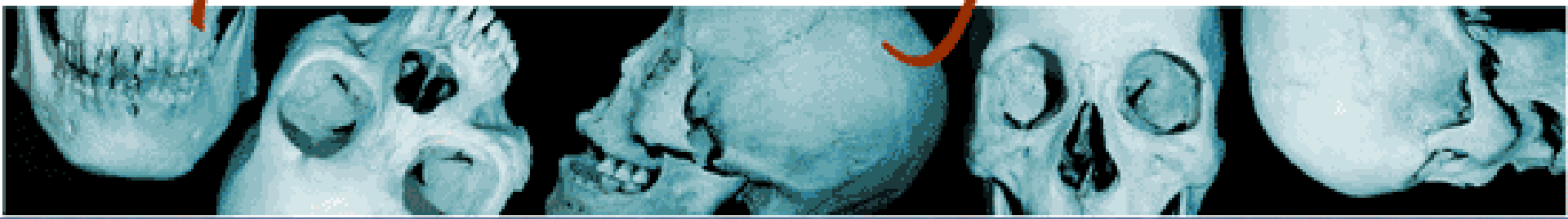


Forensic Archaeology: *field recovery methods*



The skeletal record in forensic archaeology

Can the dead bear witness to past events?
Just what can the dead tell us?

Change of views as far as the body is concerned

- Early medieval: body is not important – soul is to be saved at the cost of the body
 - Little distinction between man and beast in terms of body (Gerald of Wales c. AD 1146 – 1223)
 - Suicide punished by decapitation, buried in unconsecrated ground body violated in order for the soul to reside in forever punishment = belief – based in canonical law.



Bizarre medieval behaviours

Later medieval/early modern

- Modern period (1st 'autopsy') period of rationalism – body is of value. 1308 Chiara of Montefalco dissected to reveal her saintliness. Cremona in 1286 an autopsy was performed on a cadaver, a victim of the plague, in order to find the cause of death.
- By Renaissance body can bear witness

Today?

“ FOR THE DEAD
AND THE LIVING,
WE MUST BEAR
WITNESS. ”

