

# POTTER'S FIELD

A FORGOTTEN PAUPER'S GRAVE,  
ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE,  
AND THE RELATIONSHIP  
BETWEEN THEM.

## OFFICIAL PRESS KIT

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# PRESS KIT

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27 MINUTES  
SHORT LENGTH | DOCUMENTARY | 2017  
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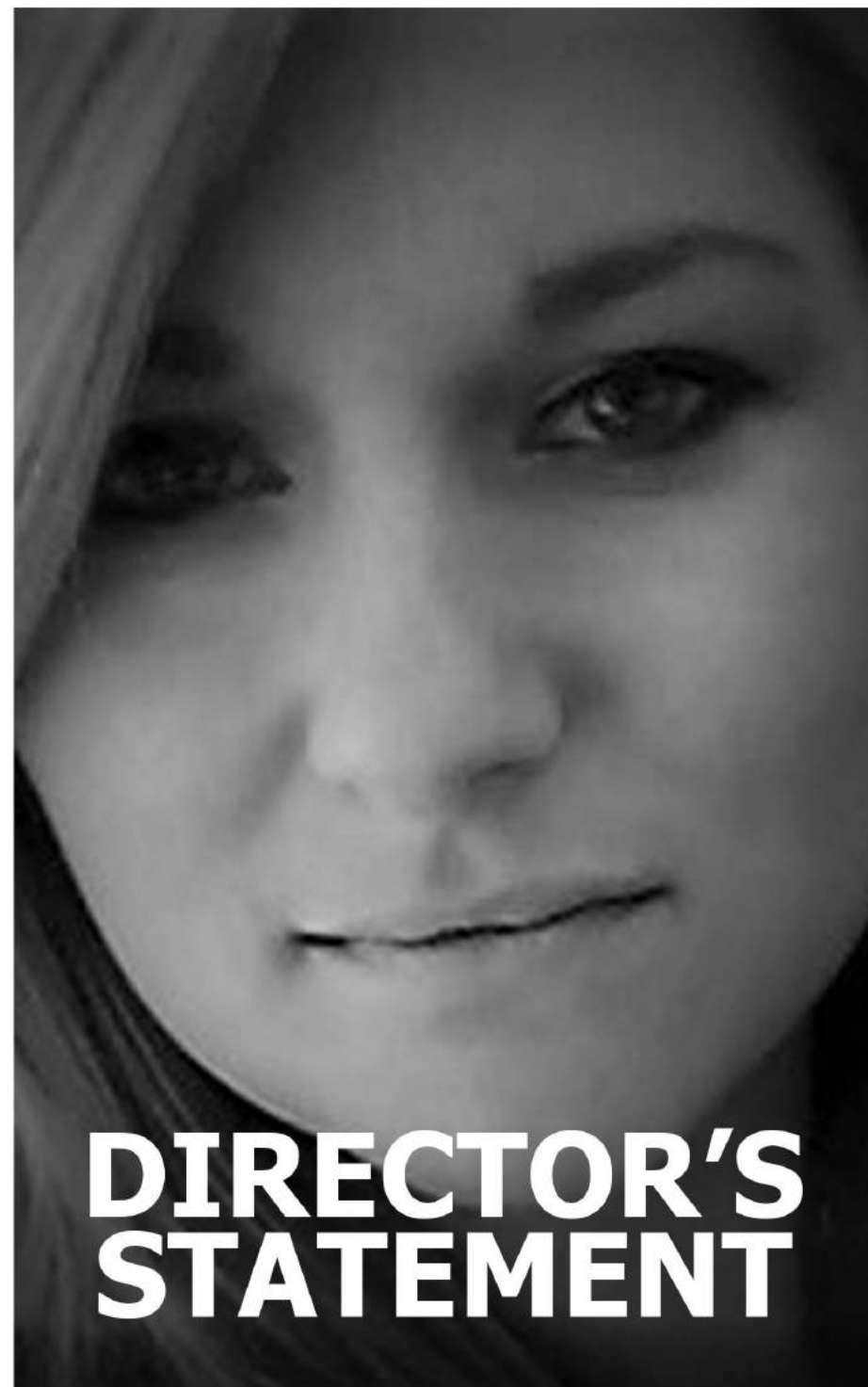
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## INTERNET

[WWW.CSUCHICO.EDU/ALVA/PROJECTS/2017/POTTERS-FIELD.HTML](http://WWW.CSUCHICO.EDU/ALVA/PROJECTS/2017/POTTERS-FIELD.HTML)

Potter's Field started out as a story about a lost cemetery in the Santa Clara Valley. But as the story progressed I discovered the complexity of the film. I wanted to tell the story of the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center skeletal collection on California State University, Chico's campus. The remains belong to people that time has forgotten, buried under a parking lot without a voice. A large portion were paupers; poor people who couldn't afford burial fees and died while in the care of the hospital, many from infectious diseases, now curable with modern antibiotics. What makes the collection unique is that the discovery of these cemeteries tends to represent a specific window into American public health. The transition to germ theory took place in the last decades of the 1800's, and incorporated the idea that infectious disease could be spread to humans by microorganisms. Sites like the VMC allows us to look at disease in a narrow window of time where germ theory was understood by doctors, but before the invention of antibiotics. We are already seeing a rise in antibiotic resistance among certain bacteria, a trend scientists expect to increase in the near future. What does this mean for our future? Will collections like the VMC have the answers?

