

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of "Forensic Odontology"

REFERENCE: Gustafson, G., *Forensic Odontology*, American Elsevier, New York, 1966, 263 pages, \$12.75.

To the dentist and to all those in a law enforcement capacity interested or knowledgeable in the field of forensic sciences, a basic textbook is necessary in a reference library so that when a sudden call is made for professional services in an unforeseen disaster, a ready guide will be available. For many years, devoted and eminently qualified individuals have given freely of themselves in time, effort, and in many other ways, in the interest and promotion of the increasingly important and rapidly growing branch of odontology in law enforcement needs. Gösta Gustafson is one such individual who has proven his wisdom, confidence, and expertise in dental identification, disseminating his knowledge to all who seek it.

The book Gustafson has written brings to the reader his quiet wisdom, restrained enthusiasm, and his broad knowledge and experience in the multiphase field of forensic odontology. His systematic coverage of the various steps needed by the qualified odontologist is well organized and as thoroughly covered as is possible in a single text, strong in some sections, and necessarily weak in others—especially those in which little scientific work and experience have been catalogued. His sage advice scattered throughout the book should be heeded not only by the novice, but remembered as well by the expert.

Until all teaching institutions can agree on a standard method of charting teeth which is accepted universally, we will always have the confusion and time-consuming task of interpretation, as Gustafson has pointed out in his discussion on transmitting records from one individual to another. He also brings out the headaches and heartaches the disaster team encounters in the early moments of confusion, and the many demands that are placed upon the investigators.

He has drawn on the experience and research of others as well as his own efforts. With his comments on marking dentures, compiling a good dental and medical history, the weaknesses of assumptions, the methods of age determination, and pertinent case histories, and with a well represented subject and reference section, he has laid the groundwork for the new books that are to follow shortly, books that will update and reinforce the excellent work Gustafson has contributed to the forensic sciences.

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