



## Physical Anthropology Section – 2006

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### H24 Research Trends During the History of the Physical Anthropology Section at the AAFS Annual Meetings

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The goals of this presentation are to discuss the research trends that have occurred during the more than 30-year history of the Physical Anthropology Section at the annual meetings of American Academy of Forensic Sciences as well as physical anthropological contributions to the *Journal of Forensic Sciences (JFS)* during the same time period.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by presenting trends in physical anthropological research seen through the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) and *JFS* during the more than 30-year history of the Physical Anthropology Section. This poster will provide forensic and physical anthropologists with essential information for the interpretation of research importance and popularity of scientific research.

In 1972, a new section was established at the annual American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS). Dr. Ellis Kerley was pivotal in the development of the Physical Anthropology Section at the AAFS meetings (Snow 1982; Stewart 1979; Ubelaker 2001). Since its inception, physical anthropologists and, specifically, forensic anthropologists have had a medium in which to share their research with others. This new section allowed forensic anthropologists a national meeting in which to communicate research and discuss problems and unique case situations.

In the past 33 years, both professional physical anthropologists and archaeologists as well as student participants have presented their research in both oral and written formats at various AAFS meetings; during the last decade, poster presentations have become a more important and integral alternative for presentation at the Meetings. In addition to presenting research at the national meeting, the *JFS* provides an important publication outlet for physical/forensic anthropologists and archaeologists.

Research trends, like anything else, wax and wane with popularity. This is particularly true in forensic sciences, because of the relationships with funding and grants for "new and unique research." Additionally, since most physical anthropologists are academically-based, research that is oriented along new trends has a higher likelihood of being chosen for presentation at the meetings and publications in the *JFS*. This poster examines the main trends, including case studies; major categories of study (osteometrics, biological profile determinations, various forms of trauma interpretation, taphonomy, forensic archaeology), and historical treatises of importance to forensic anthropologists.

The methodology categorizes abstracts and keywords from both *Proceedings of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences Annual Meeting* and the *JFS* since 1973 to 2004. These categories are then presented in graphic form in order to illustrate the major research trends in the field.

#### **Trends in Physical Anthropology, Research, History**