor just before the abduction and usually they are not returned to the custodial parent after visits. In 2015, Portuguese police authorities received 4148 communications of missing people, 1611 of which 1611 were children under 18 years old. The disappearance has a profound emotional impact on family members and significantly affects their lives. Boss (1999) developed the concept of ambiguous loss, considering the disappearance as a loss, which is characterized by the uncertainty or lack of information about the person's whereabouts, who may be physically absent but psychologically present for others. Our research focused on the experiences of parents and legal guardians whose children were abducted, through qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews. The participants (N=5) were men between 35 and 59 years old (M=46, SD=9.4). Four participants were fathers whose child had been abducted by the mother; one participant was the grandfather and legal guardian of the child, who had been abducted by the father. The interviews' main themes were parents' meanings regarding the child abduction event, its impact at the time, individual and family reorganization and perceptions of social support, and expectations about the future. Results are discussed in the light of the ambiguous loss framework. The family abduction of children is a serious social problem that has to be understood. These results provide a crucial contribute in the field of missing children, as well as relevant clues for professionals who work with this specific population.



Ana Tavares is a PhD student in Clinical Psychology, in the area of Family Psychology. She is currently studying the individual and systemic impact of having a missing child in the family. Her research work is supervised by Professor Carla Crespo and Professor Maria Teresa Ribeiro who develop research about families in the context of adversity. She is also a clinical psychologist at the Family and Marital Therapy Unit of the Faculty of Psychology in Lisbon.

Understanding Parental Alienation: Missing Children in the Lives of Good Enough Parents

Karen Woodall and Nick Woodall (Family Separation Clinic, UK)

Abstract: Parental Alienation is the complete unjustified rejection of a once loved parent by a child, usually occurring within the context of family separation. An alienated child will completely and consistently reject a relationship with a parent, seeking to eradicate that parent and the wider family from their conscious experience. Once considered to be the result of a deliberate and conscious campaign by a vexatious parent, parental alienation is now widely understood to be a spectrum experience in which the child at different ages can be susceptible to adult alignments and expectations. Whilst the incidence of deliberate inculcation of fear and dislike of a parent is seen in such cases, more routinely a child will become unable to relate to a parent because of complex emotional and psychological dynamics surrounding them. Parents are often helpless to create change in the child's mind when an alienation reaction has occurred, looking more closely at the underlying psychological dynamics explains why this is so. Parental alienation is a pernicious problem which if left unaddressed will cause the child to reject not only a parent but the whole of the side of the family associated with that parent. Children are known to also reject friends and even once loved pets when they enter into this state of mind. This leaves one side of their family missing the child and it can take many years for such a difficult dynamic to resolve itself. In some cases, parents and family members will die before such change occurs.

The work of the Family Separation Clinic in London is concerned with both the treatment of parental alienation and the raising of this issue as an urgent mental health concern for families experiencing separation in the UK and across the world. Based upon their new book *Understanding Parental Alienation: Learning to Cope, Helping to Heal* (2017) Karen and Nick Woodall from the Family Separation Clinic offer insight into the problem of alienation



in children and the way in which leaving matters unresolved, causes significant harm to children in the present and future. Approaching the issue from a clinical perspective, the authors demonstrate how changing practice with separated families leads to understanding and ability to utilise tools to assist the family courts.

Karen Woodall is a Psychotherapist at the Family Separation Clinic where she is working with a range of issues concerned with children's experience of difficult divorce and separation and is a specialist in reuniting children with parents after family separation.



Nick Woodall is a Psychotherapist at the Family Separation Clinic where he is working with parents who have lost loved children due to parental alienation, he is also a specialist in working with children who have rejected parents after separation.

Karen and Nick train other practitioners in working with children and families affected by parental alienation and are the Co-Founders of the European Association of Parental Alienation Practitioners which brings together practitioners from across Europe who work with the problem of children's resistance and rejection of parental relationships after separation.

Session 4: Forensic Age Progression and Identification

Know Your Audience: Targeting Public Beliefs about Forensic Age Progressions

James Michael Lampinen (University of Arkansas, USA), **Andrew Provenzano** (University of Arkansas, USA), **Charlie Frowd** (University of Central Lancashire), **Gregory Mahoney** (Boston Police Department, USA) and **William Blake Erickson** (University of Missouri, USA)

Abstract: One factor that may limit recognition based on age progressions (APs) is a lack of understanding about what age progressions are and how they are produced. We tested the idea that providing participants with information about age progressions could increase their recognition. Forensic artists created APs from age 12 to age 20 based on childhood photos provided by adult volunteers. Participants (N = 287) studied each AP twice for two seconds per presentation. Other participants studied outdated photographs. For the participants who studied the APs, half were given instructions including examples of APs and what the target individuals eventually looked like. The instructions stated: "Keep in mind that an age progression is a best guess of what a person might look like and may not look identical to the person in all regards... police artists cannot easily predict changeable aspects of a person's appearance such as hair style, hair color, makeup, facial hair, weight gain, weight loss, and so on." Participants took a recognition memory showing the target individuals and distractors at age 20. The AP with additional instruction condition had

significantly recognition accuracy than the AP with no added instruction condition, $p < .001$. Recognition for participants who studied outdated images did not significantly differ from participants who studied APs with the added instructions. Results indicated recognition based on APs can be improved with a simple instructional manipulation. However, even with those added instructions, recognition based on APs did not exceed recognition based on outdated images.



James Michael Lampinen PhD, is a Distinguished Professor of Psychological Science at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville AR, USA. He received his PhD in Cognitive Psychology from Northwestern University in 1996. Dr Lampinen's work focuses on applications of basic research on memory and face perception to legal issues including eyewitness identification, missing and wanted persons, and forensic age progression. He is author of two books, *The Psychology of Eyewitness Identification*, published by Psychology Press and *Memory 101*, published by Springer. His work has funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation.

On Age Progression of Ben Needham's Face - A Computer Method to Age Progression using Faces of Missing Children and Adults

Ali Bukar and Hassan Ugail (University of Bradford, UK)

Abstract: The Case of Ben Needham is claimed to be one of the longest missing person's case in British history. Recently, computer based active appearance models have been used to progress facial images of missing people. These techniques have also been applied to the face of Ben Needham. However, principal component analysis (PCA) which is at the core of the appearance model has a weakness as it averages facial features. Hence, generating age progressed images using this technique produces faces with insufficient texture information. Further, missing facial deformations such as wrinkles leaves us with images that look younger than their age. To this end, we propose an age progression model that incorporates a non-parametric texture enhancement framework to the appearance model. Results show that our framework produces realistic images with enhanced details. We have designed and tested our method using a database of 500 face images with known ages. We have then used our method to progress Ben Needham's facial image that was taken when he was 21 months old to the ages of 6, 14 and 22 years. Somewhat surprisingly, our results differ from the various predictions made by others previously as to what Ben might look like. However, our method passes both visual and computer based face recognition tests, on the images produced for Ben Needham, providing us with additional confidence. Hence, we believe our method could potentially be used to enhance the search for missing people.



Ali Maina Bukar received the MSc degree from The School of Computing Science and Digital Media, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, UK in 2010. He is currently working towards the PhD degree, at the Centre for Visual Computing, University of Bradford, UK. His research interests include automatic facial analysis, pattern recognition, machine learning, computer vision and signal processing.

How Expectations of Encounter Influence Responses to Missing Person Alerts

James Michael Lampinen, Kara N. Moore, and Andrew Provenz (University of Arkansas, USA)

Abstract: Authorities sometimes release photos to get public help in recovering missing persons. Lampinen, Arnal, and Hicks (2009) proposed that such campaigns rely in part on what they called prospective person memory (PPM). People generally consider the chances of encountering a missing person to be low and we hypothesized that this may limit the effectiveness of missing person alerts.

Five-hundred and one participants encountered three different mock missing person alerts on three different days (MWF). They could win up to \$200 if they spotted the person and contacted the experimenters. For the first two alerts participants had no opportunity to make a sighting. On the third day, the "missing person" was standing outside the lab. Control condition participants only saw the third alert. More sightings occurred when participants saw one video (10.00%) than when they saw three (4.68%), $p = .028$. Participants who saw one video had higher expectations of being in the same location as the confederate than participants in the three video condition, $F(1, 462) = 15.25, p < .001$. We found a significant correlation between expectations of encounter and intention to look, $r = .37, p < .001$. We found a significant correlation between people's expectations of being in the same location and sighting reports, $r = .20, p < .001$. Repeated exposure to missing person alerts, in which a sighting is not made, can decrease the likelihood of reporting the missing person, partly by reducing expectations of encounter.



James Michael Lampinen PhD, is a Distinguished Professor of Psychological Science at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville AR, USA. He received his PhD in Cognitive Psychology from Northwestern University in 1996. Dr Lampinen's work focuses on applications of basic research on memory and face perception to legal issues including eyewitness identification, missing and wanted persons, and forensic age progression. He is author of two books, *The Psychology of Eyewitness Identification*, published by Psychology Press and *Memory 101*, published by Springer. His work has funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation.