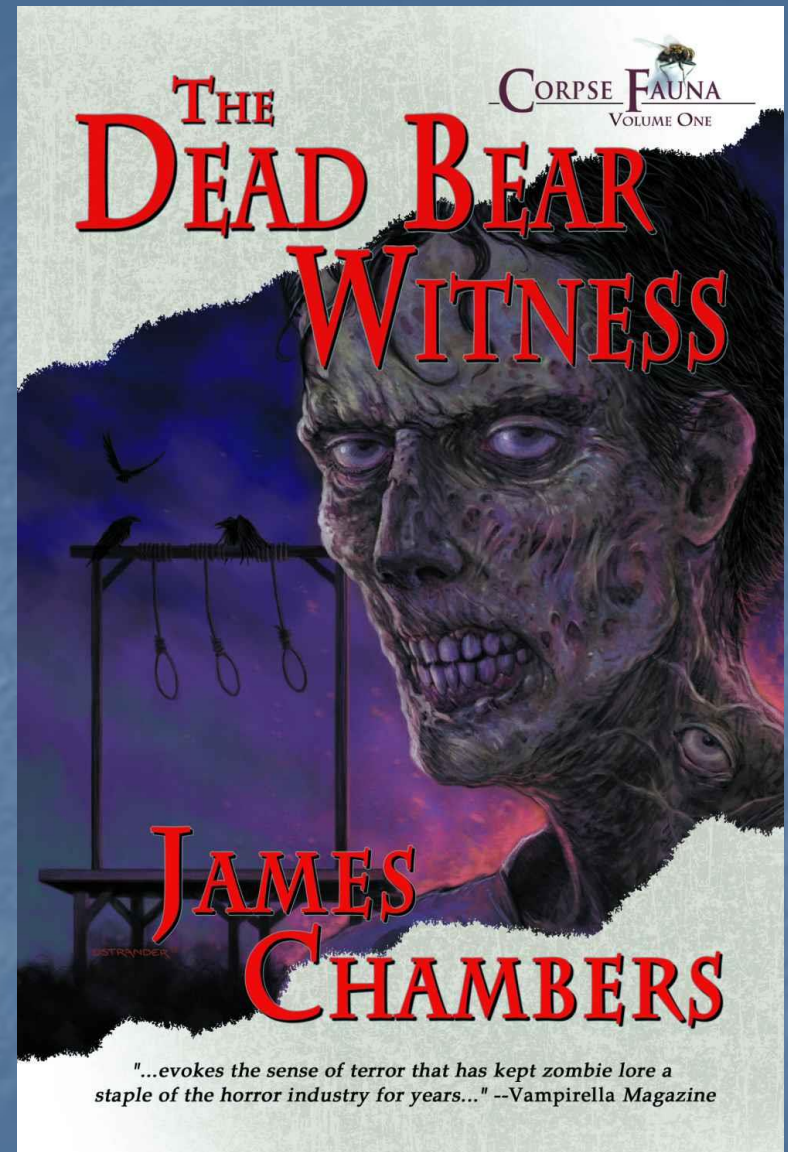
ELIE WIESEL

#NEVERFORGET

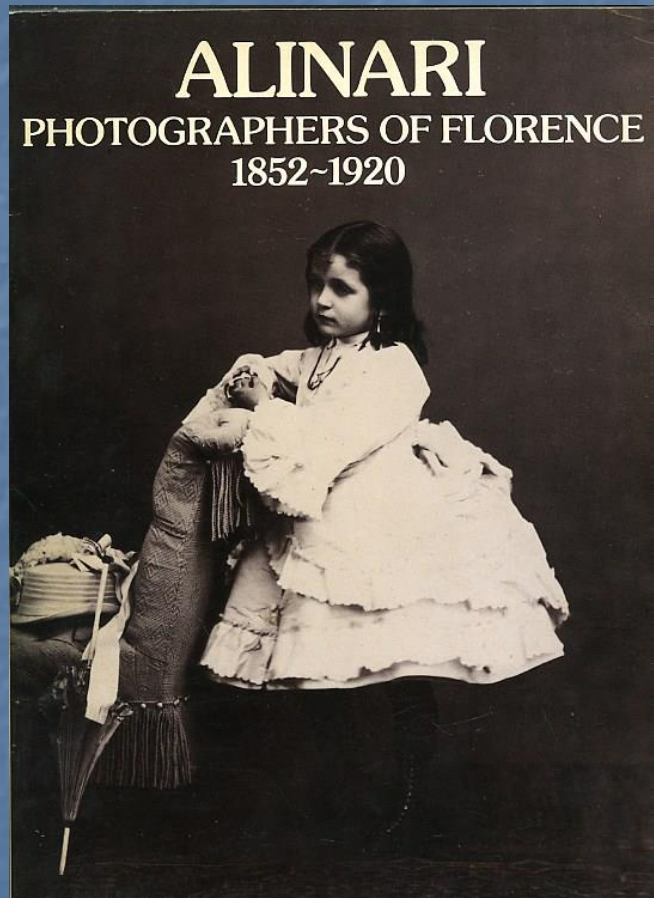
JEWISH TREATS

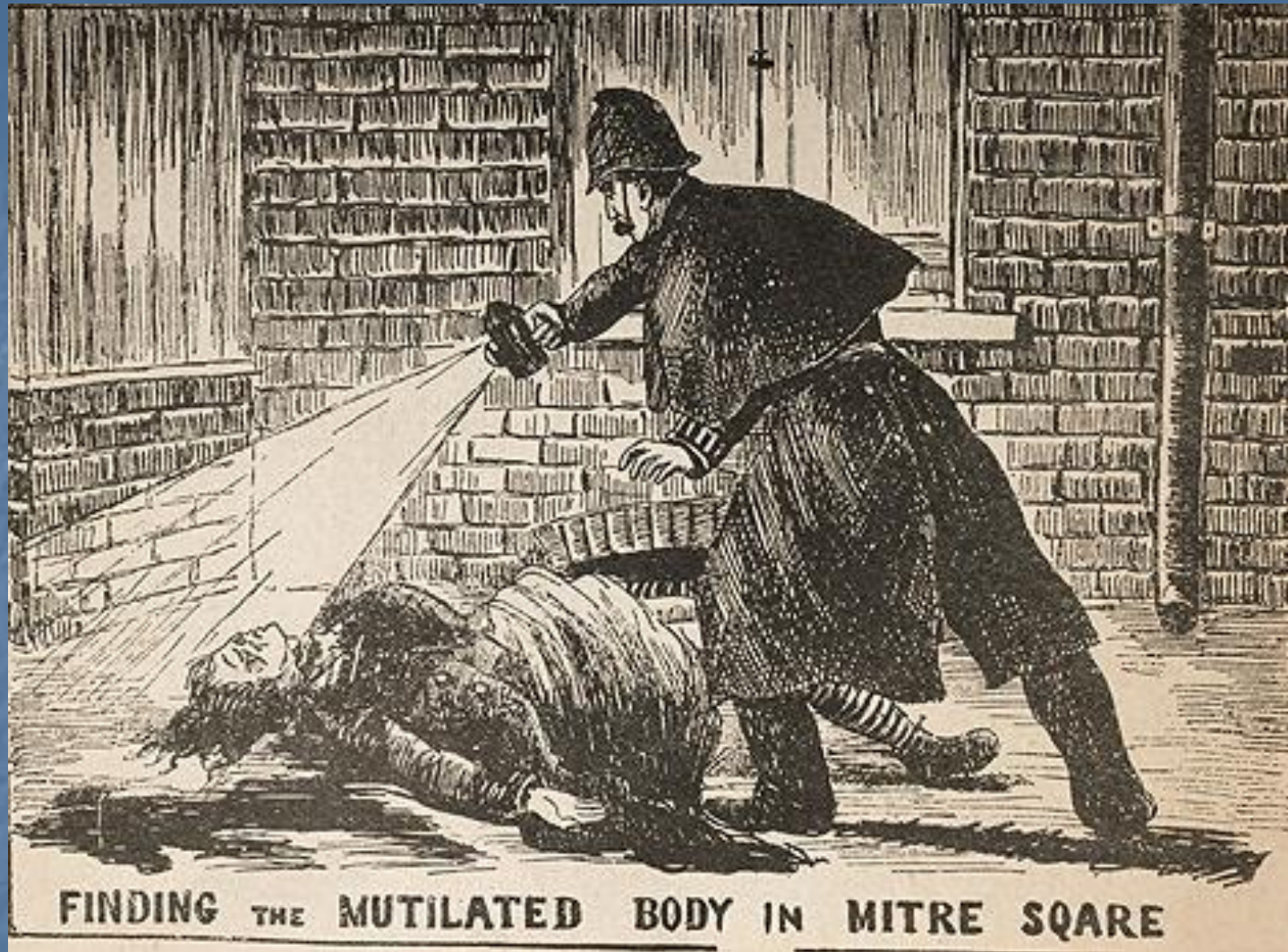
