

# The Rise of Forensic Pathology in Human Medicine

Alblas A\*

*SAMRC Microbial Water Quality Monitoring Centre, University of Fort Hare, South Africa*

## INTRODUCTION

The rise of forensic pathology in human medicine has greatly contributed to the administration of justice, public safety and security, and medical knowledge. However, the evolution of human forensic pathology has been challenging. Veterinary forensic pathologists can learn from some of the lessons that have informed the growth and development of human forensic pathology. Three main observations have emerged in the past decade. First, wrongful convictions tell us to use a truth-seeking stance rather than an a priori "think dirty" stance when investigating obscure death. Second, missed homicides and concealed homicides tell us that training and certification are the beginning of reliable forensic pathology. Third, failure of a sustainable institutional arrangement that fosters a combination of service, research, and teaching will lead to stagnation of knowledge. Forensic pathology of humans and animals will flourish, help protect society, and support justice if we embrace a modern biomedical scientific model for our practice. We must build training programs, contribute to the published literature, and forge strong collaborative institutions.

The rise of forensic pathology in human medicine has greatly contributed to the administration of justice, public safety and security, and medical knowledge. However, the evolution of human forensic pathology has been challenging. Veterinary forensic pathologists can learn from some of the lessons that have informed the growth and development of human forensic pathology. Three main observations have emerged in the past decade. First, wrongful convictions tell us to use a truth-seeking stance rather than an a priori "think dirty" stance when

investigating obscure death. Second, missed homicides and concealed homicides tell us that training and certification are the beginning of reliable forensic pathology. Third, failure of a sustainable institutional arrangement that fosters a combination of service, research, and teaching will lead to stagnation of knowledge. Forensic pathology of humans and animals will flourish, help protect society, and support justice if we embrace a modern biomedical scientific model for our practice. We must build training programs, contribute to the published literature, and forge strong collaborative institutions. The rise of forensic pathology in human medicine over the latter part of the 20th century and the early part of the 21st century has been a remarkable journey. The systematic development of the medical subspecialty of forensic pathology after training in anatomical or general pathology has changed how science and medicine are used in the justice system and in public safety. Prior to the emergence of forensic pathology, the examination of dead bodies of citizens and victims of crime was performed by pathologists (and other medical practitioners) who lacked basic training in forensic medicine and the interpretation of injuries. However, through the progressive development of institutional and academic infrastructure in forensic pathology, the discipline has evolved to create a highly reliable body of knowledge that can serve the interest of justice. The growth and development of forensic pathology in human medicine can serve as a guide as to how veterinary forensic pathology can become a coherent subspecialty of veterinary pathology. In general, the lessons from human forensic pathology can be distilled into 3 main philosophical or systemic guides.

**\*Correspondence to:** Phillip Engen, SAMRC Microbial Water Quality Monitoring Centre, University of Fort Hare, South Africa, E-mail: alblas26@gmail.com

**Received date:** September 01, 2021; **Accepted date:** September 15, 2021; **Published date:** September 22, 2021

**Citation:** Alblas A (2021) The Rise of Forensic Pathology in Human Medicine. J Foren Path 6:5.

**Copyright:** © 2021 Alblas E. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.