

BOOK REVIEWS

The sexual exploitation of children – A practical guide to assessment, investigation, and intervention; written by Seth L. Goldstein, Second Edition. CRC Press (Boca Raton/FL, London, New York, Washington/D.C.) 1999; (CRC series in Practical Aspects of Criminal and Forensic Investigations) 574 pages, DM 140,-. ISBN 0-8493-8154-2

This book is part of a series entitled “Practical Aspects of Criminal and Forensic Investigation” and is published 12 years after the first edition. The author Seth Goldstein is a former police officer who specialised in the field of investigating sexual abuse of children and is now working as the executive director of a Child Abuse Forensic Institute. As his objective the author states the higher priority of the protection of the child even if in conflict with the needs of the criminal investigation.

In addition to the introduction the book is divided into 8 chapters (State of the Problem, Parties to the Crime, Commission of the Crime; Child Pornography Investigation; Interviewing Children; Interviewing the Offender, Search Warrant, Case Management). At the end of every chapter “notes and references” and recommendations for further reading are given.

There is a lot of useful information on different aspects of child abuse, especially on interviewing victims. Unfortunately the legal recommendations of this “investigative reference guide” cannot be simply transferred to Europe because of the differences in the legal systems. Special information for physicians is not included; medical indicators are restricted to 1 1/2 pages – and for further information only 2 references are given.

If someone were very interested in the field of sexual child abuse and the situation in the United States this book might be recommended, it is not useful to someone who expects information on broader range and scope about this field.

S. Banaschak, Bonn

BG Brogdon, MD “Forensic Radiology”

In recent years it has become increasingly more common for imaging techniques (Röntgenogrammes, computer tomography, nuclear magnetic resonance) from the clinical radiology to be introduced into forensic medicine. The majority of forensic medical institutes have X-ray equipment which are mostly different. In contrast the capability of an optimal utilisation of the X-ray equipment and an efficient evaluation of the images are often present in only a limited circle of individuals. The book on Forensic Radiology from Brogdon published in 1998 is a welcome contribution. This is especially so for the last chapters which deal with the installation of equipment, radiation protection, the positioning of anatomical structures for special questions and the production of usable X-ray images. The individual applications are described in a chapters “Identification” “Gun-shot wounds” and “Radiology of abuse”. The largest section is taken up by the question of identification as expected. Emphasis is given to the estimation of age from skeletal parameters, dental radiography with respect to post-mortem orthopantomography and identification of the dead in mass catastrophies. The high level of practical experience is reflected in chapters such as “Pit-

falls in the radiology of gun-shot wounds”. In the chapter on child abuse there are excellent diagrams of well-known skeletal changes such as the corner fractures and also important information on the detection of soft tissue injuries. A complete chapter is dedicated to the use of nuclear spin resonance in cases of suspected child abuse. Furthermore there are descriptions on the detection of foreign bodies and from body packers in the alimentary canal. The book is rich in illustrations, most of which are excellent and the chapters on historical perspectives, fakes and forgeries and the stereolithographic reconstruction of the 5300-year-old skull from Ötztal are fascinating. The book has a very high practical value for the forensic practise and will contribute to the increasing introduction of radiological techniques in the forensic practise. One shortcoming of the book is that microradiographical investigation techniques to detect foreign bodies in wounds are not mentioned. However, apart from this the book is expected to be well accepted by radiologists and forensic pathologists.

A. Du Chesne, Münster

Introduction to Forensic Sciences,

ed. WG Eckert ISBN 0-8493-8101-0 CRC PRESS Boca Raton

The book is interesting to read and covers most of the important aspects of forensic science. As reflected in the title and in the preface, this book is suitable for newcomers to the field of forensic science and fulfils this aim by giving a sometimes superficial overview of the various topics. This book is, however, not suitable for practising forensic scientists or pathologists who would be disappointed by the lack of detail. The arrangement of the chapters is rather unbalanced and some of the contributions are not very well represented. This is especially so for the new chapter on forensic pathology which is only 13 pages long. The autopsy is described in only 3 paragraphs and the external examination of the body is only very briefly described. The book also gives an unbalanced view of the various aspects which is probably mainly due to the fact that most of the contributions come from America. It would have been interesting to include some aspects of other legal systems most notably in Europe. It is disturbing that in the appendix on resources in forensic sciences the bibliography especially for periodicals shows many shortcomings. Some of the periodicals listed such as “The Forensic Examiner” and “Revista de Medicina Legale De Chile” are practically unknown outside America and some of the most important periodicals such as International Journal of Legal Medicine, Forensic Science International and the Journal of Forensic Science Society have been omitted. The book also suffers from some poor quality illustrations such as figures 3.8 and 3.9 and some of the illustrations in the chapter bloodstain pattern interpretation do not transpose to black and white photographs. For a new and revised edition the list of references in the chapter serology and DNA typing are very out of date, the most recent being from 1993. This cannot be considered an up-to-date review of the subject. However, the book fulfils its main objectives to give the student or lay person an introduction to various aspects of forensic science.

S. Rand, Münster