

Unveiling the Dark Secrets: Inside America's Underground Trade in Human Remains

Deep beneath the seemingly ordinary surface of America lies a macabre underworld that deals in the illegal trade of human remains. This shocking and chilling industry thrives in the shadows, feeding off our morbid fascination with death. From stolen skeletons to ancient burial artifacts, the demand for these eerie artifacts continues to fuel a market that operates in secrecy and often violates laws and ethics. In this article, we delve into the haunting details of America's underground trade in human remains, exposing the disturbing truths that lie beneath.

The Historical Significance of Human Remains

Throughout history, human remains have held great cultural and historical value. Archaeologists and anthropologists have relied on these remains to unlock the mysteries of ancient civilizations and gain a deeper understanding of human evolution. Properly excavated and conserved, human remains can offer invaluable insights into the past.

However, the fascination with human remains extends beyond scientific research, leading to a questionable market for bones, skulls, and even entire skeletons. The illegal trade in human remains has become an unfortunate reality, with the respect and dignity owed to the deceased often sacrificed for profit.

Body Brokers: Inside America's Underground

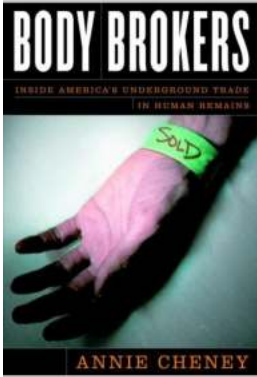
Trade in Human Remains by Annie Cheney (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 240 pages
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Where Do the Human Remains Come From?

One of the most shocking aspects of this illicit trade is the source of the human remains. While some come from ancient burial grounds disturbed by black market looters, others involve clandestine operations within the funeral industry. As difficult as it may be to fathom, funeral homes and crematoriums have been involved in illegally selling body parts and human remains.

Occasionally, grieving families are deceived into unknowingly participating in this gruesome trade. Unscrupulous funeral directors exploit their vulnerability, withholding information about the human remains being sold to third-party buyers who have no respect for the deceased.

The Underground Market and Its Players

The underground market for human remains functions much like any other illicit trade. Buyers, sellers, and middlemen engage in covert transactions, often communicating through encrypted channels to avoid detection by authorities. Online marketplaces and dark web forums make it easier for this disturbing commerce to take place.

Collectors, enthusiasts, and even some educational institutions may be enticed by the prospect of possessing genuine human remains. Some argue that these items can serve as unique teaching tools or add an air of authenticity to certain creative endeavors.

Legal and Ethical Issues

The trade in human remains raises crucial legal and ethical concerns. In the United States, the sale of human remains is strictly regulated and requires proper documentation and permits. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) also enforces the repatriation of certain ancestral remains to their respective tribes.

However, enforcement of these laws remains challenging, and the underground market continues to thrive. The lack of oversight and punishment allows unscrupulous individuals to profit from the desecration of graves and the exploitation of the deceased.

The Consequences of the Underground Trade

The implications of the underground trade in human remains extend far beyond legal and ethical concerns. Theft from burial sites destroys invaluable historical and cultural heritage. The disturbance of ancient graves not only robs future generations of knowledge, but it also disrespects the spiritual beliefs of the deceased and their descendants.

Moreover, this shadow economy perpetuates an industry that has no regard for the dignity and sanctity of the human body. The desensitization to the value of human life and the commodification of the deceased perpetuates a disturbing narrative that chips away at our collective empathy and respect for the dead.

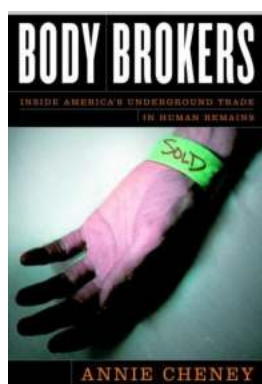
Fighting the Illicit Trade

Efforts to combat the underground trade in human remains must involve a multi-faceted approach. Enhanced regulation, stricter law enforcement, and increased public awareness are key factors in curbing this macabre industry.

Strengthening legal frameworks and ensuring penalties for those involved can act as a deterrent. Additionally, educating the public about the cultural significance of human remains and the consequences of their illegal trade can discourage potential buyers from engaging in this illegal commerce.

The underground trade in human remains remains a chilling reality within the heartland of America. Transcending cultural boundaries and legal jurisdictions, this macabre industry continues to exploit the deceased and undermine our respect for the sanctity of human life.

By shining a light on this dark underbelly and raising awareness about the consequences of the trade, we can take steps towards protecting our historical heritage, upholding ethical standards, and restoring the dignity owed to those who have passed on.



