

Symposium: Essays Honoring Ellis R. Kerley, Ph.D. (1924–1998)*

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This collection of essays was organized and edited by Douglas H. Ubelaker, Ph.D. of the Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. and Richard L. Jantz, Ph.D. of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The symposium was presented at the 52nd Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences in Reno, NV, within the physical anthropology section, on February 25, 2000.

With the September 3, 1998 death of Ellis R. Kerley, forensic science and physical anthropology lost one of its most visible and historically important scholars. Through his very broad education and experience, and active role in forensic science, Kerley not only made numerous scholarly contributions to the field but is widely recognized as the prime mover in the formation of the Physical Anthropology Section of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and the American Board of Forensic Anthropology. His research, especially with microscopic techniques of estimating age at death from human compact bone is well known. To date, he is the only physical anthropologist ever elected President of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. Kerley also was a gifted teacher, administrator, and lecturer who reported on many forensic cases during his career.

In organizing this symposium, we invited past students of Ellis Kerley to present papers in his honor. Many of his students have become authorities in the field, thus it was relatively easy to assemble contributors who not only offered relevant remembrances of Kerley, but also substantive research contributions. Those students contributing to the symposium were Drs. Ousley, Ortner, Klepinger, and Gill, in addition to the two of us. Dr. Ousley studied with Kerley as an undergraduate at Maryland. The others studied with Kerley during his years of teaching at the University of Kansas.

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* Editor's note: Douglas H. Ubelaker, Ph.D., and Richard L. Jantz, Ph.D., organized this symposium and edited its proceedings in preparation for publication. Without their efforts, this symposium series would not have been possible.

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FIG. 1—Ellis R. Kerley (1924–98).

In addition to those listed above, we invited Paul S. Sledzik, curator at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, to specifically address Kerley's work at that institution (AFIP) and Madeleine J. Hinkes of San Diego, CA to discuss Kerley's work with human identification in a military context. Dr. Hinkes had worked closely with Kerley during his association with the United States Army Central Identification Laboratory, HI. William M. Bass graciously agreed to discuss Kerley's contributions in the classroom, especially the important years at the University of Kansas.

The initial segment of the symposium concerned aspects of Kerley's life and contributions. Ubelaker offered an overall introductory overview of Kerley's work, followed by the more specific pa-

pers of Sledzik, Bass, and Hinkes. Jantz then discussed aspects of cranial variation in American samples. This section was introduced and moderated by Ubelaker.

Following the break, Richard Jantz moderated research papers by former students. These consisted of contributions by Stephen Ousley on new approaches to metric data collection, Donald Ortner on forensic aspects of pathology (specifically Ortner's work in assessing pathological conditions relevant to the Josef Mengele identification in Brazil), Linda Klepinger on the proper consideration of variables in the interpretation of secular trends, and George Gill on human variation in the morphology of the proximal femur.

These contributions were followed by Dr. Jantz reading a short remembrance submitted by Kenneth S. Field who could not attend the session. This brief presentation was accompanied by slides of photographs provided by Kenneth S. Field of Kerley at various AAFS functions. The session ended with comments by Jantz on Kerley's teaching style and his impact on Jantz's career.

The session was well-attended, reflecting the great collegial respect that exists for Ellis Kerley's work. Included in the audience was the Kerley family, his wife Mary Adams of Lake San Marcos, CA, and three daughters, Mary Elise Kerley, Laurelann Bundens, and Amy Moorhouse. The Kerley family sponsored a reception for the Physical Anthropology Section the evening of February 24 at the meeting hotel and announced their formation of a scholarship fund for students of forensic anthropology in memory of Ellis Kerley.

Organizing this symposium and publication effort has been an educational and pleasurable experience. The effort brought together the many students, friends, and family of Ellis and the many good memories that inevitably evolve. It also forced us to examine in greater detail the life experience and many accomplishments of Ellis Kerley. This process has reinforced our conviction that his impeccable reputation and substantial accomplishments prominently place him among the historical giants of forensic anthropology.