

Teasing Secrets from the Dead: My Investigations at America's Most Infamous Crime Scenes

By Emily Craig Phd

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Teasing Secrets from the Dead is a front-lines story of crime scene investigation at some of the most infamous sites in recent history. In this absorbing, surprising, and undeniably compelling book, forensics expert Emily Craig tells her own story of a life spent teasing secrets from the dead.


Emily Craig has been a witness to history, helping to seek justice for thousands of murder victims, both famous and unknown. It's a personal story that you won't soon forget. Emily first became intrigued by forensics work when, as a respected medical illustrator, she was called in by the local police to create a model of a murder victim's face. Her fascination with that case led to a dramatic midlife career change: She would go back to school to become a forensic anthropologist—and one of the most respected and best-known “bone hunters” in the nation.

As a student working with the FBI in Waco, Emily helped uncover definitive proof that many of the Branch Davidians had been shot to death before the fire, including their leader, David Koresh, whose bullet-pierced skull she reconstructed with her own hands. Upon graduation, Emily landed a prestigious full-time job as forensic anthropologist for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, a state with an alarmingly high murder rate and thousands of square miles of rural backcountry, where bodies are dumped and discovered on a regular basis. But even with her work there, Emily has been regularly called to investigations across the country, including the site of the terrorist attack on the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, where a mysterious body part—a dismembered leg—was found at the scene and did not match any of the known victims. Through careful scientific analysis, Emily was able to help identify the leg's owner, a pivotal piece of evidence that helped convict Timothy McVeigh.

In September 2001, Emily received a phone call summoning her to New York City, where she directed the night-shift triage at the World Trade Center's body identification site, collaborating with forensics experts from all over the country to collect and identify the remains of September 11 victims.

From the biggest news stories of our time to stranger-than-true local mysteries, these are unforgettable stories from the case files of Emily Craig's remarkable career.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

With a second *CSI* spinoff hitting the airwaves this fall, the timing couldn't be better for this intriguing memoir by a leading forensic anthropologist. The only full-time state employee in her field, Craig utilizes her expertise to identify victims from the tiniest remnant of tissue or bone. The author's reputation as an international expert on human anatomy led her to reconstructing faces of the dead from skull fragments to aid the police. Her credentials involved her in many notorious cases, most notably Waco, the Oklahoma City bombing and the destruction of the World Trade Center. In each instance, her dedication, professionalism and knowledge played key roles; Craig's scientific analysis established that more than one-third of the dead at Waco had died before the fire as a result of a mass murder-suicide by the Branch Davidians. She also rebutted claims that the real bomber of the Murrah Federal Building had died in the explosion by proving that a mysterious severed limb actually belonged to a victim. Despite occasional gratuitous gross-out details concerning maggots, Craig does a good job of explaining her science to the layperson and portraying the nitty-gritty everyday realities of her job.

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From [Booklist](#)

Forensic anthropology is a blazingly popular cultural subject as reflected on television (e.g., the program *CSI*) and in books (Kathy Reichs' mystery series featuring a forensic anthropologist, whose seventh installment, *Monday Mourning*, was reviewed in BKL Je 1 & 15 04). Analogous in spirit to Clea Koff's account of exhuming mass graves in Rwanda and Croatia (*The Bone Woman* [BKL My 15 04]), Craig's memoir presents her experiences drawn from the past decade as an expert on human bones. Like Koff, she stresses the strain that arises from maintaining a businesslike application of her expertise to the macabre facts of decomposed human remains. Nevertheless, readers discover how burnt, shattered, shot, or sawed-off bones harbor vital clues, and, interestingly, how Craig reconciles such forensic information with occasionally erroneous missing-persons information. Wrapping this factual core with her interactions with sheriffs and scientists at crime scenes, which in this work include the World Trade Center, Craig will especially intrigue readers drawn to fictional portrayals of her profession. *Gilbert Taylor*

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From the Inside Flap

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ron Lauer:

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Adrian Rogers:

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Susan Gaier:

People live in this new day of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the extra time or they will get great deal of stress from both way of life and work. So , once we ask do people have free time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not only a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity are you experiencing when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer will unlimited right. Then do you ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, often the

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