by NJOP

Elie Wiesel, 1989 Noble Peace Prize
winner, quote from his acceptance
speech

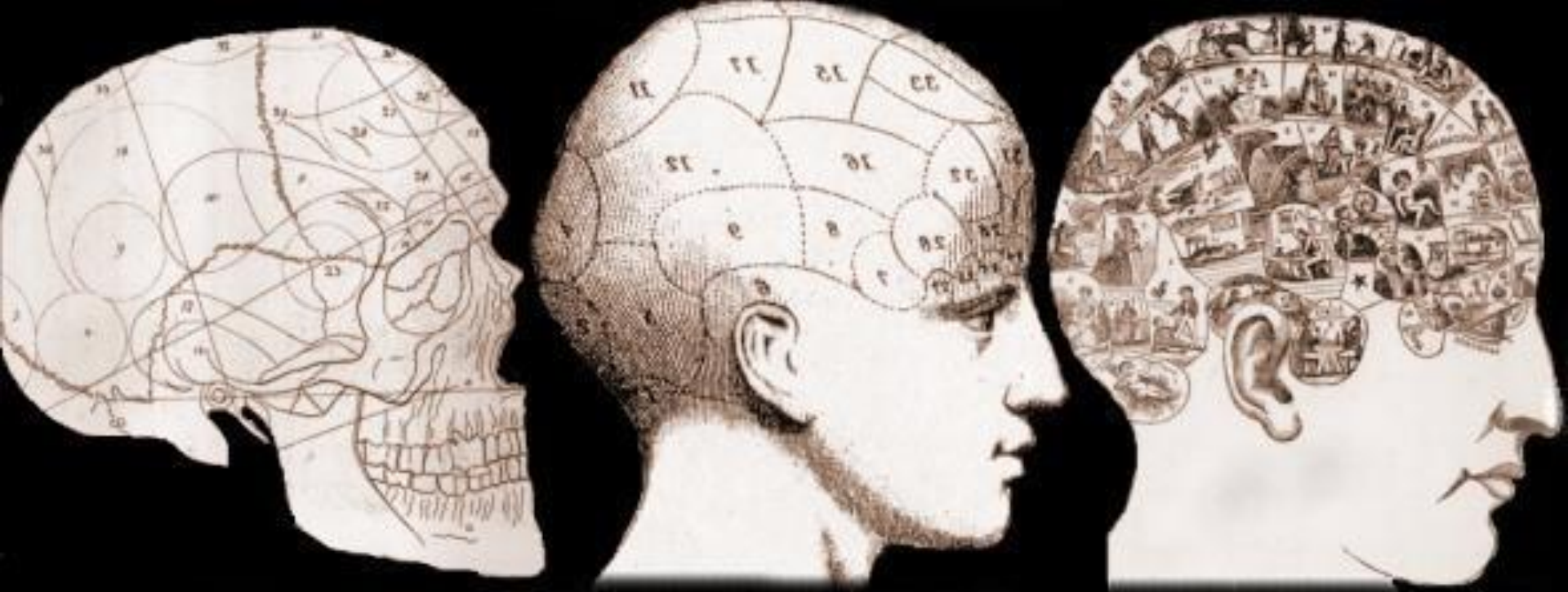


Fratelli Alinari (The brothers