Anali Ranadive

Is the President of Sci**Law**Forensics, Ltd, a forensic science and legal consulting firm in Phoenix, AZ. Ms. Ranadive is an Advisory Commissioner on the American Academy of Forensic Science's Forensic (AAFS) Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC), has served on the AAFS program committee in various capacities for the last twenty years and is a former member of the AAFS Board of Directors.

She co-edited "*Ethics in Forensic Science*" published by Elsevier Press in April, 2012. She conducts training of law enforcement, attorneys, judges, forensic scientists and other experts in various aspects of forensic science and law and consults on criminal cases involving complex scientific evidence, especially DNA, across the U.S.

Ms. Ranadive is currently an adjunct professor at Arizona State University where she teaches a course on Testimony and Ethics in the undergraduate forensic science program. Ms. Ranadive previously worked as a contractor to the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ/USDOJ) Investigative and Forensic Sciences Division where she served as a subject matter expert on Attorney General Reno's *National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence*, was the coordinator for NIJ's five annual Conferences on DNA and Science and the Law, and the facilitator of several technical working groups (TWGs) on various forensic issues.

Prior to NIJ, Ms. Ranadive worked as a staff DNA analyst at Cellmark Diagnostics where she conducted forensic DNA testing and provided expert testimony across the country. She holds a B.A. in Biology from The Johns Hopkins University, an M.F.S. in Forensic Science from The George Washington University, and a J.D. from the American University, Washington College of Law. She is licensed to practice law in Maryland and the District of Columbia.

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Ethics in Forensic Science

Whether you are a forensic scientist working in a laboratory or an attorney, prosecutor or defending criminal cases, working hand in hand with law enforcement presents a unique set of challenges. In addition to maintaining neutrality throughout the evidence collection, testing, reporting and testimony processes, forensic scientists must work overtime to ensure that the public perception that we work "for" the government is minimized.

Despite many crime laboratories falling under the jurisdiction of a law enforcement agency or prosecutor's office, forensic scientists must be neutral and unbiased. We "work" for neither side, but are staunch advocates for the underlying science of our discipline. Regardless of which side calls us to testify (presumably whichever side is most aided by our results in any given case), WHAT we say should not differ. Whether we testify for the prosecution or the defense our obligation to uphold fundamental ethical standards remains constant. We must present the science, the methods, the data, and the interpretation in a sound and reliable manner, every time, without exception. We must never misrepresent or overstate what the data supports. We must be transparent in explaining the strengths and limitations of our discipline.

There have always been *"forensic bad apples"* who transgress these principles by falsifying data, reporting results without conducting testing, and provide unsupported and unethical testimony. These actors tarnish the field and fuel the public perception that we are corrupt and *"in the pocket of law enforcemen*t".

But the blame can also be shared with the bar. Criminal attorneys who proffer forensic experts also have an ethical obligation to ensure that the testimony they elicit is accurate, reliable and generally accepted in the field. "Coaching" or telling an expert what they need to say is not only unethical, it could rise to the level of suborning perjury. The hope is that with adequate and ongoing training to everyone in the criminal justice continuum these issues will diminish over time.