On March 12, Condon met with the kidnapper and soon after turned over $50,000 in ransom money. He was told the child could be found on a boat near Martha’s Vineyard Island, but it turned out that no such boat existed. The hunt continued and on May 12, the body of the child was found in woodland near the Lindbergh’s home. Forensic evidence pointed to asphyxiation or blunt force injury as the cause of death.
The written ransom note might be a rich source of evidence, but it is not very common in the twenty-first century. Handwriting examiners spend more time looking at printed documents and photocopies which are, of course, revealing in their own way. The ransom note is not common because kidnapping itself has
rather gone out of fashion—at the time of the Lindbergh case, it was accepted that huge ransom sums could be paid to resolve the matter. That is no longer the case, at least publicly, as has been seen from the spate of kidnappings in Iraq in recent years. But forgery and fraud still provide ample work for the handwriting forensic analyst.

FURTHER RESOURCES
Books

Web sites


Forensic Experts Unearth Mass Grave

Photograph
By: Danilo Krstanovic
Date: July 25, 2002
Source: Reuters/Corbis

About the Photographer: This photograph was taken by Danilo Krstanovic, a photographer for Reuters (newswire service), on July 25, 2002, at a mass graves for victims of the 1995 massacre in Srebrenica.

INTRODUCTION
In the summer of 1995, as part of a program of “ethnic cleansing” being carried out by Serbia in the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serb military forces executed some 8,100 Muslim males civilians, from teenagers to elders, near the town of Srebrenica. Bodies from the massacre—actually a series of massacres, not all committed one day or in one place—were buried in several mass graves. Several months later, in an effort to conceal these facts, Serb military forces used earth-moving machinery to excavate the mass graves and move the bodies to fresh graves in more remote locations. This picture shows a member of an international team excavating one of these secondary graves in 2002 as part of a project to identify the victims.

Following the G-7 summit in Lyon, France in 1996, the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) was formed to uncover information about persons who had disappeared in the various wars and conflicts that had occurred in the Balkan states in the early 1990s. (The G-7 or “Group of Seven” consisted of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the U.K., and the U.S.A, who together represent about half the world’s economy; it has since