Session 5: Young People at Risk

Profile and Trajectories of Young Runaways in Belgium

Sofia Mahjoub (Child Focus, Belgium)

Abstract: In 2016 Child Focus, in collaboration with the University of Liège, conducted a research study on the profile and trajectories of young runaways in Belgium. For this research project, quantitative and qualitative research methods were combined. The quantitative analysis was based on a large scale sample of 1694 cases collected by the Belgian NGO over a two years period. A qualitative content analysis was conducted on a random sample of 228 cases. This analysis was further completed with 22 in-depth interviews with young runaways. The study focusses on the profile of young runaways and on the trajectories during their time away from home. The profile was not only defined on the basis of general demographic and household criteria (age-gender-home situation) but also on the basis of their social and psychological background: family conflicts, problems at school, deviant behaviour, mental or psychological problems. The trajectories of young runaways were the main focus of the interviews. A specific emphasis was put on the first time, the motivations to run away and the feelings and needs of young runaways. The study revealed that running away is seen as an act of emotional regulation for the youngsters. Running away offers distance from a difficult situation or it expresses feelings without using words. Youngsters also see it as an experiment (to see how much they are missed or what distance feels comfortable). Finally, researchers defined a typology of the contemporary runaway. The following categories were identified: young runaways, repeated runaways, roaming runaways and thrown-aways.



Sofia Mahjoub has a degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Criminology. Since she started working as a researcher and policy officer at Child Focus, the Belgian Foundation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children, in 2004, the disappearance of children has been her main focal point. She analyses the phenomenon within the framework of the hotline for missing children. Child Focus being the turntable of information exchange and cooperation in cases of missing children, she actively works on the efficient and effective collaboration between all actors around the child.

The impact of No Wrong Door and the embedded police roles on missing from home and care incidents

Clare Lushey, Georgia Hyde-Dryden and Lisa Holmes (Loughborough University, UK)

Abstract: In 2015 the Department for Education's Innovation Programme awarded North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) funding to develop No Wrong Door (NWD). The NWD innovation provides a service for young people aged 12 to 25 who are in care, on the edge of care, or leaving care. NWD operates from two 'hubs' which provide residential beds and other accommodation options, an outreach service, and specialist support from police liaison officers and a police analyst, life coaches (i.e. clinical psychologists), and communication support workers (i.e. speech and language therapists). The role of the police within NWD is to reduce missing from care/home incidents and criminal activity, and to identify and reduce child sexual exploitation - through mapping, analysis and an agreed multi-agency approach which ensures that responses are sensitive and proportionate. NWD is currently being evaluated by the CCFR at Loughborough University. A mixed methods approach has been adopted and includes interviews with young people, birth parents, foster carers, and NWD staff; and the collation of anonymous quantitative data routinely collected by the NWD project team. This paper will focus on the role of the police liaison officers and analyst in preventing and responding to missing from care/home incidents. Jointly with NYCC the officers and analyst have reduced the number of missing from home incidents through the introduction of an agreed protocol to be used when a young person goes missing, using intelligence to identify addresses a missing young person has been attending, and also by implementing disruption techniques.



Clare Lushey works at the Centre for Child and Family Research at Loughborough University and has undertaken a number of studies aimed at promoting positive outcomes for children and families. Current work includes the evaluation of North Yorkshire County Council's No Wrong Door programme. In addition to this Clare recently completed an evaluation of the TwentyTwenty lifeskills centres. Clare's research interests include transitions from care to adulthood, outcomes for looked after children and care leavers, and the peer research methodology.

The Link between Repeated Runaways and Sexual Exploitation

Sofia Mahjoub (Child Focus, Belgium)

Abstract: The link between disappearances and sexual exploitation has received a fair amount of attention in the context of cross-border human trafficking. However, less attention has been attributed to the question of the direct link between disappearances of runaway minors and the subsequent risk of falling prey to sexual exploitation. Child Focus tries to combine its expertise on the risks of running away, especially for repeated running away, and its expertise on child sexual exploitation, more specifically on prostitution of minors. Child Focus, in its case-analysis, systematically reviews the number of child prostitution cases having a link with running away. In 2015, that link existed in 25 out of 35 prostitution cases. In 2016, in 42 out of 60. The majority of those links is unsurprisingly to be found in cases of runaway girls between the age of 13 and 16. One of the main reasons of Child Focus' heightened attention for this link, was the rise since end of 2014 in cases of prostitution of teenage girls by so-called "loverboys." Loverboys are basically to be seen as "teen pimps" who use emotional and factual dependency as a way of forcing underage girls to go work in prostitution for them. These girls that are already in a vulnerable position, mostly due to problematic socio-economic contexts, are lured by these criminals and will quite easily do anything to impress, get the attention, or just be in the presence of their pimps. Repeated running away from home or from the institution they often reside in, is one of the key characteristics in these cases, making the link between repeated running away and prostitution of minors all the more relevant as a subject that deserves our highest attention.



Sofia Mahjoub has a degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Criminology. Since she started working as a researcher and policy officer at Child Focus, the Belgian Foundation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children, in 2004, the disappearance of children has been her main focal point. She analyses the phenomenon within the framework of the hotline for missing children. Child Focus being the turntable of information exchange and cooperation in cases of missing children, she actively works on the efficient and effective collaboration between all actors around the child.

Session 6: Identification and Recovery of Bodies

Body Recovery from Water Study – A Study of Human Body Movement in Inland Waterways

Lorna Dennison-Wilkins (Sussex Police, UK)

Abstract: Missing person behaviour datasets and other literature highlight that a significant proportion of long-term missing people are found dead in water. Despite this there is little research to assist search operatives and investigators in establishing how human bodies move in water with a view to locating them more expeditiously. The Body Recovery from Water Study, which began in 2007, involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data relating to deceased human bodies found in inland water. The study aims to identify factors that might affect body movement and subsequent location and to establish if these variables could effectively inform and determine search parameters and increase the chances of successful search operations and associated investigations. This would give earlier resolution in missing person cases, reduce the risk to search operatives, and ensure timely evidence gathering. The information may also facilitate preventative measures to reduce the number of drowning incidents. Data on the case circumstances and variables continue to be collected through a purpose-built questionnaire. The current sample consists of 275 cases (men n=233 and women n=42) in inland waterways provided by 5 different organisation types from 5 countries. This presentation will cover the initial findings of the study and will discuss the ways in which these can enhance knowledge of body movement in inland waterways and inform current search strategies.



Lorna Dennison-Wilkins: After achieving a BSc (Hons) in criminology Lorna joined Sussex Police in 1998 and has worked in operational policing for all of her career, she is

currently a police sergeant. For the past 10 years Lorna has been a police search advisor specialising in planning, and conducting search operations for vulnerable missing people, crime and counter terrorism and has had considerable experience in search and recovery operations in hazardous areas. Lorna is conducting post graduate research at the University of Dundee.

Forensic Oceanography – Predicting the Trajectory of Human Corpses in the Marine Environment

Jon Rees (CEFAS, UK)

Abstract: Whilst in the majority of the marine incidents, the lost individuals will be recovered quickly by the Coastguard and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), in 2015 the RNLI alone recovered 168 corpses. Once active Search and Rescue activities have been stood down, the responsibility for the recovery of the corpse passes to the Police authorities. Cefas (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquatic Science), an executive agency of Defra provides operational advice to the Marine Management Organisation, Food Standard Agency and Defra during Oil and Chemical spills around the UK. Numerical oceanographic models are used to predict the transport and fate of oil and contaminants during these emergencies. These models can also be used to predict the trajectory of corpses during missing person cases where entry points and times are known or can be estimated. These high resolution numerical models incorporating tide and wind processes can be used to forecast potential stranding locations up to three days in advance. This enables the Police authorities to maximise the use of search resources and enables closure for the family. The numerical models can also be run in reverse and thus can be used in “backtrack” mode to predict likely entry points for unidentified corpses found washed ashore. As well as corpses, the models can be used to track narcotics, lost containers and other items of interest. A number of anonymous case examples will be presented describing some of the benefits and limitations of the approach.



Jon Rees: After degrees at Warwick, Southampton and UEA, Jon joined Cefas as an Oceanographer. He is involved in a wide range of research programmes in the UK and worldwide on the transport and fate of sediments, contaminants and oil/chemicals in emergencies. He provides advice on marine policy at UK and international level (MSFD). Jon uses a blend of operational observations and models to deliver guidance to a wide range of customers.

Underwater Decomposition and Forensic Entomology: Application to Missing Person Investigations

Helen Ody, Paul Smith and Katherine Brown (University of Portsmouth, UK)

Abstract: Occasionally, and sadly, the search for a missing person culminates in the discovery of a body often in various states of decomposition. The use of entomological evidence in these situations can be crucial in ascertaining the minimum post-mortem interval (mPMI; time since death) and can provide vital links to other corroborating evidence. Investigation of insect succession on human remains can help to provide an estimate of mPMI. Insect succession on land is well studied, however although decomposition of human remains in water is known to differ from that on land, little research has been conducted into how these differences extend to forensic entomology. In addition, personal observation by forensic entomologists and police personnel suggests that forensic entomology is being underused in an investigative context. This study aims to provide data on insect succession in aquatic habitats in Portsmouth and make recommendations for collection and storage of entomological evidence from aquatic death scenes. Alongside this, data will be gathered from professionals on current practices and awareness of forensic entomology. The results will be used to provide targeted information where gaps in awareness exist. Field studies are being conducted in which piglet carcasses are being allowed to decompose on land, in fresh water and in sea water. Species colonisation patterns for each habitat will be discussed. As part of the investigation into missing persons, the use of insects can provide vital supporting information to narrow down searches, corroborate and support other evidence sources, and provide additional intelligence to inform investigators.



Helen Ody is a PhD student with the University of Portsmouth's Institute of Criminal Justice Studies. Her research compares decomposition and insect succession in different environments, aiding with minimum post-mortem interval estimation and providing links to corroborating evidence where the search for a missing person has culminated in the discovery of a body. Her previous qualifications include a BSc (Hons) and an MRes, both in forensic science from the University of Derby.

