

## BOOK REVIEW

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### A Review of *Medicolegal Investigation of Death* (Second Edition)

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**REFERENCE:** Spitz, W. U. and Fisher, R. S., *Medicolegal Investigation of Death: Guidelines for the Application of Pathology to Crime Investigation*, Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1980, 623 pages, \$45.00.

The second edition of *Medicolegal Investigation of Death* will continue to provide the forensic scientist, the attorney, and the law enforcement officer with a basic practical textbook for the application of pathology to crime investigation. The text retains its comprehensive nature without being too technical yet includes the obviously technical materials including up-to-date references. The original list of 14 authors has been expanded to 16 to include new developments in death investigation.

The subjects within the text cover almost all aspects of death investigation: trauma, sudden or unexpected death in natural disease, sudden infant death syndrome, and toxicology. The addition of chemical considerations by Coe fills an important need for the investigator. The sections on human and dental identification have been expanded. One rather interesting sideline of note is the similarity in data of the types of death in Cuyahoga County in 1969 and 1976 in the section on sudden and unexpected deaths. The shortcoming of the previous edition (1972) in the area of toxicology has been rectified by the addition of a new chapter dealing with methods and interpretation of toxicological procedures. The section on sudden infant death syndrome is also new and valuable. The omission of the section on abortion in this edition may or may not prove to be an error depending on the various groups who might influence legislation one way or another.

The book, although not an atlas, has excellent photographs, more than in the first edition, and of better quality than in the second printing of the first edition. Although it would have been useful to have some in color, the costs would have been prohibitive, as the authors here so stated.

The textbook is a highly recommended addition for the reference library of all persons interested in forensic pathology. Again, as in my review of the first edition, I would recommend it highly and without reservation to all who become involved in death investigation.

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