



### **D28 The Concept of the Forensic Landscape: Recognition of Patterns of Evidence in Mass Death Scenarios**

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Attendees will learn the concept of forensic landscape—the recovery and recognition of evidence across an environment in space and time. This presentation will impact the forensic community by increasing recognition that surviving evidence of crime and the linking of apparently discrete forensic scenes are possible in many circumstances using multidisciplinary analysis.

It may be perceived that sites such as plane crashes or mass graves are distinct entities containing the dead from mass disaster or human rights violations. This is not the case. These sites are usually the most obvious, intact, complex and culturally potent manifestations of a wider evidence of large scale death events.

These “main” sites are but one part of the surviving evidence of criminal events that cover a given area in space and time. Related sites and evidence other than that found in these epicenters of investigative focus are numerous and widespread. They are not always systematically looked for. The Forensic Landscape can be described collectively as all sites, evidence, and patterns of forensic relevance within the environment.

The Forensic Landscape is the surviving topography, alterations, deposits, artifacts, and materials left in the natural and cultural landscape within a given time frame, concerning and related to specific criminal events. The forensic landscape may be the area of a specific site, or a continuous landscape, represented by a continuous spread of evidence across the terrain, or a series of spatially separate sites linked by the same process of criminal activity.

This paper will consider what concepts from archaeology and crime scene investigation can be employed to maximize the recognition and recovery of important evidence from such landscapes, and how loss of evidence can be minimized, using multidisciplinary approaches.

**Forensic Archaeology, Crime Scene Investigation, Mass Death**