Exploring predictive factors in the distance of bodies and body parts to the last known location of a missing person

Zara Fuhl (National Crime Agency, UK)

Abstract: A topic which has been explored and studied extensively is the distance in which a missing person travels. With the use of past cases, specific categories in which the missing individual fits has been devised to locate individuals more quickly by calculating the average distance the individual is likely to travel. Categories include gender, age, learning difficulties and mental health problems. However, an area which has not been explored in distance is unidentified bodies and body parts. To fill this gap, the current research will aim to explore predicting factors in the distance between the body and body part found location and the last seen location. Resources such as the UK Missing Person's Bureau database Hermes, and closed cases from police forces of unidentified bodies and body parts, found and identified between 2008 and 2016, will be used for the current research. The difference in distance between identified bodies and body parts will be compared, as well as; male and females, the type of remains found, whether the body or body part is suspicious, if it was found in water or on land, as well as comparing different age groups. Based on previous research of missing adults, it is predicted that males will have travelled a further distance than females from the last seen location to where the individual was found.



Zara Fuhl is currently undertaking her placement year at the National Crime Agency as part of her undergraduate degree at Bournemouth University, where she is studying psychology. As a research assistant at the Missing Persons Bureau, Zara supports and builds upon the Bureau's intelligence on missing person cases. This ranges from conducting open source searches to conducting her own research and evaluating others research. Once Zara has completed her degree, she hopes to specialise in forensic psychology.

Session 7: Responses to Young People at Risk

Partnership in Action: Keeping Children Safer

Gillian Scott (Police Scotland, UK) and Liz Lafferty (South Lanarkshire Council, UK)

Abstract: A

Zara Fuhl is

Returning Home: A Bespoke Response to Young Runaways in Tayside

Alison Watson (Shelter Scotland, UK) and Mike Whitford (Police Scotland, UK)

Abstract: A



Alison Watson has worked in social care for over 25 years. As Deputy Director with Shelter Scotland, she has led the development of the organisation's services across Scotland over the last 13 years, including the launch of a national Helpline and digital advice provision and the creation of innovative services working with groups such as runaways, offenders and gypsy travellers. Prior to joining Shelter Scotland, Alison worked in the mental health field, where she played a leading role in the development of several innovative services, as well as making a major contribution to pioneering the involvement of service users in the design, delivery and management of services.



Mike Whitford is a Chief Inspector and the tactical lead for Tayside Division in respect to missing persons. He has worked in a wide variety of roles during his 23 years in the police service, including CID, Intelligence, Critical Incident Command and Local Area Command. In all of his command roles his focus has been the development of partnerships; developing more collective and sustainable approaches to mitigate risk to the public and protect the vulnerable. This approach is central to the approach taken to missing persons in Tayside Division, in recognition that no one service or third sector agency can effectively deal with such a challenging aspect of public protection in isolation.

Child Protection Mechanisms as a Prevention and Response Tool for Missing Children

Harold Burrows (National Search and Rescue Dog Association, UK) and Manos Kosmas (The Smile of the Child, Greece)

Abstract: The goal of the proposed session which will be organized and coordinated by “The Smile of the Child”, member of the European Federation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children- Missing Children Europe (MCE), and by the “National Search and Rescue Dog Association”-NSARDA, is the exchange of expertise and good practices among the speakers, who will present the work of their Organizations in cases of missing children, and the audience. The Smile is the only officially responsible Organization in Greece for missing children, through the European Hotline for Missing Children 116 000, which operates on a 24/7 basis, 356 days/year and calls are free of charge. The Smile with its long lasting experience has developed a concrete mechanism in order to prevent or response to disappearances. The mechanism concerns both all internal procedures as well as the collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. The Smile consciously embeds itself in the existing societal patchwork of initiatives and endeavors already undertaken by authorities at all levels and does not use its manpower and equipment to compete or substitute the efforts made by them. Cooperation is extremely important for the Organization since it leads to added value in terms of both capacity and impact. The Smile is in a constant effort to sustain and expand the high quality of services provided by the European Hotline for Missing Children 116 000 and also to enhance a structured, integrated and holistic approach while responding to cases of missing children via the collaboration with competent authorities. In order to achieve the aforementioned, the Organization participates in projects and other initiatives, which foresee, among others, the provision of training and capacity building of government official (police officers, coast guard etc). A proof of the successful outcomes of this effort it that in the framework of the EU-funded project “Minimizing violence through quality control: Monitoring &Evaluating 116000 Hotlines to prevent, support and protect missing children”, the Hotline was thoroughly evaluated among nearly twenty other 116 000 hotlines in other European countries and was accredited with the maximum score of 100% on the service quality criteria laid down in the accreditation process. The Smile also operates the Amber Alert Hellas, which is the National Coordinating Programme of timely and accurate notification of citizens on cases of missing /abducted minors. The Smile has set up, with the valuable contribution of volunteers, the «Thanasis Makris» Search and Rescue Team for missing children. The aim of the team is the research in urban or non-urban environment to identify children who have gone missing. Key members of the Missing Children Search and Rescue Team «Thanasis Makris» are the Canine Teams participating. The Canine Teams (handler and dog) are the only ones in Greece certified by NSARDA. The “National Search and Rescue Dog Association” (NSARDA) is an umbrella Organization representing Search Dog Associations in the UK, Isle of Man and Eire. NSARDA holds the standards by which search dogs are trained and qualified. The contribution of NSARDA is very valuable for every Organization with a rescue team. Their work underlines the importance of training of professionals and mostly the importance of setting minimum standards at the local, national, European and international level.



Manos Kosmas coordinates the Emergency Response Coordination Center of The Smile of the Child. He holds a BEng in Mechanical Engineering from University of Wales, Cardiff and a Post-graduate Diploma in Renewable Energy Technology Systems from Loughborough University(CREST). He is a BLS/AED instructor in ERC and he has successfully completed the national cognitive and skills examinations in accordance with standards of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians for Pre-hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS). He has more than 8 years experience in search and rescue (SAR) and more specifically in the use of dogs in wilderness tracking, natural disasters and in locating missing people.



Harold Burrows joined his first Mountain Rescue team, The Llandudno and District MRT in September 1966. In 1986 he joined the Search and Rescue Dog Association Wales (SARDA Wales) and he trained his first search dog Kim, his second call-out was for the Lockerbie incident 1988, where he spent four days. He was the Chairman of SARDA Wales from 1990 to 2005. He is the Chairman of NSARDA from 1994 to date. He is an active member of North East Wales Search and Rescue (NEWSAR) team from 1999 to date and the Chairman of NEWSAR from 2009 to date. He is a founding member of the Animal Behaviour & Training Council and he became the secretary in 2011 to date. As Chairman of SARDA Wales 1990 he attended as an external assessor in all nine associations of the UK and Ireland. He also introduced to SARDA Wales the training system for search dogs, to improve the number of dogs and handlers reaching the high standard needed.

As chairman of NSARDA, he has developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lowland Search Dogs, and with the Lowland Search and Rescue (LSAR) to develop a standard for search dog teams working with LSAR.

Session 8: Missing with Dementia

When People with Dementia who Wander-Walk Go Missing: What Can We Learn from Other Countries?

Jan Dewing (Queen Margaret University, UK)

Abstract: Wandering has been discussed in healthcare for forty years now (Snyder et al. 1978). Historically within the dementia field, it was conceived of and researched as a problem behaviour. The focus was therefore on trying to stop it or at least manage it. The first line option was medication. Families and carers were advised to keep the person with dementia in the house and of course accompany them at all times. We now know that wander-walking is mostly a positive activity for persons with dementia, bringing several beneficial outcomes related to health and social wellbeing (Dewing 2006). Our increased awareness of personhood and human rights for persons with dementia demands we find other approaches to responding to both wander-walking and its consequences. Given dementia is a social disability issue, the promotion and support of safer wander-walking is something we need to address in our communities and care system. However, there are clearly risks associated with some of the unwanted consequences of wander-walking; chief of which is when the person becomes significantly 'lost'. The costs associated with a missing person with dementia are multi-faceted and can affect many others around the person with dementia. This paper will draw on the international evidence base to see what we can learn about persons with dementia who go missing. It will consider key characteristics from missing incidents, including antecedents and differences between those found alive or dead. It will also consider evidence on patterns of wander-walking to see if there is any connection to missing incidents.

Dewing, J. (2006) Wandering into the future: reconceptualizing wandering 'a natural and good thing', *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 1, 4, 239–49.

Snyder, L.H., Rupperecht, P., Pyrek, J., Brekhus, S., et al. (1978) Wandering, *The Gerontologist*, 18, 3, 272–80.



Professor Jan Dewing has an international reputation for expertise in person-centred care, practice development and gerontological practice including care of people living with dementia. Jan is the academic editor for *The International Development Journal*, a free to publish and access e journal and on the editorial board of several journals including *The International Journal of Older People Nursing*. Jan contributes to postgraduate education and research and is supervising a number of doctoral students including international students. She also holds a professorship at the Centre for Care Research Bergen University College and Stord-Haugesund University College Norway and at The School of Nursing, Wollongong University, NSW Australia.

