

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of Death Investigation and Examination Medicolegal Guidelines and Checklists

REFERENCE: Lipskin, B. A. and Field, K. S., Eds., *Death Investigation and Examination, Medicolegal Guidelines and Checklists*, The Forensic Sciences Foundation Press, Colorado Springs, CO 80910, 1984, 214 pp., \$65.00.

The notebook, edited by the Executive Director and the Chairman of the Forensic Sciences Foundation, consists of a ten-part series of guidelines and checklists concerning a variety of medicolegal procedures. The contributors are forensic science experts in their respective fields. These fields include scene investigation, postmortem examination, toxicology, odontology, physical anthropology, and jurisdictional problems. There is also a selected bibliography covering some of the major forensic science areas.

Each section attempts to delineate specific steps to be followed in a complete medicolegal investigation of death through the use of case studies or systematic examinations. Although there is considerable discussion on the gross examination, the value of the preliminary investigations and medicolegal data is emphasized. It is further stressed that interpretations should not be on the gross autopsy findings alone but upon the complete evaluation of the case. At the end of each section is a series of checklists presented in outline form to be used in general and specific medicolegal examinations.

The loose-leaf configuration of the notebook allows for expansion of the checklists by the Foundation through further publications or by the recipient of the volume adding additional material. The volume is quite comprehensive without being pedantic or dictatorial. The use of basic terminology and definitions will be valuable in courts.

The editors and contributing authors are to be commended for the accomplishment of such a tremendous task. The notebook is highly recommended for use in the development of new medical examiner's or coroner's offices, for the new medicolegal death investigator, and for review by the experienced investigator.

The value of this notebook will be realized as more and more legal, law enforcement, and government agencies demand excellence in the medicolegal examination.

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