Alinari), the famous Italian photographers. Ca 1870, became first to capture this scientifically





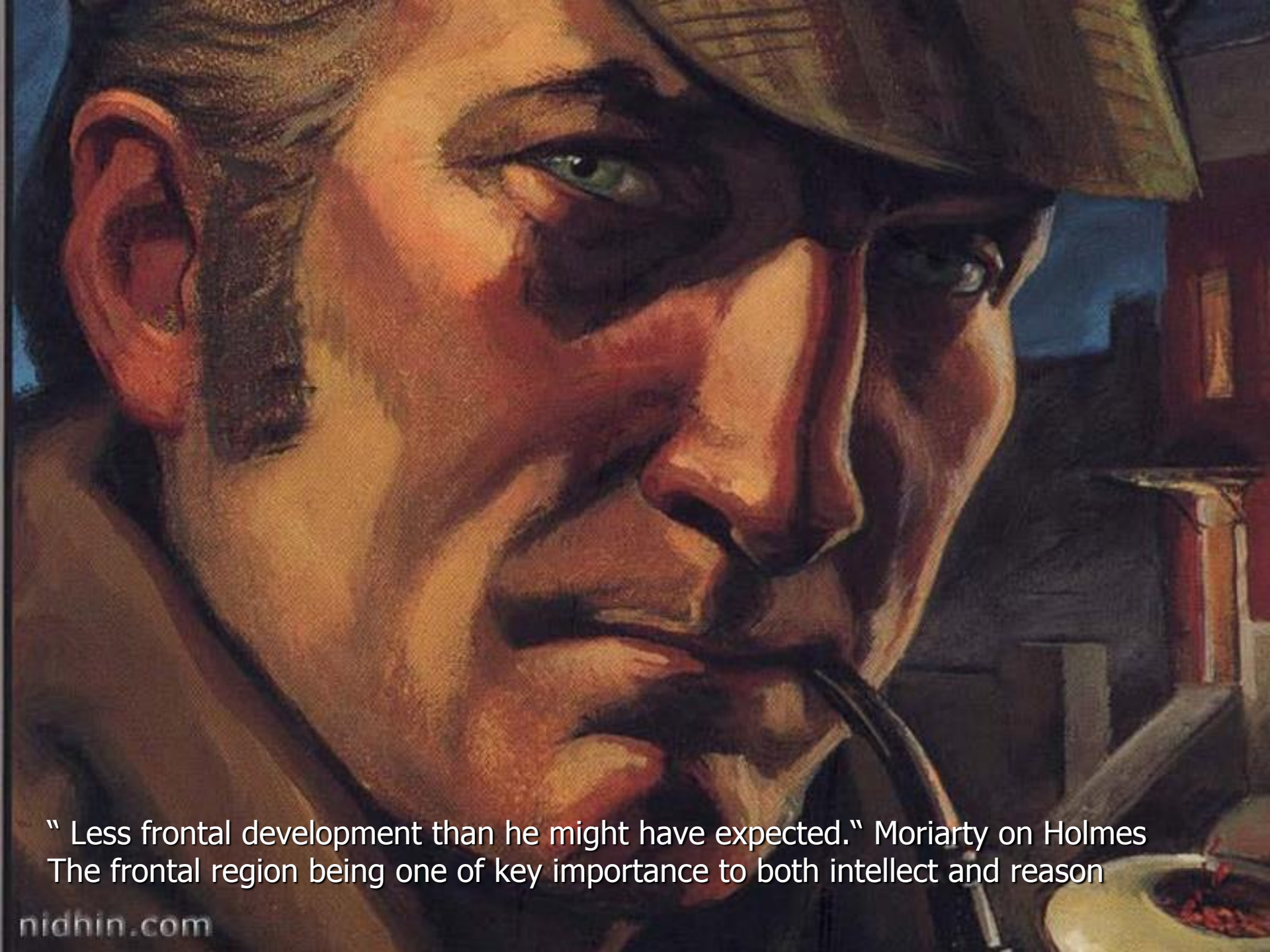
Optograms: The second victim of Jack the Ripper – Annie Chapman in (1888). Taking her retinal image (optogram) was mooted as an idea but the police surgeon denied this possibility