Protecting Vulnerable Persons and Reducing Demand using Assistive Technology

Abigail Salter (Hertfordshire Constabulary, UK) and Karen Shalev-Greene (Portsmouth University, UK)

Abstract: Walking about outdoors and exercising is an important part of living well with dementia (Bantry White & Montgomery, 2015). However, one clinical consequence of living with dementia is an inability to recognise familiar places or find a familiar location (Rowe & Bennett, 2003). Therefore, people living with dementia are at risk of becoming lost even in familiar environments (Rowe & Bennett, 2003). Thus, they are more likely to go missing than people of similar age who do not live with dementia. Despite their elevated risk, the majority of people with dementia who go missing are found safe and well. However, when people with dementia go missing they are exposed to particular risks, such as dehydration, injuries such as bruising and abrasions, orthopaedic and soft tissue injuries, hypothermia, hyperthermia and death (Ali et al., 2015; Aud, 2004; Rowe et al., 2004). Thus, it is most important that an intensive search gets quickly underway, before people with dementia succumb to death by exposure. A solution to this issue is the somewhat 'controversial' use of assistive technologies, commonly using GPS. It is a solution that intends to promote safe and independent walking. The user carries an electronic device, allowing a formal or informal carer to track him/her remotely should they go missing (Schaathun et al., 2014). While the application of technology to facilitate independent living is not new, its use by police forces across the UK is growing, with a particular interest in reducing missing person episodes as well as the time it takes to recover the missing person and bring them back to safety. The Police Innovation Fund was opened to Police forces in September 2015 and

supported by their Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to bid for money in relation to 'Preventing Crime', 'Transforming Policing' and 'Protecting Vulnerable People'. Hertfordshire Constabulary, in collaboration with the Project's lead force West Yorkshire Police, were granted funding to work on a 'Proof of concept' project running for 12 months, within financial year 2016/17. The bid for Police Innovation Funding was to prove a concept that GPS Safer Walking Devices would:

- Promote greater freedom and empowerment for those adults living with Dementia, by helping people remain independent for longer and help families and carers monitor the person they care for.
- Be a 'safeguard'/risk management tool which would reduce the risk of a person living with dementia from being 'lost' or being found quicker, putting them less at risk from danger.
- Reduce demand on Police resources by reducing calls into the Police and/or shortening the amount of time and resources spent on locating missing people living with dementia.



For Hertfordshire Police, the Project was led by Detective Sergeant Abigail Salter, and the data was evaluated by Dr Karen Shalev-Green. Anonymised data for evaluation of the project was provided by West Yorkshire and Hertfordshire police forces and analysed using descriptive analysis as well as inferential statistics in order to identify patterns and trends. Several case studies were used as examples. The evaluation made conclusions as to whether the pilot met its goals and recommendations regarding best use of the new model in the future.

Abigail Salter is a Detective Sergeant within the Safeguarding Command in Hertfordshire Police. She served in the Metropolitan Police 2001-2012 and then took a career break to live in Australia (2012-2015) where she completed a MSc in Risk, Crisis and Disaster Management and worked as the Subject Co-ordinator for Investigations on the Associate Degree in Policing Practice Program at the New South Wales Police Academy.



Karen Shalev-Green is a senior lecturer at the Institute for Criminal Justice Studies, at the University of Portsmouth. She is the founder and Director of the Centre for the Study of Missing Persons. Her research focuses on Missing Persons and she collaborates with law enforcement agencies, NGO's and other academics in the field from the UK and abroad. She is the lead editor of the book 'Missing Persons: A Handbook of Research'.

Session 9: Conceptual and Narrative Explanations of Missing

Being a 'Missing Person': A Concept Analysis

Claire Taylor, Penny Woolnough & Geoff Dickens (Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: The term 'missing person' appears in a range of contexts associated with law enforcement (including investigation), health care, social work, and academic research. The Association of Chief Police Officers, for example, define a 'missing person' as "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another" (ACPO 2005/2013). However, there is a general lack of clarity regarding the concept 'missing person', particularly in the context of adult behaviour. This presentation will discuss the results of a Concept Analysis, which explores how the term 'missing person' is used in professional discourse in an attempt to aid clarity and provide a more universal understanding. The results of this analysis will be discussed with particular attention being paid to the attributes of both missing people and missing behaviour.



Claire Taylor is a PhD researcher at Abertay University in Dundee, where she is currently working with Dr Penny Woolnough and Professor Geoff Dickens to investigate behavioural consistencies in repeat missing adults. The research is now in its second year and previously won the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and Police Scotland Postgraduate Award in 2016. Prior to this, Claire attended Strathclyde University in Glasgow where she achieved a first class honours degree in Psychology and an MSc in Psychological Research Methods. She also has extensive experience working with vulnerable adults having previously supported those with mental health issues, addictions and learning disabilities.

An Endless Narrative: Missing persons and the cultural space between life and death

Ori Katz (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel)

Abstract: This presentation discusses the case of missing persons in Israel, to show how narratives of missingness are constructed by the people who were left-behind. The field of missing persons in Israel is

characterized by high ambiguity, uncertainty and absence of cultural scripts. Thus, other than the ritual of reporting to the police, there is no cultural guidance for the people who were left-behind, and the construction process of their narratives occurs through relations and negotiations. My claim is that the social category of missingness and its' narrative construction undercuts modern dichotomies and assumptions. The missing persons are placed in a constant flux between life and death: They are both in a liminal state, meaning neither here nor there, and in a hybrid state, meaning both here and there. The social category of missingness sheds also new meaning on body and temporality: a non-dichotomous meaning of the body and a non-linear meaning of time. The missing persons are not a body anymore, though have a potential to become one. The speculations over the past shape both the present and the future and create back and forth scenarios. Time may 'kill' the missing persons or bring them back to life, as a result of cultural negotiations. Thus, an endless narrative must be constructed. The presentation is based on a narrative ethnography, in which I took part in various events such as physical searches and meetings, in addition to in-depth interviews with families of the missing, police officers and other relevant actors.



Ori Katz is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. His current research deals with (non-military) missing persons in Israel, to reveal how narratives of missingness are constructed, in conditions of ambiguity and uncertainty. This research continues his interests in the cultural space between life and death. His graduate research examined post-mortem fertilization using frozen sperm in Israel.

Harm and Missing Persons: Challenges to and Opportunities for the Measurement of Harm: a Literature Review

Joe Apps (National Crime Agency, UK)

Abstract: The purpose of the literature review is to provide an understanding of harm from a conceptual viewpoint; to understand ways in which harm may be measured; to link harm to the missing persons' phenomenon; and, to propose a model or method by which harm in missing may be measured. The review responds to Edkins' (2011) call to do more to recognise missing people by offering a new kind of recognition through a consideration of the individual and collective harm involved in being missing. The review is not a systematic review. When viewed in its social, political and policing context missing is seen as harmful for the missing person, their family and friends as well as for communities and wider society. Temporal and spatial features of missing are seen to exacerbate harm. Harm can be considered also in terms of failures of policing (reputation harm) through inadequate policy and harmful or flawed operational practice. Missing can also be caused by socially harmful activities either promoted by the state or through the omissions of the state: failures to tackle poverty, alcohol and drug abuse; to address mental ill-health adequately; to ensure education for all children; to promote full employment and so on. The social harms identified can be directionally ambiguous as results of missing and as causes of missing. Foregrounded are the aspects of invisibility surrounding missing harm and building on work of Sparrow (2008) and Davies et al. (2014) the review expresses its hidden nature, particularly represented by emotional difficulties and long term mental challenges (Wayland et al., 2016 and Lenferink et al., 2017). The measurement or valuation of harm in the varied settings of drugs, road collisions, alcohol and domestic abuse is explored alongside existing methods of assessment in missing. Current approaches are shown to be insubstantial at best and it is concluded that no single method has the potential to encompass all the harms in missing and a multi-method approach is the most promising way forward. The review contributes to the literature from a multi-disciplinary perspective in the emerging field of law enforcement and public health (LEPH) as missing persons represent a ubiquitous challenge for health and criminal justice internationally (Sowerby and Thomas, 2016). Framing missing as harm puts forward a potentially powerful political narrative and the review exposes a broad range of problems in government health and police policy as well as operational practice. In building on this review, my research study aims to provide a new and appealing approach to measuring both individual and collective harm and expand the politics of missing harm with the law enforcement and public health field.



Joe Apps MBE has extensive knowledge of missing persons' investigations and the missing phenomenon. He is studying for a professional doctorate at the University of Dundee researching 'missing harm'. Joe leads the UK Missing Persons Bureau, part of the National Crime Agency, and is responsible for the operational lead of behalf of government, co-ordinating extensive partnership groups including national policing leads, ministers and government officials, law enforcement and NGOs along with key international partners.

Session 10: Approaches to Protecting Vulnerable People

NHS and Police: A National Partnership Agreement

Inspector Suzanne Smith (Police Scotland, UK) and Val Johnson (NHS Scotland, UK)

Safeguarding on Transport

Jane Thompson (Railway Children, UK) and Eleanor Page (British Transport Police, UK)

Abstract: In 2015/16 British Transport Police submitted over 1000 reports to their Central Safeguarding Hub about children who were missing from home or care. At this session, Railway Children and British Transport Police will highlight aspects of their innovative new partnership to deliver the Safeguarding on Transport programme, which aims to:

- Promote the importance of safeguarding within the transport industry.
- Help staff within the transport industry to understand the role they can play in keeping vulnerable children and adults safe.
- Provide support in selected locations for children identified as using rail networks and/or frequenting transport hubs when missing.

British Transport Police will outline the mapping activity that has happened to date, and discuss some of the data gathered at the ten rail stations that report the highest numbers of missing children. Railway Children will showcase the materials being used to train transport staff, giving participants a chance to try out some of the exercises used, and share their experience of the benefits and challenges of engaging non-specialist staff in developing effective safety networks. The overall aim of the session is to generate discussion on ways of taking safeguarding messages into new arenas and reflect on the learning that can emerge from doing so.