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“You are a little soul carrying around a corpse.” —Epictetus

“Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will follow.” —Matthew 24:28

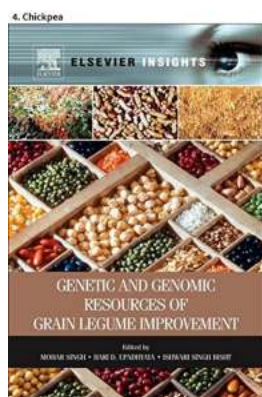
Body Brokers is an audacious, disturbing, and compellingly written investigative exposé of the lucrative business of procuring, buying, and selling human cadavers and body parts.

Every year human corpses meant for anatomy classes, burial, or cremation find their way into the hands of a shadowy group of entrepreneurs who profit by buying and selling human remains. While the government has controls on organs and tissue meant for transplantation, these “body brokers” capitalize on the myriad other uses for dead bodies that receive no federal oversight whatsoever: commercial seminars to introduce new medical gadgetry; medical research studies and training courses; and U.S. Army land-mine explosion tests. A single corpse used for these purposes can generate up to \$10,000.

As journalist Annie Cheney found while reporting on this subject over the course of three years, when there’s that much money to be made with no federal regulation, there are all sorts of shady (and fascinating) characters who are willing to employ questionable practices—from deception and outright theft—to acquire, market and distribute human bodies and parts. In Michigan and New York she discovers funeral directors who buy corpses from medical schools and supply the parts to surgical equipment companies and associations of surgeons. In California, she meets a crematorium owner who sold the body parts of people he was supposed to cremate, generating hundreds of thousands of dollars in profits. In Florida, she attends a medical conference in a luxury hotel, where fresh torsos are delivered in Igloo coolers and displayed on gurneys in a room normally used for banquets. “That torso that you’re living in right now is just flesh and bones to me. To me, it’s a product,” says the New Jersey-based broker presiding

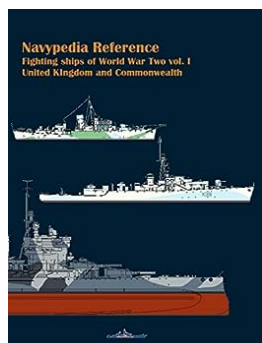
over the torsos. Tracing the origins of body brokering from the “resurrectionists” of the nineteenth century to the entrepreneurs of today, Cheney chronicles how demand for cadavers has long driven unscrupulous funeral home, crematorium and medical school personnel to treat human bodies as commodities.

Gripping, often chilling, and sure to cause a reexamination of the American way of death, *Body Brokers* is both a captivating work of first-person reportage and a surprising inside look at a little-known aspect of the “death care” world.



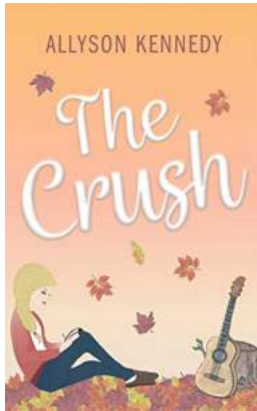
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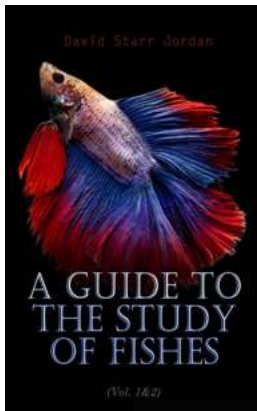
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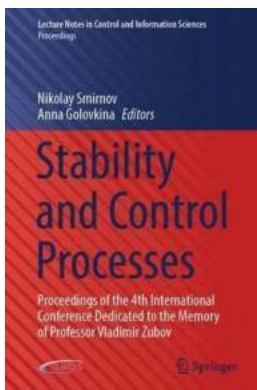
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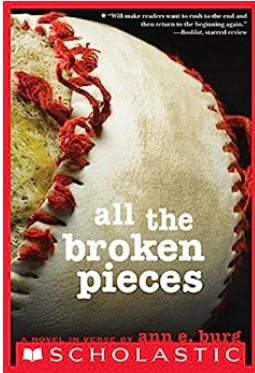
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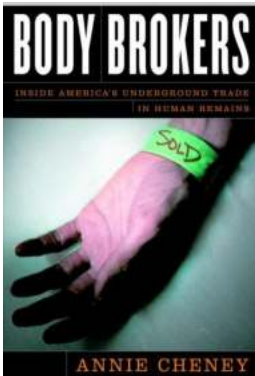
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