- Kristina Jeffries-Kinney, Director



# SYNOPSIS



## **Short Synopsis:**

In 2012, a thousand once forgotten burials were excavated under a parking lot at a San Jose hospital. Now anthropologists at California State University, Chico study how the skeletons could offer insight into navigating a future of antibiotic resistance.

## **Extended Synopsis:**

In 2012, officials at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center got more than they bargained for while preparing the construction of a new hospital wing. Buried for decades underneath a parking lot, they uncovered a paupers' cemetery once associated with the hospital in the late 19th century. Now, anthropologists at California State University, Chico study the collection and its significance in the past and in our future. This film attempts to give a voice to the individuals interred in the medical center cemetery, who were among some of the poorest and most disenfranchised members of the Santa Clara Valley community at the time of their death. It also investigates how the study of this skeletal collection might offer us the tools we need to overcome an impending medical crises.



**CHRISTINA JEFFRIES  
-KINNEY  
DIRECTOR**

She recently graduated from California State University, Chico with a degree in Anthropology. She will be pursuing an MA in Anthropology after completing the certification program in Museum Studies at CSU, Chico.



**BRANDON PINARD  
CINEMATOGRAPHER**

An experienced photographer and cinematographer. He is currently a double major in Media Arts and Anthropology at California State University, Chico.



# FILM CREW

**TANNER HANSEN  
EDITOR**

A sophomore at California State University, Chico, majoring in Anthropology and English. *Potter's Field* is his first time doing editing work, but he has since been involved in the production of other student films.



## Q&A WITH DIRECTOR KRISTINA JEFFRIES-KINNEY

**Why did you choose to make the film?** As an anthropology student, I have been interested in the physical aspect of anthropology and the study of human remains. Our skeletal structures are the last to be affected by biological trauma and record all kinds of events that may have taken place. They have a unique story to tell. The ability to work with skeletal remains and learn what they have tell us was an opportunity I couldn't pass up.

**Why is this film important?** The film is a complex subject. The individuals buried in the cemetery represent a demographic of people within the lowest socioeconomic status. We know that those with such status are affected the most by infectious diseases and epidemics. There are 6 of these collections that allow us to study the affects of infectious disease on the human body during a time where antibiotics didn't exist. It's important because we are approaching a time where the over use of antibiotics has rendered them ineffective. We need to understand what this means for the future and those who will be most affected.

**What were some of the challenges in making the film?** The biggest challenge in making the film was having access to the remains to film. Many of the remains are crumbling with every touch, to take them out and film them is damaging to the remains. Another challenge in creating the film was really trying to create a narrative that incorporated many academic fields that are challenging to understand. We had to try to tie physical anthropology to the study of microorganism's, infectious diseases, and epidemiology. I also didn't want to create a film that came across too much like a public service announcement, like we were trying to scare people into believing that we are facing doomsday.



# TECHNICAL INFORMATION

*“Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest public health challenges of our time.”*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

**Total Running Time - 27 minutes**

**MPAA - Not rated**

**Aspect Ratio - 16x9, pixel size 4K 3840x2160p**

**Year - 2017**

**Website - [www.csuchico.edu/alva/projects/2017/potters-field.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/alva/projects/2017/potters-field.shtml)**

**Production Company - The CSU, Chico**

**Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology**

**Television Standard - NTSC**

**Shooting Format - R3D**

**Sound Format - Stereo**

**Framerate - 23.976fps**

**Subtitles - English**

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS



*“Infections disease are an equal opportunity attacker... they don’t discriminate according to race, religion, or socioeconomic status. Everybody could be affected.”*

**LINDA LEWIS  
EPIDEMIOLOGIST  
BUTTE COUNTY HEALTH**



*“One of our larger goals is to learn not just from a historical perspective about what’s happening with [the individuals of the VMC cemetery], but to also be able to apply what we learn from them to modern times and potentially contemporary medical problems.”*

**DR. COLLEEN MILLIGAN  
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY,  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO**