Jane Thompson is the UK Research and Policy Manager at Railway Children, an international charity that works with children at risk on the streets. She has over 20 years' experience in the voluntary sector in operational management, policy and research roles. In recent years, she has focused on policy and practice responses to children who run away, go missing or are forced out.



Eleanor Page, Safeguarding Analyst, British Transport Police, graduated from Durham University in 2008 with a master's degree in mathematics and spent the early part of her career working as an actuary in the life insurance industry. In January 2016, Eleanor decided to change careers to enable her to make a contribution to the protection of vulnerable people. This led her to her current role as a safeguarding analyst for the British Transport Police.

Day Three - 16 June 2017

Session 11: Behavioural and Investigative Approaches

Missing Behaviour: The Development of a Missing Interest and Proclivity Scale

Claire Taylor, Penny Woolnough & Geoff Dickens (Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: The term proclivity refers to an individual's inclination or predisposition towards a certain behaviour. In the forensic context of firesetting, researchers have developed a Fire Proclivity Scale (Gannon and Barrowcliffe, 2012) which has been used to differentiate between those who had purposely set fires and those who had not based on their fascination with fire, behaviour propensity and fire arousal. Such scales have the potential to inform risk assessment and the development of new preventative strategies. In a similar manner, it remains possible that proclivity for intentional missing episodes may be measurable. Given, 38% of all police recorded missing person incidents relate to individuals who have previously been reported missing, the ability to identify those who are at risk of missing behaviour has obvious preventative benefits. With this in mind, the results of a study to develop and assess a variety of missing behaviour scales, including proclivity tests will be presented.



Claire Taylor is a PhD researcher at Abertay University in Dundee, where she is currently working with Dr Penny Woolnough and Professor Geoff Dickens to investigate behavioural consistencies in repeat missing adults. The research is now in its second year and previously won the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and Police Scotland Postgraduate Award in 2016. Prior to this, Claire attended Strathclyde University in Glasgow where she achieved a first class honours degree in Psychology and an MSc in Psychological Research Methods. She also has extensive experience working with vulnerable adults having previously supported those with mental health issues, addictions and learning disabilities.

Missing Adults' and Childrens' Behaviours: Exploration of the Narrative Action System Model

Daniel Hunt, Maria Ioannou and Laura Hammond (University of Huddersfield, UK)

Abstract: The United Kingdom has one of the highest international rates for missing persons reported with almost 250,000 reports made per year. Utilising an inferential framework, the research sought to differentiate missing children and adults in relation to potential motives, distances, time, locations, criminal behaviour and mental health that previous research has regularly focused on independently. The study employed a non-experimental, mixed methods design that applied qualitative content analysis and quantitative multi-dimensional scaling procedures. Fifty archival police reports of missing adults ($n = 18$) and children ($n = 32$) were analysed to generate ninety action variables relating to behaviours before, during and after the missing period. Data were then subjected to a non-metric multidimensional scaling procedure in the form of Smallest Space Analysis (SSA). Four distinct behavioural themes were identified from spatial representations for missing child and adult samples: Pushaway's Conservative Tragedy, Throwaway's Expressive Quest, Runaway's Adaptive Adventure, and Fallaway's Integrative Irony. An additional stringent criterion demonstrated that 67% of missing adults and 72% of missing children could be characterised within one dominant behavioural theme. Moreover, missing children were found to adopt narratives with high levels of agency whereas missing adults were found to adopt narratives with high levels of intimacy. Additional analysis identified further associations between behavioural themes with locations visited, length of time missing, distance travelled, criminal behaviours and mental health. Theoretical implications of the findings and practical applications regarding police decision-making are discussed for a greater understanding of the missing experience.



Daniel Hunt a Doctoral researcher with the International Research Centre for Investigative Psychology at the University of Huddersfield. His current research focus is on the effects of personality with missing and non-missing persons. The presented research paper was part of the MSc Investigative Psychology thesis for which he graduated with a Distinction. Prior to this, Daniel completed the BSc Psychology receiving first class honours.

Examining the Efficacy of a Self-Administered Report Form in Missing Persons Investigations

Donata Andriuskeviciute (Goldsmiths, University of London, UK), **Fiona Gabbert** (Goldsmiths, University of London, UK), **Alessandra Caso** (Goldsmiths, University of London, UK), **Joe Apps** (National Crime Agency, UK) and **Penny Woolnough** (Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: The success of missing person investigations often centres around the quality of information obtained in the early stages. Reliable information can not only inform the search, but might also become vital evidence if the case broadens into a criminal investigation relating to a sexual offence, abduction, or even murder. In addition to eliciting high quality information, police officers must consider those close to the missing person are going through a very difficult and stressful time. What can be done to meet these needs? Recent developments in investigative interviewing have demonstrated the benefits of a 'Self-Administered Interview', that we propose might be an ideal interview tool for use in a missing person investigation. The aim was to develop and test a self-administered form designed to obtain reliable information that would meaningfully inform a missing person investigation. The form has been designed to be left with the individual/s who reported the missing person. It features retrieval support to facilitate the retrieval and reporting of information deemed relevant for the investigation. To test the efficacy of the form, 60 participants were tested in pairs, but immediately separated into different rooms and instructed to imagine that the person they came with has gone missing. Participants completed either the Self-Administered Missing Persons Interview Protocol, or a self-administered control interview. The study also examined people's willingness to share potentially sensitive information about the missing person. The amount, accuracy,



specificity, and investigatory value of information as well as willingness to share sensitive information were all examined and will be presented.

Donata Andriuskeviciute is an MSc Forensic Psychology student at Goldsmiths University of London and is supervised by Professor Fiona Gabbert. Her dissertation focuses on the development and testing of a self-administered form designed to obtain reliable information that would meaningfully inform a missing person investigation. The overall aim of her research is to elicit high quality information from, as well as to meet the needs of, people close to the missing person.



Fiona Gabbert is a Professor of Applied Psychology at Goldsmiths University of London, and is Director of the Forensic Psychology Unit. She has an international reputation for her research in the fields of suggestibility of memory and evidence based investigative interviewing. She has developed innovative ways to improve the usability, credibility, and reliability of evidence from eyewitnesses, that have had an important impact on police operational procedure and policy in the UK and internationally.

Forensic Interviews with Child Victims of Trafficking: Understanding the Challenges

Stephanie Bennett and Becky Milne (University of Portsmouth, UK)

Abstract: Human trafficking (HT) is a significant problem across Europe, with the UK currently considered high on the priority list as a destination country for victims. Research exploring forensic interview practices with child victims of human trafficking specifically has not yet been a particular focus for academic research. Child victims of HT often present with a unique set of characteristics that need to be appropriately managed in an interview situation, which requires appropriately trained and experienced staff. Experienced Police interviewers (N=10) completed an extended survey which served as an exploratory study scoping their understanding of the difficulties and issues that can arise when interviewing child HT victims. The overarching theme emerging from both the literature and this exploratory research study is the need for more time in child HT interviews. Certain features and dynamics of child HT forensic interviews are considered to be unique to child HT interviews; 1) difficulties with establishing rapport due to the child feeling fearful of adults/ authority figures and their uncertain situation; 2) questioning is more challenging and requires interviewers to have an in-depth understanding of the experiences the child may have gone through and finally; 3) language and communication difficulties are a significant barrier to rapport development, with the use of an interpreter adding an additional layer of complexity to the interview. Due to the small sample size in this exploratory study, further research is clearly needed. It is suggested that future research should include in-depth focus groups with the interviewers themselves.



Stephanie Bennet is a Chartered Psychologist and currently works at the University of Portsmouth as a Learner Development Tutor specialising in quantitative research methodology and statistical analysis. She is also an Associate Lecturer in Psychology for the Open University. As well as an MSc and PhD in Psychology, Stephanie has just completed an MSc in Crime Science Investigation and Intelligence, with a research focus exploring the challenges in forensic interviews with child trafficking victims.

Session 12: Community Responses to Missing

Citizen-Led Forensics: Searching for Disappeared Persons in Mexico

Arely Cruz-Santiago (Durham University, UK)

Abstract: This paper analyses disappearances in Mexico through an ethnographic engagement with the forensic practices that families of disappeared persons have developed since the so called 'war on drugs' began in 2006. As Parr et al. (2016) argue, families' search/ing strategies are a response to authorities' inability to conduct effective searches for missing people. This is the case in Mexico, where citizen-led forensic practices are developed in a scenario in which approximately 27,000 people have disappeared. To explore these citizen searches, is to explore how grass-root knowledge making practices are transforming the way in which forensic science is performed, disputed and gradually stabilised in the country. My research looks closely into families' everyday life and experience of search and their relation with forensic materialities,

instantiated by the technologies they use such as GPS, data tracking, and, more recently, clandestine mass grave location. The analysis of how relatives of the disappeared engage with forensic materiality, renders a variety of possibilities for understanding 'search assemblages' and the political possibilities that citizen forensic knowledges bring to a scenario plagued by uncertainty, lack of rule of law and corruption. In short, this paper opens up the multiple versions of citizen-led forensics and its implications for our understanding of the geographies of absence.



Arely is a PhD Candidate in Human Geography at Durham University. She completed an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice at Durham University in 2013. During 2014 – 2015, she was the Co-Investigator on the ESRC-funded project 'Citizen-led forensics: DNA & data-banking as technologies of disruption'. She has extensive fieldwork experience in Mexico and Colombia, analysing forensic practices. Her publications include: (2016) 'Pure Corpses, Dangerous Citizens: transgressing the boundaries between mourners and experts in the search for the disappeared in Mexico'. *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 83(2): 483 – 510, and (2016) Forensic Civism: Articulating Science, DNA and kinship in Mexico and Colombia. *Journal Human Remains and Violence*. 2(1):58-74 (both with Schwartz-Marin, E.)

