Early History Of Human Anatomy: From Antiquity To The Beginning Of The Modern Era

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From antiquity to the beginings of the modern era, the bodies of the executed were the only legal source of bodies for dissection. Starting in the late seventeenth century, the bodies of unclaimed persons were also made legally available. The history of the use of bodies of the executed in German Anatomy Departments during the National Socialist regime is an example for the insidious slide from an ethical use of human bodies in dissection to an unethical one. There are cases of contemporary use of unclaimed or donated bodies of the executed, but they are rarely well documented.