

## BOOK REVIEW

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# Review of: Craniofacial Identification in Forensic Medicine

**REFERENCE:** Clement JG, Ranson DL, editors. Craniofacial identification in forensic medicine, Arnold, 338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH, 1998, 306 pp, \$169.50.

This excellent volume on craniofacial identification is evidence that the frontiers of forensic science are being advanced on a global scale; the 28 contributions are from Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The editors of this book should be commended for their excellent work. Comprehensive and well written, it consists of 20 chapters organized into four parts, bringing together an impressive amount of information on craniofacial anatomy, analysis, documentation, and identification. What sets this book apart from others is its educational theme, which clearly outlines specific procedures followed in the forensic investigation and identification of human remains.

The chapters are short and to the point, ranging from 10 to 22 pages, and for the most part include ample citations. The book is easy on the eyes, produced on glossy paper with clear tables and figures, including both black and white photographs and color plates. One small criticism is that some of the photographs of remains lack a scale, and some scene photos lack a north arrow, but these oversights are the exception. To the credit of this volume, the importance of using a photographic scale is emphasized in Chapters 9 and 10.

Part 1 (Principles) outlines the major components of a forensic investigation, including "Management of the Scene and Forensic Evidence" (Chapter 2), "The Autopsy in Human Identification" (Chapter 3), "Craniofacial Anatomy" (Chapter 4), "Anthropological Assessment" (Chapter 5), and "Dental Identification" (Chapter 6). These chapters competently highlight the fundamental goals of these specialist areas, providing a solid introduction to the investigation of human remains. As a forensic anthropologist, however, I felt that the portrayal of my science in Chapter 5 was limited in scope. This may be a reflection of the differing roles of the forensic anthropologist across the world. The anthropological assessment of human remains in the United States and Canada is much broader than simply the osteological assessment of age, sex, and ancestry. In fact, more often than not, it is the forensic anthropologist that facilitates craniofacial identification.

Perhaps the greatest educational contribution of this volume is found in Part 2 (Techniques). In this "how to" section of the

book, a broad spectrum of applied techniques and human craniofacial identification methods are described. In Chapters 7 through 10, "Preservation, Restoration and Duplication of Remains" (Chapter 7), "Craniofacial Dissection" (Chapter 8), "Scene Photography" (Chapter 9), and "Photography of Remains" (Chapter 10), valuable technical information is provided to assist investigators in the documentation of human remains cases. "Craniofacial Photography of the Living" (Chapter 11) is also exceptionally useful as it provides photographic fundamentals critical to experts employing photo-photo analysis as well as skull-photo superimposition.

"Superimposition Techniques" (Chapter 12) chronicles the state of photographic and video superimposition techniques today. The historical background on superimposition is enlightening and enjoyable to read, and the discussion of the reliability of superimposition as an identification technique is deftly handled. "Facial Reconstruction and Approximation" (Chapter 14) is a short introduction to this technique. A useful companion chapter, "Forensic 'Art' in Human Identification" (Chapter 18), is curiously located in Part 4 (Medicolegal Issues) of this volume. "Quantification of Facial Shape and Form" (Chapter 13) and "Computer Modelling of Facial Form" (Chapter 15) outline some of the cutting-edge advances in the expanding field of facial identification of the living.

Part 3 (The Changing Face) consists of only two chapters. The first, "Growth of Children's Faces" (Chapter 16), is an important chapter that contains critical information difficult to find elsewhere on growth and development. "Age Changes to the Face in Adulthood" (Chapter 17), however, is much less effective as it lacks substantive information. I was especially disappointed that this chapter is totally bereft of citations.

Part 4 (Medicolegal Issues) explores the complex relationships between identification and the law. The two chapters, "Reporting and Presentation of Evidence" (Chapter 19) and "Identification and the Law" (Chapter 20), present legal information germane mostly to England and Australia.

Finally, the Appendixes section is one of the nicest features of this volume, as it provides specific protocols for recovering remains, packaging evidence, charting the dentition, radiographing the skull, and report writing.

I was initially concerned that the volume might have limited utility as a reference book in the United States, anticipating that the procedures of Anglo-Australian forensic science and law may be significantly different than those practiced in this country. How-

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ever, with the possible exception of the medicolegal chapters (19 and 20), I found this book to be an outstanding technical guide for human identification experts in any country. As such, it represents one of the finest sources on human craniofacial identification, evidence that we can learn much from our forensic colleagues "across the pond." The strength of this volume lies in its comprehensive approach, choosing to place craniofacial identification within the broader forensic investigation, beginning with the scene and ending with the courtroom. It is a fine companion to Iscan and Helmer's *Forensic Analysis of the Skull*, which has a narrower fo-

cus. These two volumes used in conjunction present a formidable one-two punch in human identification.

*Craniofacial Identification in Forensic Medicine* is a valuable training guide and reference for those involved in human identification, including forensic scientists, law enforcement personnel, and lawyers. I especially recommend it as a reference for forensic pathologists, anthropologists, and odontologists. I also believe that this volume will be of particular benefit to educators and students in the forensic field. It would certainly be an outstanding textbook for a forensic course, if not for its high price (\$169.50).