'Without Them': An Activist Opportunity for changing the way Israel deals with Missing Persons

Shuki Minivitzki and Galit Itzhaki Shimshon (Bil'adeihem, Israel)

Abstract: Daniel, the son of the Minivitzki family, has been missing since October 2014. This presentation describes the family's struggle to improve the way Israel deals with missing persons and their families. In contrast to the cultural, financial and technological resources devoted in Israel to locating missing soldiers, only limited resources are available to the search for missing civilians, with little official organizational support and public awareness. Therefore, each family faces the mission of searching and rebuilding their lives individually and without support. The Minivitzki Family's story reflects how 'frozen grief', to use Boss' term, may turn into activism for changing public policy and raising public awareness. The seeds of the struggle emerged from the realization that the problem of missing persons is not just a personal problem, but a national issue. Consequently, a voluntary association named 'Bil'adeihem' (without them) was established, bringing together the families of missing persons. The association appealed to the Israeli parliament which then undertook to conduct research about missing persons. This research sheds new light on the malfunction of the state institutions. To date, 529 people in Israel are considered to be missing persons. But while 923 unidentified bodies were found since 2001, most of them were buried without any genetic samples having been taken. Thus, while much has been done by the association, its main target is to establish a national authority, to deal with missing persons' cases at all levels and stages. To do so, a sustained struggle of the families should be waged.



Shuki Minivitzki is the chairman of "Bil'adeihem" (i.e. "Without Them"), a voluntary association which established in December 2015, a year after his son, Daniel, has gone missing. His aim is to support the families of the missing and to change the state's list of priorities with respect to missing persons. It is the first voluntary association in this field in Israel.



Galit Itzhaki Shimshon is a criminal profiler and Jungian psychotherapist. She is the profiler of the voluntary association "Bil'adeihem" ("Without them"), which aims to support the families of the missing and to change the state's list of priorities with respect to missing persons. Among other activities, she supports the preventing suicide department in the health ministry in Israel and leads programs of youth at risk. Her fields of interests include typologies and profiles of missing persons.

Missing but Assumed Dead: Public Participation and the Complexity of Mourning Practices

Maggie Sweeney (University of the West of Scotland, UK)

Abstract: Writing in 2006, Erika Doss argued that "contemporary mourning practices are visibly public and participatory" (p.306). As noted by a number of scholars, this movement towards a more participatory culture following sudden and traumatic deaths is a routine trait of civil society and the contemporary mediated public sphere (Eyre, 2007; Santino, 2004). Such practices are most often manifested in the form of spontaneous shrines at the sites of human tragedy, with the placing and adornment of everyday artefacts

such as ribbons, toys and floral tributes being a commonplace feature. In that respect, such “performative commemorations” are “no longer emergent” categories sitting on the fringes of the hegemonic sphere of mourning. Rather, their universal appeal suggests that they have now entered the realms of the “legitimate public sphere” (Doss, 2002). However, whilst the enactment of such practices, and the visibility of particular symbols, have “clearly become a contemporary mourning ritual or tradition associated with untimely death,” their application and adoption also extends outwards to include the missing and the assumed dead. With reference to the disappearance of Madeleine McCann (2007) and April Jones (2012), this paper will examine the complexities that arise when publics are ‘invited’ to mourn those who are missing but assumed dead. Robert Pogue Harrison (2003) reminds us that a central tenet of Western civilisation is that we have an “obligation to the corpse.” However, it is apparent that the normative symbolic practices associated with our ‘obligation’ become infinitely more problematic and complex when there is no corpse to mourn.



Maggie Sweeney is a lecturer within the department of Media, Culture and Society at the University of the West of Scotland. In 2016, she was awarded her PhD from the University of Glasgow, the title of her thesis being- ‘The Missing and the Murdered: Crime Narratives in the Mediated Public Sphere’. The central focus of her research interests is concerned with examining the media’s coverage of missing and murdered children and the complexity associated with contemporary mourning practices in relation to their unexpected disappearance and death.

Session 13: Social Media and Publicity: Benefits and Challenges

Police use of Social Media in Missing Person Investigations

Joseph Hamilton and Penny Woolnough (Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: Academic research in the area of policing seldom focusses on the applications of social media, despite the growing impact of online platforms. This study intended to contribute to this vacancy in the academic community, analysing Police Scotland’s use of social media (mainly Facebook) both generally and within the context of missing person investigations. It also sought to explore the nature of decision making which leads to online publishing behaviour, and consider the restraints of police culture which leads to cautious, restrictive social media usage. Over the course of 3 months (June 1st - Aug 31st), 14 Police Scotland Facebook pages were monitored - one social media page per Police Scotland division (13) and also a national page with a more diverse target audience. Key quantitative data from the corresponding 3 months of missing person reports, generated by one division of Police Scotland, were also collected. In addition, across Scotland, three individual interviews and two group interviews were undertaken, encompassing a range of roles and social media contact (n= 8). According to the Facebook data gathered, males were typically older (mean = 40 years) than females (mean = 35 years), with posts involving the latter generating more engagement (an average of 196 shares, compared to 143 for males), which may be influenced by factors such as perceptions of gender vulnerability. The interviews demonstrated that prior to any potential social media posting, the investigation team will carefully consider the ramifications of using an online platform in order to ensure the missing person’s safety and privacy are suitably maintained. Topics identified included issues with IT systems, access and budgeting restraints, intelligence monitoring and the public contention with repeat missing persons.



Joseph Hamilton is a final year student at Abertay University studying BSc (Hons) Forensic Psychobiology. During the summer of 2016 he was awarded a scholarship from the Carnegie Trust to carry out a study investigating Police Scotland’s use of social media in relation to missing person’s cases. His primary research interests surround the field of neuroscience and he is currently working with the Scottish Dementia Working Group charity which is based in Dundee. This autumn, Joseph will attend University College London where he has been accepted onto the MSc Neuroscience programme.

Impact of Publicity on Missing Children Cases

Karen Shalev-Greene (Portsmouth University, UK), **Mette Drivsholm** (Missing Children Europe, UK), **Delphine Moralis** (Missing Children Europe, UK) and **Penny Woolnough** (Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: In the EU alone, 250,000 children are reported missing each year and a common practice in the search for missing children is the use of publicity appeals through a variety of channels, including websites, social media, TV, Radio interviews and national child alerts. This presentation will discuss findings from a



study involving 19 hotlines that support missing children and their families across the EU. The study examined the decision making process involved with launching a publicity appeal, running a publicity appeal, the effectiveness of a publicity appeal and the impact of a publicity appeal on the children and their families.

Karen Shalev-Greene is a senior lecturer at the Institute for Criminal Justice Studies, at the University of Portsmouth. She is the founder and Director of the Centre for the Study of Missing Persons. Her research focuses on Missing Persons and she collaborates with law enforcement agencies, NGO's and other academics in the field from the UK and abroad. She is the lead editor of the book 'Missing Persons: A Handbook of Research'.

A Missing Person's Perspective on Social Media

Esther Beadle (Returned missing adult, UK)

Abstract: We are able to carry all of our contacts in our pocket. We can share information across the world with the tap of a screen. We are in a position to update people with our whereabouts, or what we had for lunch, at the touch of a button. From a very personal perspective, using my own missing story, I aim to highlight both the good and bad social media brings to the missing experience. In the 41 hours I was gone, there were thousands of retweets and Facebook shares of appeals for information. My missing episode reached the websites of various national news outlets, including Mail Online, the Telegraph, The Mirror and The Metro, among others. From troublesome Whatsapp read receipts, to the ease of making appeals, to resulting Press coverage. Even complete strangers were in a position to message me, tweet me, demanding to know where I was. Social media and smart phone technology introduces very new and difficult aspects to the missing experience. How does one escape, when technology keeps track of your every move? How does one filter out the noise and clamour of social media appeals in order to hear the very real and worried voices of loved ones? How can be that news of one person's missing experience can reach thousands of people in the space of a few hours? And what is the lasting impact on the person at the centre of it - the missing person themselves.



Esther Beadle: formerly assistant news editor on the Oxford Mail, I went missing for 41 hours at the end of January 2016. Social media appeals from friends and family brought the episode to the attention of the national media. Having now been diagnosed with a mental illness, I work as a communications advisor for a large NHS trust in North East England. I hope to raise awareness of both mental ill health and the lasting effect of missing episodes on returned missing adults.

Session 14: Responding to Returned Missing People

What Missing People and their Families tell us about their Return

Hester Parr (University of Glasgow, UK)

Abstract: In August 2016 a joint briefing paper from Missing People Charity and University of Glasgow was launched calling for action on returned missing people, citing research evidence as to why responding to return was necessary and urgent. This presentation outlines and elaborates this call and presents evidence from a recent ESRC research project, and national workshops on 'Returned Missing' to explore why and how different professionals might respond to the complex event of returning from a missing episode. Using narrative, audio and film the presentation will privilege the voices of missing people and their families.



Hester Parr is Professor of Human Geography at the University of Glasgow and has published over 90 peer reviewed articles and books on 'geographies of mental health'. Her recent work has been on missing people and she has served on Scottish Government Working Groups concerning the 'Framework for Missing People in Scotland' and the 'Return Interviews Working Group' in the last few years. She works closely with the Missing People charity and police partners in England and Scotland.

