

# Family sues for 'brain-in-bag' funeral home blunder

## 葬儀社「袋裝大腦」當遺物 家屬提告



A family in New Mexico are suing a funeral home after their grandmother's brain was sent to them in a bag of personal belongings following the woman's death, it was reported recently.

The *Albuquerque Journal* reported that the **grisly** discovery was made after family members noticed a "foul **odor**" coming from a bag sent to them by the DeVargas Funeral Home and Crematory in Espanola Valley.

The allegation was contained in a lawsuit filed on behalf of four family members in a District Court in Albuquerque, the paper reported.

According to the report, the bag had been left inside a family member's truck overnight. When family members opened it they found personal effects and a bag labeled with her

name reading "brain," the lawsuit alleged.

"Wouldn't you agree that it was a horrible mistake?" Albuquerque attorney Richard Valle told the paper. "No loved one's brain should ever be part of those belongings."

The brain has since been buried with the woman's body.

Funeral home owner Johnny DeVargas insisted his business was not to blame, **pointing the finger** at another entity in Utah.

"All I can say is DeVargas did absolutely nothing wrong and that the family was well cared for," he was quoted by the paper as saying.

"The family was very **meticulously** cared for and they were very pleased with our service."

The woman, who was identified only by her **initials** in the lawsuit, was killed in a car accident in Utah in September.

(AFP)

近 日一則報導指出，美國新墨西哥州一戶人家控告一間葬儀社在他們祖母往生後，竟把她的腦子當作私人遺物裝袋寄還給他們。

《阿布奎基日報》報導，這家人聞到西班牙谷「瓦格斯葬儀社暨火葬場」寄來的袋子傳出一股「惡臭」後，才發現這件恐怖的事。

報導指出，這一家四口在阿布奎基地方法院對上述指控提出告訴。

該報導表示，這袋物品被置放在一名家人的後車廂一夜。訴狀說，這家人打開袋子後，發現裡面裝了一些私人遺物，和一包標示著祖母名字及「腦子」字樣的袋子。

阿布奎基律師理查·瓦勒受訪時表示：「你也同意這是個令人毛骨悚然的錯誤吧？往生至親的腦子不該被當成遺物的一部分。」

這袋大腦事後已與婦人的遺體同葬。葬儀社業主強尼·瓦格斯堅稱，這個錯誤跟他們公司無關，並把矛頭指向猶他州另一間公司。

報導中引述他的話說：「我僅能表示，瓦格斯葬儀社絕對沒有半點錯，對這家人也提供了完善貼心的照顧。」

「我們對這家人提供極為週到的服務，他們也對我們的服務感到很滿意。」

這名婦人去年九月在猶他州一起車禍中喪生，該訴訟案中僅透露她姓名的首字母。

(法新社／翻譯：袁星塵)

A woman consults a catalogue near the sculpture *Where Can I Buy a New Brain* by German artist Bodo Korsch in Karlsruhe, Germany on Feb. 27, 2008.

PHOTO: AFP

二〇〇八年二月二十七日於德國卡爾斯魯爾，一名女子站在德國藝術家波多·柯西格的雕塑品「哪裏可以買到新腦袋」旁查看導覽手冊。照片：法新社

### TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

#### 1. **grisly** /'grɪzli/ adj.

恐怖的 (kɒŋ3 bu4 de5)

**例：** A bunch of kids playing in the woods made the grisly discovery.  
(一大群在樹林裡玩耍的小孩發現了這個恐怖的東西。)

#### 2. **odor** /'ɒdə/ n.

氣味 (qi4 wei4)

**例：** I went down to investigate the strange odor coming from the basement.  
(我到地下室去調查那股奇怪氣味的來源。)

#### 3. **meticulously** /mə'tɪkjələslɪ/ adv.

極細心地 (ji2 xi4 xin1 de5)

**例：** Everything was meticulously prepared ahead of the mayor's visit.  
(所有細節都在市長來訪前妥善準備好了。)

#### 4. **initial** /ɪ'nɪʃəl/ n.

姓名首字母 (xing4 ming2 shou3 zi4 mu3)

**例：** Write your initials at the top of the paper when you've finished checking it.  
(檢查完後，請在這頁上方簽下你姓名的頭一個字母。)

### IDIOM POINT 重要片語

#### point the finger 指責、怪罪

If you **point the finger** at someone, you blame them for something. In the article, the owner of the funeral home **pointed the finger** at a business in Utah for accidentally sending the brain to the family.

Examples: "As soon as the business started to lose money, people were quick to **point the finger** at the sales department for its lavish expenses," or "Don't be so quick to **point the finger** at other people. You should look at your own faults before you start accusing others."

如果說你對某人「**point the finger**」，意思就是你把某件事的錯怪在他們頭上。上文中提到，該葬儀社業主把錯寄大腦給這家人的矛頭指向猶他州一間公司。

例如：「這間公司一開始賠錢，大家立刻就怪到業務部開支過高上」，或是「不要這麼急著怪罪別人，你指責別人前應該先檢討自己的過錯」。