'anatomic characterology'

Phrenology: the determination of character, personality traits and criminality on the basis of the shape of the head

Principle is you are what your skeleton says you are



" Less frontal development than he might have expected." Moriarty on Holmes
The frontal region being one of key importance to both intellect and reason



Left: La Ferrassie a Neanderthal, and right: a early modern human. Both examples from France and not so dissimilar in date at around 35-40 thousand years old.

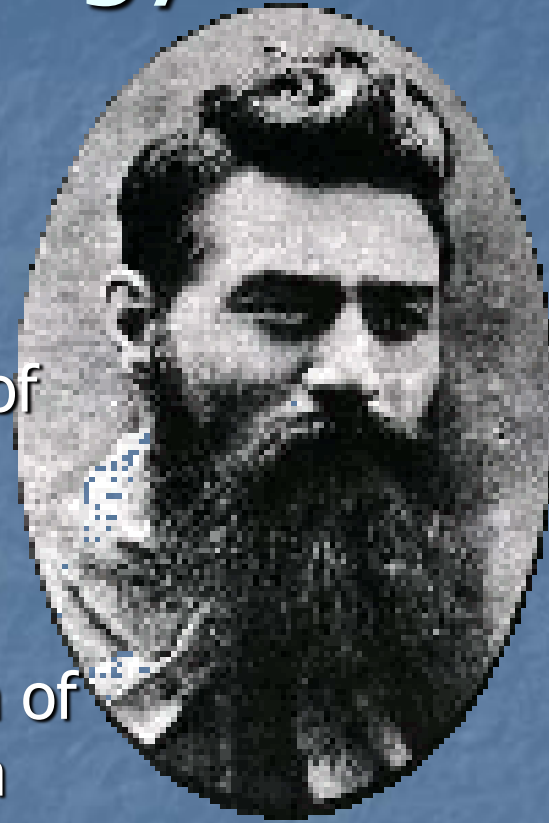
Popularizing phrenology

Ned Kelly



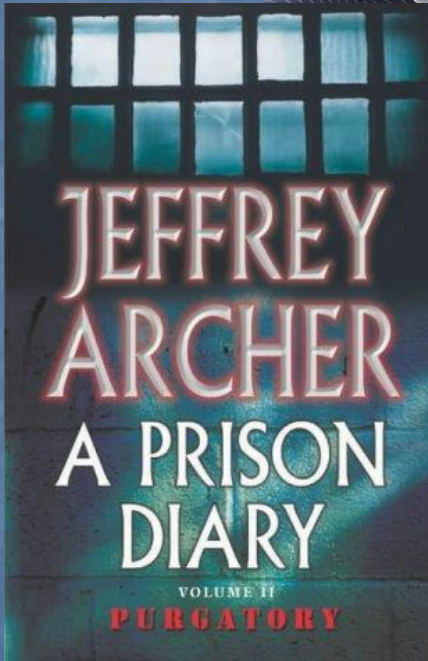
The notorious Australian bushranger who fell foul of the law: died in 1880, Victoria, Australia

Post-mortem examination of his death mask (in itself a long and well loved tradition) established his criminal proclivities – his skull said he was a bad boy.



The Moral Microbe

The criminal gene – or just a criminal!



The search for the body to predict, reveal or determine behaviour is still with us

The ability to read a skeleton relies on there being a skeleton



"....giving alms to the birds."

Sky burials are common in Tibet where it is important for the ritual not to be disturbed or the birds interrupted

Many people are never recovered



Scott's fateful expedition to the Antarctic, Scott probably the last of the five explorers to have died in March 1912. The body of one of his number, Captain Oates, was never recovered.

It is not just about acts of violence

Coroner: aim to establish and record the cause of death, and to determine if there is any criminal intent in cases where death.

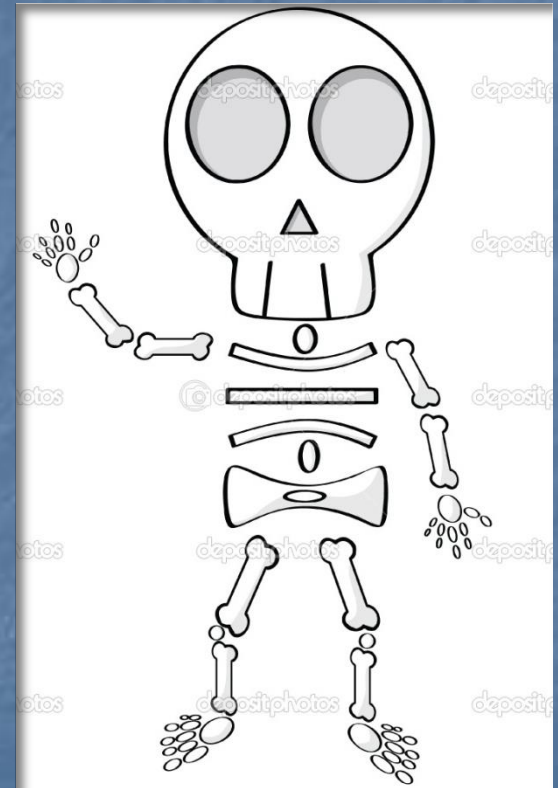
- is sudden
- is unexpected
- occurs abroad
- is suspicious
- occurs under the control of a central authority



Not just about crime and getting
someone to do the time!

What are the main questions relating to skeletal remains?

- Are they human?
- How many are there?
- Who are they?
- How long have they been dead?
- How did they die?
- What practices are evident?



Such questions can be remarkably difficult to answer!