Adult Return Home Interviews by Telephone

Becca Padbury and Shane Hemsley (Missing People, UK)

Abstract: Missing People will be holding this session on adult return home interviews following the completion of their pilot with South Wales Police in June 2017. This session will focus on the project set-up, internal processes and project outcomes with a view to highlight best practice evaluated by the project so far. The voice of the adult will also be heard via case studies and we will explore recommendations for future adult return services to ensure that every adult who returns from being missing is offered a return interview to assess what help they need, and support them to access that help.



Becca Padbury joined Missing People in 2014 and currently leads on the development of key partnerships with police, statutory and the voluntary sector across the UK. Becca also leads on a number of projects which contribute to safeguarding children and adults, supporting families left behind and growing the charity's capacity to be a lifeline when someone disappears. Most recently, Becca has led the project management of an adult return home interview pilot with South Wales Police, a texting service for suicidal missing adults in partnership with The Samaritans and has managed the development of the charity's first commissioned training for professionals.



Shane Hemsley has worked at the charity Missing People for six years. He spent four and a half years in the Services team delivering the charity's 24/7 helpline, offering help, advice and support to young runaways, missing people and their families, before taking up the role as Senior Aftercare Coordinator. The Aftercare service is being piloted across Wales for three years until 2017 and offers guidance and support for anyone who is struggling with reconnection after a missing incident. Shane has recently been part of the team delivering return home interviews for adults which are the first to be offered by Missing People.

Safe and Well? Managing the Return of Repeatedly Missing People in England & Wales

Michael Harris and Karen Shalev-Greene (Portsmouth University, UK)

Abstract: The presentation will examine the return process for people who are reported missing repeatedly (e.g. 3 times or more). A 'Safe & Well Check' is usually carried out by a police officer to prove the missing person has returned and are not in immediate harm. A Return Home Interview (RHI) must then take place with a child within 72 hours, but no statutory responsibility exists for adults. This more in depth interview seeks to find out where people went and why, in order to identify potential risks to their safety and whether they experienced harm while they were missing. The frequency of this interview, who does it, the content, and subsequent sharing varies within Police forces and from force to force. The presentation will discuss findings from this unique study that used a mixed methods survey of nearly 2,000 Constables and 25 Third Sector workers from England and Wales, and ran in January 2016, using quantitative and open qualitative questions. Early key themes that emerged were frustration at repetition of missing cases, Police negativity around usefulness of RHI's, a challenge to involve third sector partners, and development areas in training. Third



Sector interviewers also reported challenges in meeting legislation timescales around young people. The presentation will also explore recommendations about best practice for the return process, advocating a more consistent, multi-agency approach to improve interventions.

Karen Shalev-Greene is a senior lecturer at the Institute for Criminal Justice Studies, at the University of Portsmouth. She is the founder and Director of the Centre for the Study of Missing Persons. Her research focuses on Missing Persons and she collaborates with law enforcement agencies, NGO's and other academics in the field from the UK and abroad. She is the lead editor of the book 'Missing Persons: A Handbook of Research'.

Session 15: Technological Solutions

The Quest for Adventure in the Safe Society: Is the free hire of 'Personal Locator Beacons' in the Blue Mountains National Park, Australia compensating for less preparation and self-sufficiency of the bush walker?

Abigail Salter (Hertfordshire Constabulary, UK)

Abstract: The unique and extensive remoteness of the Blue Mountains National Park, Australia makes the task of search and rescue one of which needs to be carefully managed. In 2006, the death of a bush walker

in the Blue Mountains National Park was investigated by the Coroner after several concerns regarding the failings of emergency rescue responders. This investigation influenced Benbro Electronics Technical Director, John Bennett OAM to donate 20 personal locator beacons to lend to bushwalkers free of charge in the Blue Mountains. The Personal Locator Beacons are monitored by the COSPAS-SARSAT satellite system, worldwide and when activated, identifies the unit and its exact latitude and longitude, meaning that the Police Search and Rescue Squad can then respond quicker to a rescue. The concept of a more accessible, 'convenient' rescue however, raises concerns around the shift of a visitor's perceptual system in regards to risk. This concept was explored, using a theoretical framework of 'risk compensation' by investigating if a lack of preparation and over reliance on others exists in those who borrow a free Personal Locator Beacon. Also, if there is any evidence of Beacon activations in circumstances where better self - preparation would have prevented a rescue. A literature review highlighted positive and negative aspects of technology use in the wilderness, with the main emphasis on the concern that there is increased risk-taking behavior and an over-estimation of the availability of rescue assistance. A mixed methods approach sought to provide a triangulated analysis of visitor perceptions around Personal Locator Beacons and the amount of visitor reliance on them, coupled with the amount of skill, experience and equipment possessed for a bush walk in the Blue Mountains National Park. It was concluded that there is evidence of risk compensation in that people with less skill are accessing areas that only the skilled were once able to do. This raises concerns that the lack of engagement with one's environment can contribute to a lack of visitor autonomy, self-sufficiency and a sense of self-responsibility. In turn, these factors may contribute to changes in visitor

behavior and use patterns including increased risk-taking behavior. Recommendations include an increase of isomorphic learning amongst the Police Search and Rescue Squad, leading to an increase of educational awareness programs around hazards in the Blue Mountains National Park.



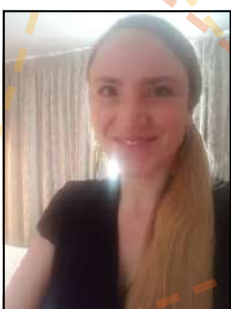
Abigail Salter is a Detective Sergeant within the Safeguarding Command in Hertfordshire Police. She served in the Metropolitan Police 2001-2012 and then took a career break to live in Australia (2012-2015) where she completed a MSc in Risk, Crisis and Disaster Management and worked as the Subject Coordinator for Investigations on the Associate Degree in Policing Practice Program at the New South Wales Police Academy.

'Proof of Feasibility' Studies to Develop an Interactive Geo-Spatial Decision Support System for Police Forces (CASPER)

Susan Giles (University of Liverpool, UK), **Ian Jarman** (Liverpool John Moores University, UK), **Denis Reily** (Liverpool John Moores University, UK), **Terrence Etchells** (Liverpool John Moores University, UK), **Lauren Walters** (University of Liverpool, UK), **John Bayly** (Liverpool John Moores University, UK), **Andrew Smith** (Liverpool John Moores University, UK) and **Freya O'Brien** (Liverpool John Moores University, UK)

Abstract: Missing person enquiries place a considerable demand on police resources. The College of Policing (2015) estimates in 2011/2012, over 3 million 'investigative hours' were invested in automatically generated tasks for medium risk incidents alone. In reality, these figures are much higher and further demand is generated by repeat missing episodes. Through our previous research, we have developed the concept of the CASPER system (Computer Assisted Search Prioritization and Environmental Response), which is a GIS-based Decision Support System to assist Police Forces. Once developed, the CASPER system will combine geo-spatial data together with primary research and repeat missing data to assist officers in planning and decision-making processes. Our primary research provides robust clusters of missing people that are linked to a risk 'dash board', providing nomothetic trends and odds ratios that can inform risk assessment and subsequent allocation of resources. CASPER's strengths lie in the richness of the data and the degree of interaction and information that could be provided through the map application to enable 'what-if' search scenarios and support risk based decisions. The purpose of this session is to demonstrate development of the CASPER software to date, including software development, findings from our primary research and

design focus groups with participating police forces. The aim of the focus groups was to ensure that CASPER is effectively designed for end users, by end users. These focus groups revealed that different end users (e.g. Response, Public Protection, Missing from Home Coordinators, POLSAs, PCs and DIs) have different remits and subsequently, different requirements from the CASPER system.



Susan Giles is a Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Liverpool, where she teaches on the MSc Investigative and Forensic Psychology. She was recently funded by West Midlands Police to undertake a process evaluation of LOCATE, Birmingham's dedicated



missing person police unit. She is the principle investigator for the CASPER project and was awarded funding by HEFCE's Police Knowledge Fund to undertake further 'proof of feasibility' studies with colleagues in Computer Science and Mathematics at Liverpool John Moores University.

John Bayly recently completed an MSc in Cyber Security at LJMU. His MSc dissertation developed a software tool that uses SMS communications and GIS data to track and locate vulnerable and persistent runaway children. This led to a PhD scholarship to continue similar study. John is currently 1 year into his PhD and joined the CASPER team as a research assistant in Computer Science.

Session 15: Technological Solutions

The Investigative Journey from Missing to Murder

Tony Osborne (National Crime Agency, UK)

Abstract: In the majority of missing person cases initial enquiries identify the reason(s) why the person has gone missing and whether it is suspicious or not. However, there are more complex cases where the reason cannot be established and there is no trace of the missing person. It is these cases that often put the police under the media spotlight and can have serious implications for resources and finances. This presentation will highlight some aspects of missing person investigations where it can, and sometimes does, go wrong.



Using the CATCHEM methodology it will demonstrate a systematic approach to reviewing and ascertaining the most likely reason for going missing and identifying information gaps.

Tony Osborne is the National Missing Persons Advisor (Crime) working with the Major Crime Investigative Support team of the NCA. His main role is to support UK police forces investigating suspicious and complex missing person cases. He is also the custodian of the CATCHEM database, a database of child homicide and missing children where criminality is suspected. He retired from Derbyshire Police in 2009 after serving 30 years, the majority of which was in support of major crime.

