

From Jack the Ripper to cybercrime: linguistics as a forensic science

Andrea Nini

andrea.nini@manchester.ac.uk

—

Forensic linguistics is the application of linguistics to legal or forensic problems. One of the most common applications within this domain is the analysis of documents of disputed authorship. These can be malicious texts, such as a threatening letter or a ransom demand, or they could be other kinds of documents that happen to be relevant for an investigation or a criminal or civil case. In this talk I will present an introduction to the field and more specifically to the use of linguistics as a forensic science by following a chronological overview. I will begin with the case of the Whitechapel murders that involved the infamous Jack the Ripper and I will then move to more modern cases, including the identification of offenders on the Dark Web.