

Julie Roberts, PhD, ChFA, MCSFS

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am a Chartered Forensic Anthropologist with over 20 years practitioner experience in the location, recovery and identification of human remains from scenes of crime, war zones and mass fatality incidents. I am a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) and certified by them to practice at the most senior level (Cert. FA-1). I am registered as an Expert Advisor in forensic anthropology and archaeology with the National Crime Agency. I am Chair of the British Association for Forensic Anthropology (BAFA), a member of the Interpol Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Pathology and Anthropology Sub Working Group (PASWG), and UK DVI national point of contact for Forensic Anthropology. I have extensive experience of teaching and training UK and international students, scientists, medico-legal experts, military and civilian police officers. I am also trained and experienced in working in hostile environments with multidisciplinary international teams.

KEY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Development of search strategies for human remains; examination of the deceased using anthropological techniques to determine identity; advising on and collecting post-mortem DNA samples; reconstruction of fragmented remains, setting-up and managing workflow through temporary and permanent mortuaries. Casework experience in the UK, Germany, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, and Lebanon
- Author of numerous Standard Operating Procedures relating to recovery and identification of the deceased from individual and mass fatality incidents. Most recently produced new documentation for Interpol DVI Working Group on the management of fragmented human remains in mass fatality incidents (accepted June 2020)
- Specialist in the recovery, examination and identification of burnt, highly fragmented and commingled remains, and in the interpretation of thermal damage to bone. Awarded a commendation in this area of expertise by the Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys Police (Wales) in 2019
- C.20 years of experience managing and coordinating teams of anthropologists, archaeologists and environmental scientists at Scientific Lead level.
- Extensive osteoarchaeology experience (27 years) in the excavation and examination of large collections of skeletal remains from Neolithic to Post-medieval periods.

CAREER HISTORY

April 2019 – Present Date: Senior Lecturer in Forensic Anthropology; Programme Leader BSc. Forensic Anthropology, at Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, UK

April 2019 – Present Date: Associate at Principal Forensic Services Ltd

April 2019 – Present Date: Consultant Forensic Anthropologist for Cellmark Forensic Services and Alecto Forensic Services

September 2010 – April 2019: Scientific Lead and Team Leader, Forensic Anthropology, Archaeology and Ecology at Cellmark Forensic Services

April 2005 – September 2010: Team Leader and Scientific Advisor, Forensic Anthropology, Archaeology and Ecology at LGC Forensics

March 2003 to April 2005: Project Manager, Human Remains and Forensics at Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD)

April 1998 to March 2003: Project Officer, Human Remains and Forensics at GUARD

November 1995 to April 1998: Consultant Biological Anthropologist and Archaeologist. Employers included GUARD, University of Manchester Archaeological Unit, Archaeological Research Consultancy Sheffield University, British Institute at Ankara

September 1987 to September 1997: Registered General Nurse (Staff Nurse) specialising in orthopaedics at hospitals in Manchester, Shropshire, Cyprus and Glasgow region

EDUCATION

- PhD awarded by the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, University of Glasgow, 2011. Thesis entitled *An Anthropological Study of War Crimes Against Children in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s*
- MSc in Osteology, Palaeopathology and Funerary Archaeology, University of Sheffield, 1996. Dissertation topic, *The Taphonomy of Cremated Human Bone*
- B.A (Hons) Ancient History and Archaeology (2:1) University of Manchester, 1994. Research project topic *Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Burial Practices in England*
- Registered General Nurse, North Manchester General Hospital, 1987

TEACHING AND EXAMINATION BOARDS

- Programme Leader for BSc in Forensic Anthropology and Senior Lecturer in Forensic Anthropology at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)
- Module Leader, Research Methods in Forensic Anthropology (MSc Forensic Anthropology, MSc Forensic Biomolecular Science)
- Module Leader, Advanced Forensic Anthropology (BS Forensic Anthropology)
- Senior Lecturer to undergraduate and postgraduate students, various modules, Forensic Science, Forensic Anthropology, and Policing Studies
- Member of the RAI Forensic Anthropology Committee and Examination Board for professional certification of Forensic Anthropologists in the UK
- Lecturer and member of the Examination Board for the Diploma in Human Forensic Identification and Management of the Dead Diploma, run by the Academy of Forensic Medical Sciences

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Achieving positive identifications in highly disrupted and commingled remains following mass fatality incidents. Analysis of DNA success rates and the factors which influence them, including recovery methods at the scene, environmental influences, tissue types, and mortuary processes.
- Multidisciplinary approaches to improve identification rates of large population groups including victims of war crimes and unidentified deceased migrants; biocultural indicators in migrant populations.
- Burnt remains; the identification of burnt human remains and interpretation of thermal damage in modern forensic contexts; interpreting sequence of events in burnt and dismembered human remains; DNA survival in burnt remains
- Post-conflict analysis of the deceased: Using multiple datasets to identify patterns relating to demographic profiles of victims, cause of death, geographical location of crimes and burial sites.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Roberts, J. and Baldry, A., 2021. Disposal of a Homicide Victim by Dismemberment and Burning: The Contribution of Forensic Anthropology and Archaeology in Reconstructing the Crime. *Archaeological and Environmental Forensic Science* 2.1, pp. 39–48

Márquez-Grant, N. and Roberts, J., 2021. Redefining Forensic Anthropology in the 21st Century and its role in mass fatality investigations. *European Journal of Anatomy*, 25 (S2) pp, 19-34

Márquez-Grant, N., Webster, H., Dussault, Harris, M., Roberts, J., Errickson D., Sanabria Medina, C., 2021. Identifying blast trauma in the human skeleton: applications for forensic anthropology. In, Tatyana Shvedchikova, Negahnaz Moghaddam and Mateo Barone (Eds) *Crimes in the Past*. Archaeopress, pp. 206-243

De Boer, H.H, Roberts, J, Delabarde, T, Mundorff, A.Z., Blau, S., 2020. Disaster victim identification operations with fragmented, burnt, or commingled remains: experience-based recommendations, *Forensic Sciences Research*. Vol. 5 (3)

Roberts J, 2016. Report by Dr Julie Roberts, Forensic Anthropologist, in, the Rt Hon Dame Elish Angiolini DBE QC, *Report of the National Cremation Investigation*
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Policy/BurialsCremation/NationalInvestigation/NationalCremationInvestigation-Report>. p.19, pp. 372-418

Accepted for Publication:

Roberts J. Recovery and Identification of Burnt Remains in a Military Theatre of Operations: The Warrior Six. In, Sarah Ellingham, Joe Adserias Garriga, Sara C. Zapico and Douglas H. Ubelaker (Eds). *The Forensic Evaluation of Human Remains*

AFFILIATIONS

- Registered Expert Advisor in Anthropology and Archaeology with the National Crime Agency
- Chair of the British Association for Forensic Anthropology (BAFA)
- Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI)
- Member of the RAI Forensic Anthropology Committee
- Member of the recently formed writing group (led by the RAI) currently producing a judicial primer on Forensic Anthropology for the UK Criminal Justice System, requested by the Royal Society
- Member of the Interpol DVI Pathology and Anthropology sub-Working Group (UK representative)
- Member of the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences
- Member of the British Association for Human Identification (BAHID)