

Editorial

Archaeological and Environmental Forensic Science

I am honoured to welcome you to the first issue of *Archaeological and Environmental Forensic Science (AEFS)*! This journal provides a new and niche platform in which to read about international research in the use of archaeological and environmental or ecological evidence in forensic cases. These evidence types have been increasingly used in criminal, civil and humanitarian cases worldwide in recent years and its applicability is certainly growing.

The journal aims also to provide broader discussion and promotes the use of these disciplines primarily to law enforcement agencies. Contributions are welcomed from a wide range of subjects including taphonomy, post-mortem interval, search, antiquities, provenancing of objects, wildlife crime, ecotoxicology, mycology, palynology, entomology, botany, environmental scene sampling, geophysics, and excavation techniques.

In this exciting first issue, five papers introduce part of the scope of our journal. With an interest on international perspectives we have invited a number of scholars and thank them for their contribution. Fiona Brock and Gordon Cook provide an overview and recommendations on radiocarbon dating. More commonly, knowing the age of skeletal remains has recently relied on this method. This paper will be of interest to forensic anthropologists as well as forensic pathologists and police officers. The increasing number of taphonomy facilities or “body farms” and the opportunity they offer for research is also worth exploring. Aida Gutiérrez and colleagues provide us with information of their animal based taphonomy facility in Spain. As research increasing with animal remains or human cadavers around the world, publications in this field are, for example, particularly relevant for answering questions on post-mortem interval or the events leading to the deposition of the cadaver. Related to this question of time since death is entomology. The invited contribution from Amoret Whitaker teaches us about the effect of fire on minimum post-mortem interval as estimated from entomological evidence. Another environmental

evidence is limnology. In this particular case, algae and diatom analysis are explored by Kirstie Scott and colleagues and a thorough coverage is given as to their value and the techniques employed to analyse this environmental trace evidence. We could not forget archaeology and, although not strictly forensic, we have travelled to India and invited Jagminder Sehrawat and coauthors to highlight in a case study how the lack of contextual information, in particular as documented by archaeology, limits the amount of information that can be retrieved.

I am sure you will find these contributions interesting and helpful, whether you are an academic, forensic science practitioner, pathologist, lawyer or police officer.

Finally, whilst we celebrate and share this first issue, I open a call to other researchers to submit work on their fields of expertise. I am sure that with this journal encompassing the different disciplines into one and exploring the relationship between them, we can increase awareness on the utility of these evidence types to help society and solve criminal, civil and humanitarian cases.

Whilst we enjoy learning from this issue, I look forward to sharing our forthcoming Issue 2 with you!

Best wishes,

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