

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of Death Investigator's Hand Book: A Field Guide to Crime Scene Processing, Forensic Evaluations, and Investigative Techniques

REFERENCE: Eliopoulos, L. N., *Death Investigator's Handbook*; Paladin Press, Boulder, Colorado 80306, 1993, 873 pp.

This hand book is divided into three main sections: Crime Scene, Investigative, and Scientific. Each covers nearly every topic imaginable in outline form in a series of subsections. To compile this data the author has drawn from 304 sources cited in the bibliography.

This outline form, with its charts, lists, and tables is what, in my opinion, makes the book so valuable and practical for the neophyte or experienced detective, crime scene investigator or instructor/trainer in the field, office, or classroom.

I must admit that following my first cursory inspection of the text I found much fault with it. Of course, because of my field of expertise, my attention was first drawn to the section on crime scene investigation. There I found a list of specific containers for

various types of evidence that does not allow for agency preference. Another list of evidence collection supplies includes 5% nitric acid solution; an agent that has not used by my bureau for several years.

In the subsection on the methods of obtaining latent prints from various surfaces, iodine and benzidine are listed. The utilization of these chemicals for this purpose has long been discarded by a number of agencies because of their carcinogenic features.

It is when I perused the hand book and accepted it as conglomeration of suggestions, guides, and memory revivers that I realized its true value.

Need a handy Physicians' Desk Reference (PDR)? It's here—turn to page 705. Your knowledge of firearms is limited! Help starts on page 763. You can't remember the name of a human bone—check the subsection on forensic anthropology. The list of medical abbreviations (pg. 503) may assist you in interpreting a hospital chart.

This hand book will not solve a case for you, but it may help with a problem encountered along the way.

I consider it a valuable tool to have available.

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