Risky Business? A Study Exploring the Relationship between Harm and Risk Indicators in Missing Adult Incidents

Naomi Eales (National Crime Agency, UK)

Abstract: This Professional Doctoral thesis has both an academic and an operational focus to explore risk assessment as it applies to missing adults in police investigations. The thesis examines risk in terms of its philosophy, decision making and assessment to inform how this may apply to vulnerable missing adult cases. The study critically reviews historic and current risk assessment practices for missing adults to highlight some of the key issues in order that this may inform future procedures. The study analysed a sample of 1712 resolved missing adult cases obtained from forces that use Compact to manage their missing person investigations. A number of demographic and vulnerability indicators were established and tested, alone and in combination, against a newly created harm framework. This study is the first of its kind to provide an in depth statistical exploration of both non-fatal and fatal harms outcomes in cases of vulnerable missing adults. Analysis of the demographic indicators enabled the creation of a conceptual model for risk assessment.



This and other significant findings of the thesis will be presented at this conference along with a number of recommendations for both police and the research community.

Naomi Eales has worked at the NCA UK Missing Persons Bureau for nine years. She has recently submitted a Professional Doctorate thesis through the University of Portsmouth. She is also responsible for the creation of iFIND, a search tool to assist police search advisers locate missing persons. During her time at the Bureau, she has also spent a semester at John Jay College, New York teaching comparative policing to undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Understanding and Managing Risk in the Context of Missing Persons

Charlie Hedges (Amber Alert Europe, UK)

Abstract: Making an assessment of risk in relation to a missing person is critical to determining the correct response. Much has been written on this subject, often concluding just how difficult it is and how badly

it is sometimes done. In the early 2000s, criteria were devised to enable a more accurate assessment of risk and this has been carried forward into several national guidance documents. There has never been any explanation of the criteria and what they might mean. The result is that decisions about risk are made on the basis of very little knowledge. Furthermore, no training is provided to ensure that officers have the required skills in this area. Failure to correctly understand the risk relating to a missing person is likely to mean that the investigation is not given the appropriate response and urgency. In any investigation, the initial assessment and perception of its seriousness influences the way that it is dealt with and can lead to serious errors being made. This is something that has concerned Charlie Hedges for some time and he has now published a document commissioned by AMBER Alert Europe, 'Understanding and managing risk in the context of missing persons', which forms the basis for this presentation. Together, they have developed training modules to improve the understanding of this important subject. The presentation will also challenge the audience to recognise the flaws in what we have and consider improvements for the future.



Charlie Hedges has been a leading expert in missing persons for nearly 20 years, during which time he published two books on the subject and was the lead developer and author of ACPO Guidance from 2003 to 2010. Until 2015 he was the Manager for Missing and Abducted Children at CEOP, a directorate of the National Crime Agency. Since then he has pursued a consultancy role at Charlie Hedges Advisory and AMBER Alert Europe, advising and training nationally and internationally.

Closing Remarks



Joe Apps MBE (UK Missing Persons Bureau, National Crime Agency)

Joe Apps MBE has extensive knowledge of missing persons' investigations and the missing phenomenon. He is studying for a professional doctorate at the University of Dundee researching 'missing harm'. Joe leads the UK Missing Persons Bureau, part of the National Crime Agency, and is responsible for the operational lead of behalf of government, co-ordinating extensive partnership groups including national policing leads, ministers and government officials, law enforcement and NGOs along with key international partners.

Posters

Deaths of missing persons following police contact in 2015/16

Emma Tilley (Independent Police Complaints Commission, UK)

Abstract: In 2015/16, of the 92 fatalities that followed contact with the police regarding a concern for welfare, 32 were about a report of a missing person. For 25 of these missing people, they were also identified as having a self-harm or potential suicide risk. The deaths happened across a diverse range of circumstances and the police contact may not have been directly with the deceased, but with a third party. This poster analyses the 32 cases which occurred in 2015/16 and reflects on the facts of the cases to draw together thinking surrounding deaths of missing persons following police contact.



Emma Tilley is studying for an MSc in Crime Science, Investigation and Intelligence at University of Portsmouth. This distance-learning academic endeavour compliments her current role as a Trainee Investigator at the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). Emma's interest in missing persons has developed since working on several investigations relating to missing persons at the IPCC. At this conference, Emma presents her research into deaths of missing persons following police contact in 2015/16. Emma Tilley will be available at the conference to speak about her poster on Thursday 15 June 2017.

Acceptance, Tolerance of Uncertainty and Experiences of Psychological Distress among Family and Friends of Missing Persons: A Report of Preliminary Findings

Cecilia Hammell, Frank Deane and Amy Chan (University of Wollongong, Australia)

Abstract: Despite thousands of people going missing each year there is little research examining the psychological wellbeing impacts of those left behind. This study seeks to explore acceptance (vs. avoidance) of experiencing painful thoughts and feelings, tolerance of uncertainty, and counterfactual thinking (reflecting

on “what might have been”) as cognitive approaches to processing the experience of missingness, as well as the role these approaches play in experiences of psychological distress. Family and friends of missing persons (n=74 to date) are recruited largely from Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom via online social media platforms and through several community services within Australia (e.g., the Salvation Army Family Tracing Services). Participants complete an online survey comprised of several standardised measures including the Acceptance and Avoidance Questionnaire (AAQ-II) and the Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale (IUS), along with measures of psychological distress, post-traumatic stress (PTSD) symptoms and prolonged grief (PG). Preliminary results indicate that combined, experiential avoidance (EA), intolerance of uncertainty (IU) and counterfactual thinking (CFT) predict level of psychological distress, PTSD symptoms and PG. Alone, EA, IU and CFT predict psychological distress; however, only IU and CFT predict PTSD symptoms. CFT and EA appear to be significant predictors of PG. These findings indicate experiential avoidance (i.e., lower acceptance), intolerance of uncertainty, and counterfactual thinking to be associated with greater distress among this population. This research may have important implications for healthcare professionals, counsellors and other support service providers with whom family and friends of missing persons are likely to come in contact with.



Cecilia Hammell completed a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology BPsyc (Hons) in 2014 at the University of Wollongong (UOW) Australia. Since then, findings from her honours research project have been successfully published in a peer-reviewed journal. Cecilia is currently completing a PhD in clinical psychology (at UOW) under the supervision of Prof Frank Deane and Dr Amy Chan, which seeks to explore the psychological impact of having a missing loved one.

Repeat Missing Adults: Incidences and Characteristics

Claire Taylor, Geoff Dickens & Penny Woolnough (Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: Approximately 38% of all police recorded missing person incidents involve an individual who has previously gone missing. Whilst some attention has been applied to repeat runaway behavior in young people and absconding from mental health settings, no published research to date has specifically looked at repeat missing adults, particularly with regards to the incidences and characteristics of such behaviour. In order to advance our understanding of why such individuals go missing repeatedly, their vulnerabilities and experiences whilst missing, and to provide critical insights for multi-agency prevention and future safeguarding strategies, this poster presentation will highlight the findings of a study which is directly investigating repeat missing behaviour in adults for the first time. The number of missing adults across three Police Scotland divisions will be presented and the results of a comparison between single and repeat missing adults will be shared in an attempt to identify if any behavioural consistencies exist.



Claire Taylor is a PhD researcher at Abertay University in Dundee, where she is currently working with Dr Penny Woolnough and Professor Geoff Dickens to investigate behavioural consistencies in repeat missing adults. The research is now in its second year and previously won the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and Police Scotland Postgraduate Award in 2016. Prior to this, Claire attended Strathclyde University in Glasgow where she achieved a first class honours degree in Psychology and an MSc in Psychological Research Methods. She also has extensive experience working with vulnerable adults having previously supported those with mental health issues, addictions and learning disabilities.

Looked After and Accommodated Children: Evaluating the Implementation of a National Partnership Agreement in Dundee

Richard Grieve (Police Scotland and Dundee University, UK)

Abstract: Almost 40,000 missing person incidents are reported to Police Scotland each year and Looked After and Accommodated Children make up around 12,000 of these incidents. The ‘Looked After Children Who Go Missing From Residential and Foster Care in Scotland’ National Partnership Agreement was first implemented across 3 pilot areas in December 2015. The primary aim of this Fellowship will be to evaluate the National Partnership Agreement in its implementation in Dundee local authority against a framework of competencies. Particular focus will be given to the impact around the implementation of the ‘absent’ category. It is planned that Police data will be utilised along with surveys of professionals and young people. One to one interviews will also be undertaken to further explore themes revealed in the surveys. It is expected that the evaluation

will assist in identifying good practice and provide a supporting evidence base to utilise when considering the possibility of a wider roll out of the agreement. The application of this can contribute to improved safeguarding and outcomes for Looked After and Accommodated Children who are some of the most frequent and vulnerable missing persons.

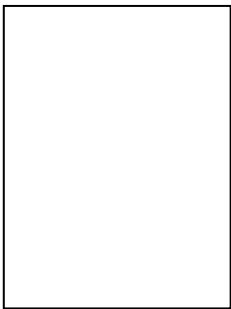


Detective Constable Richard Grieve joined Tayside Police in 2010. Between 2010 and 2014 he served in a variety of operational policing roles within Angus. In 2014 he served as the staff officer at the Divisional Headquarters. In Jan 2016 he was appointed as Tayside's first Missing Persons Operational Coordinator. DC Grieve has been involved in innovative national partnership agreements, focusing on safeguarding Looked After and Accommodated Children and NHS patients who go missing. DC Grieve has also worked extensively with the third sector and assisted in the creation of pioneering partnership agreements with local and national organisations around supporting missing persons. DC Grieve has also played a leading role in many complex and high profile missing person investigations and has utilised pioneering scientific techniques as well as commissioning university students to undertake archival research.

Adults who go Missing from Care Settings in Scotland

Cameron Tait (Police Scotland and Abertay University, UK)

Abstract: Almost



Cameron Tait joined