1. Biological identity

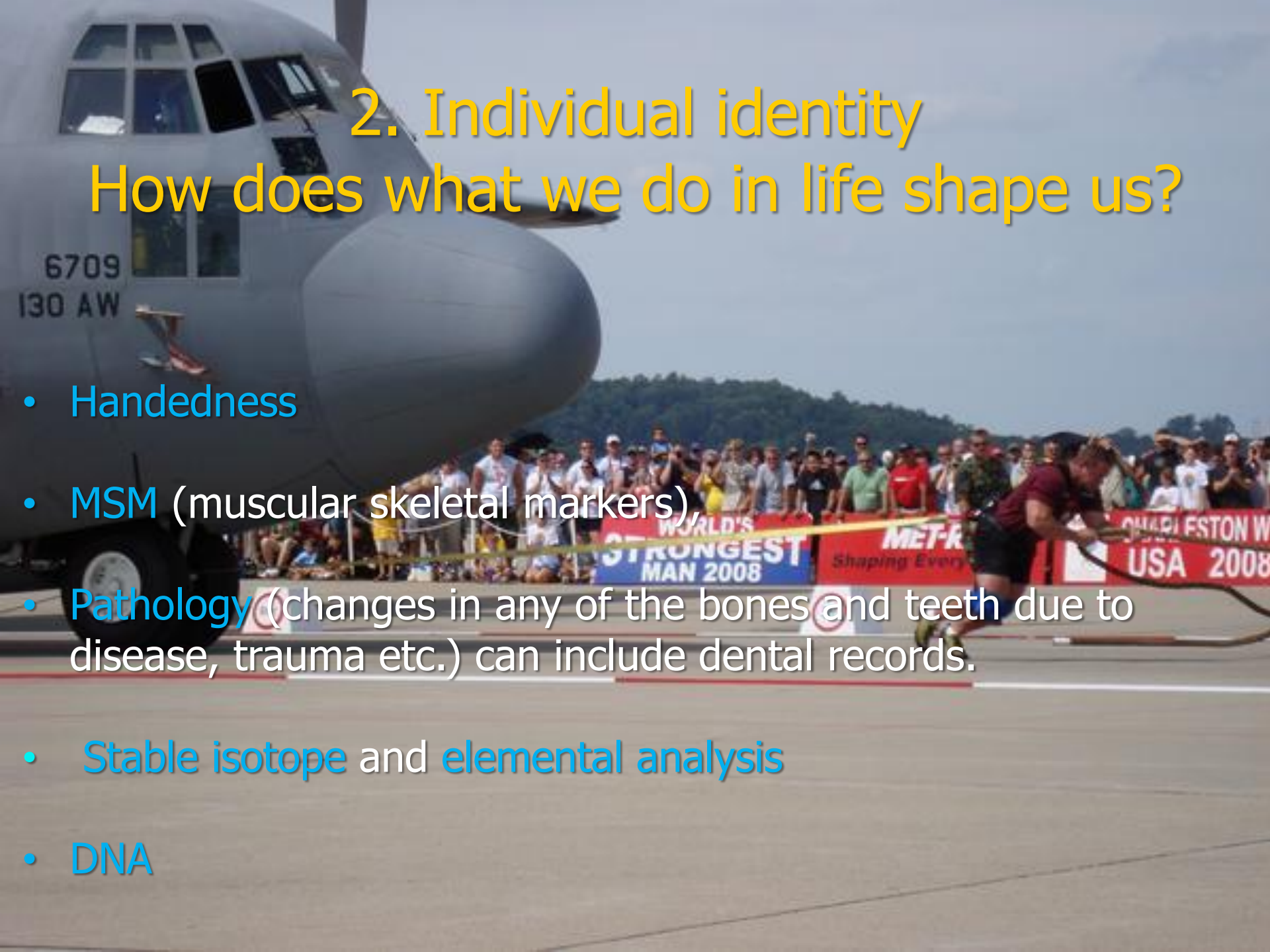
ethnic affiliation, sex, age and stature of individuals



2. Individual identity

How does what we do in life shape us?

- Handedness
- MSM (muscular skeletal markers),
- Pathology (changes in any of the bones and teeth due to disease, trauma etc.) can include dental records.
- Stable isotope and elemental analysis
- DNA



3. Collection of evidence

- 
- Location of buried remains (aerial photography, Geophysical techniques)
 - Excavation
 - Recovery and recording of material culture and human remains
 - Analysis of soils, pollen, plant macros,
 - Analysis of stomach contents, bowels, (coprolites) etc
 - Facial reconstruction
 - DNA matching
 - **Taphonomy** (Laws of Burial)
 - Experimental Archaeology
 - Publicity
- (keep in mind we are also interested in 'who' were the person/s doing the burial as well)

Reading the dead.

- attitudes to what a dead body can tell us have changed
- the dead can tell us a lot, they do not tell us everything, all of the time
- they do not lie nor tell tales, but they do need careful interpretation.
- archaeologists have a role to play in that interpretation

