



## Odontology Section - 2015

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### G32 Adam Mayes: America's Most Wanted — A Lack of Wisdom?

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the problems that may be encountered in a dental identification involving the presence, or lack thereof, of third molars in various stages of development. This case will demonstrate cross-arch variations that may occur in the development of third molars within the same individual.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by explaining the premise that if a tooth is missing in antemortem dental records but is present in the postmortem dental records, this generally constitutes an exclusion in terms of dental identification.

In April 2012, Jo Ann Bain and her three daughters were reported missing from the rural town of Whiteville, TN. Although they were scheduled to move out of state the next day, an investigation by law enforcement officials led to the conclusion that the family may have been kidnapped by a family acquaintance, Adam Mayes. An Amber Alert was issued for the missing children. The nature of the case resulted in local, state, and federal authorities becoming involved. As the investigation continued, Mayes was placed on America's Ten Most Wanted Criminals list by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Adam Mayes became the Most Wanted Man in America after the bodies of Jo Ann Bain and one of her daughters were found buried in a shallow grave in Mississippi, while the remaining two children continued to go missing.

The partially decomposed remains of the mother and one daughter were transported to the West Tennessee Regional Forensic Center in Memphis, TN, for a complete autopsy and identification. While the dental identification of the mother was straightforward, identification of the daughter became problematic when three of the decedent's third molars were found to be present in the antemortem panoramic radiograph; however, postmortem radiographs revealed that all four third molars were present. The absence of a tooth in antemortem radiographs, which is subsequently found in postmortem records, is generally recognized as an unresolved discrepancy and routinely results in an exclusion in terms of a dental identification. In this particular case, two forensic odontologists independently reviewed the case and concluded that a positive identification could be made in spite of the discrepancy with the third molars. This presentation will discuss the problems associated with the identification as well as developmental discrepancies in third molars.

Mayes was eventually located in Mississippi by state authorities along with the two missing children. The case was adjudicated in 2013. As part of this presentation, the final resolution of this case will be provided, including the status of Adam Mayes, the missing children, and the accomplices involved in this case.

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#### Identification, Odontology, Exclusion