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BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of *Poison Detection in Human Organs*

REFERENCE: Curry, Alan, *Poison Detection in Human Organs,* 3rd ed., Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1976, 356 pages.

This is the third edition of an excellent textbook on analytical toxicology. Those of us who have used the first edition (1963), 150 pages, and the second edition (1969), 280 pages, will be pleased with this enlarged and revised edition. About half the book is devoted to general toxicological information including emergency hospital toxicology, drug abuse screening, and analysis of blood, urine, liver, gastric content, brain, and kidney. The last half of the book is devoted to monographs on the analysis of specific substances. There are over 500 references; most are very recent. Of particular value are the interpretations of results.

Two approaches are considered in the text; the first is the analysis of the "general unknown" and the second is the direct analysis of specific substances. The general principles of extraction and chemical separation are adequately covered. There does not appear to be any information on "heroin-related" deaths and the toxicology associated with them. This reviewer is particularly sensitive to methods for determining propoxyphene and norpropoxyphene and would perfer that the amount of parent drug be determined. In deaths the blood should contain at least 0.1 mg/100 ml of the *unmetabolized* drug, propoxyphene.

The method of Verebely, K. and Inturrisi, C. E., "Simultaneous Determination of Propoxyphene and Norpropoxyphene in Human Biofluids Using Gas-Liquid Chromatography," *Journal of Chromatography,* Vol. 75, No. 2, 1973, p. 195, will allow for such a determination. Heroin and propoxyphene have been problems for North American toxicologists.

This book is highly recommended to anyone who must analyze for poisons. This would be my choice if I were allowed only one book on poison detection.

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