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS



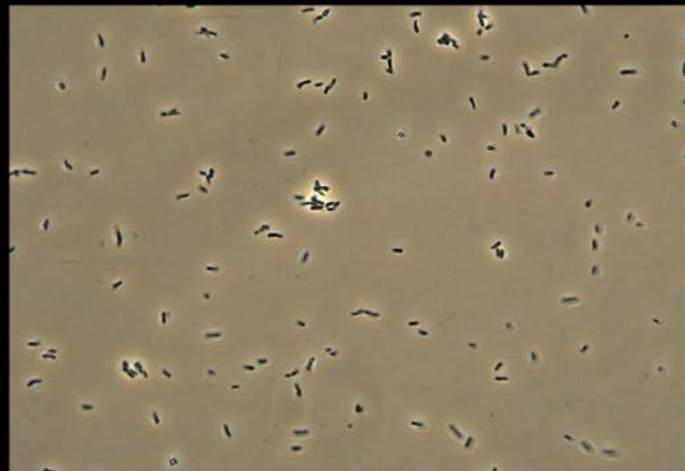
*"[What studying the VMC cemetery] gives us the opportunity to do is see what happens when bacteria goes unchecked; when a simple infection could kill you."*

**LISA BRIGHT**  
**CAMPUS ARCHAEOLOGIST**  
**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

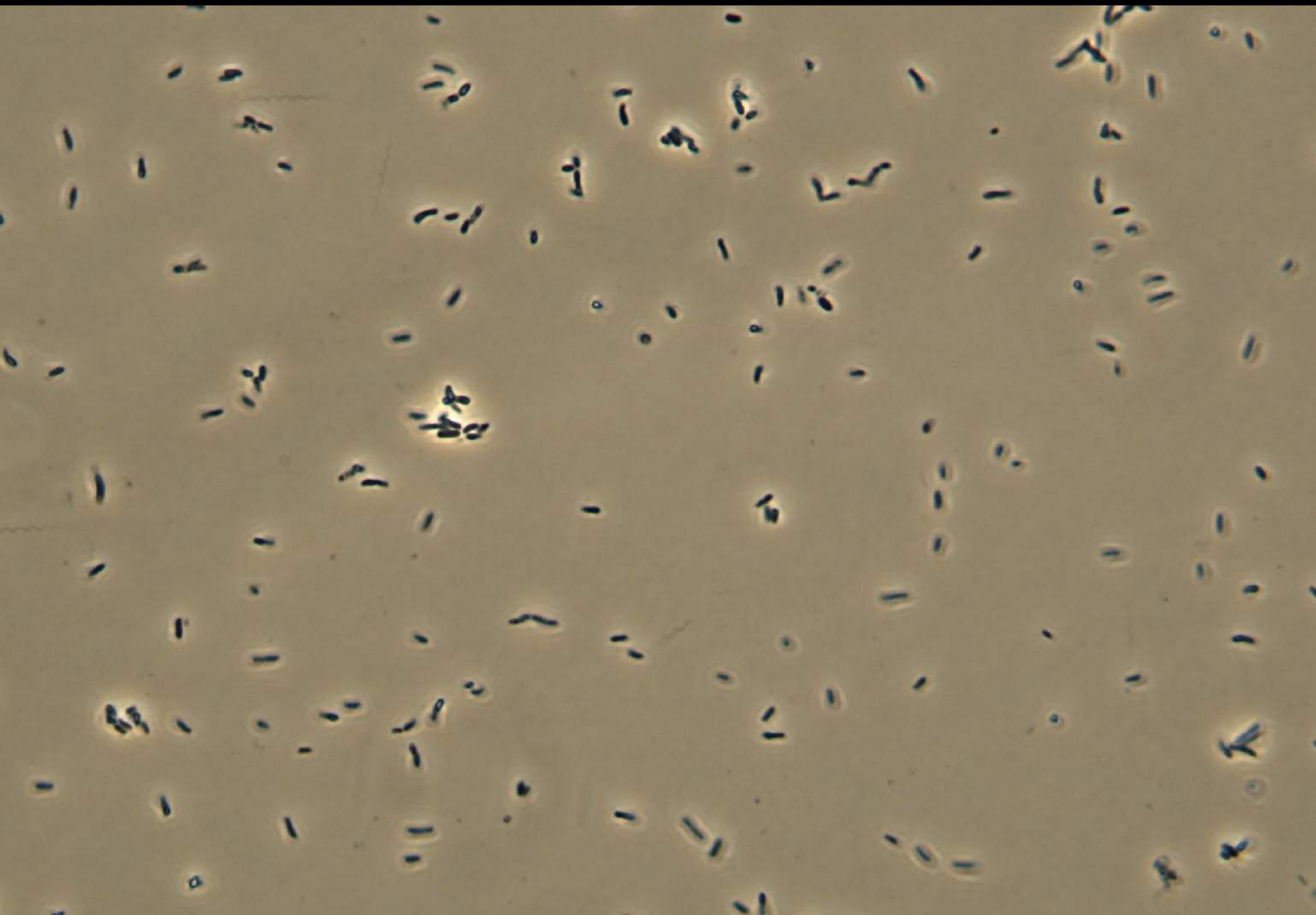
*"[Studying] a collection like this is really important... because it gives us a window into individuals who are not well represented in history books; and that's the poor... this really gives us a perspective of what it was like for these very poor immigrants."*

**DR. ERIC BARTELINK**  
**PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY**  
**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO**

# GALLERY



# GALLERY



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ANTHROPOLOGY

AN ALVA PRODUCTION 2017

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