

*Female Practitioner's*

# A Guide for Careers in Forensic Anthropology

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*Through Written vs. Oral narratives*

# Forensic Anthropology Defined

- A subfield of biological anthropology
- Findings brought to court



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# Perilous Terrain Made Easy

## ■ Education

- Obtain a graduate degree from physical anthropologist as mentor (minimally) or a DABFA (preferred).



## ■ Training

- Mentor should be willing to allow for student participation in active forensic cases.
- The student should be willing to work as a service to the state (e.g., volunteer).



# Perilous Terrain Made Easy

## ■ Research

- Topics should include those grounded in theory, but tested through the analysis of skeletal data.
- The research should add to human rights work, forensic casework, and broader themes in physical anthropology.

## ■ Casework

- Should only be undertaken under the supervision of the forensic anthropology mentor.
- Before graduating, the student should observe courtroom procedure and expert witness testimony



# Maples, Falsetti, McQuown Mantra

- All place a premium on female intellect
- Laboratory experience built into the graduate program
- Required each student to ask difficult questions of all concerned players
  - Ruth McQuown

# Research & the Female Perspective

- Bureau of Justice Statistics
  - Homicides 25:1.
- Redirecting investigations
  - From a female perspective about female victims.
- Improving forensic anthropology standards
  - To include more female data and research topics.



Image of John Schultz, Heather Walsh-Haney, and George Gill in a still from Mummy Autopsy.

# Casework

- Ph.D.
  - Or commensurate years of experience
- Employment
  - Academia
  - Law enforcement
  - Medical examiner/coroner
  - NGO
- Diplomate status
  - Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology

# Code of Conduct

## ■ AAA

- <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>
  - Try to do no harm or wrong
  - Avoid deception and misrepresentation
  - Act impartially

## ■ ABFA

- <http://www.csuchico.edu/anth/ABFA/>
  - to make available to the judicial system, and others, a practical and equitable system for readily identifying those persons professing to be specialists in forensic anthropology who possess the requisite qualifications and competence

# Access to Resources

## ■ Niches

- Defined as the medical examiner/coroner districts used by forensic anthropologists.
- Patch sizes to large, in some instances, to allow for quick resolution of forensic anthropology cases by forensic anthropologists.
- Forensic anthropology survivorship requires that patches open up to additional, newly minted, forensic anthropologists.

# Access to Resources

- Stable resource networks
  - Beginning with the silverbacks (the established forensic anthropologist) cooperative behavior can be spread between agencies and universities.

# To Do No Harm

- The CSI affect

- Not necessarily negative because those at large who would otherwise not know what science is available to prove or disprove guilt or innocence are armed with enough information to ask questions of informed participants (e.g., the forensic scientist, law enforcement, legal council, etc).

- Academic “birth control”

- The need for educators to educate students while realizing their responsibility to help their students find job and gain access to resources (e.g., the forensic anthropology casework).

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# A Guide for Careers in Forensic Anthropology

- Building a strong anthropology foundation
- Training in forensic anthropology labs
- Ask difficult questions of mentors
- Redirect investigations and research

# Thank You!

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