

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of *Autopsy*

REFERENCE: Adams, J. R. and Mader, R. D., *Autopsy*, Year Book Medical Publishers, Inc., Chicago, 1976, 196 pages, \$24.80

This book discusses the performance of an autopsy with the range of techniques varying from those appropriate for a death resulting from carcinoma of the lung to those appropriate for examination of the intact arterial system from the heart to the brain. The most unique aspect of the book is the use of numerous photographs to illustrate the techniques described in the text. There are 178 black and white photographs with the vast majority of these being of excellent quality.

Approximately half of the book describes with both text and photographs the autopsy of a death resulting from lung carcinoma. All elements of the autopsy are covered—the clinical chart review, postmortem examination of all organ systems, and finishing with a chapter showing the completed autopsy report.

A highly specialized technique of removal of the entire intact arterial system from the heart to the brain is illustrated. This technique would rarely be used, but in selected cases would prove invaluable to demonstrate pathologic lesions in the carotid arterial system. This discussion also shows the removal of the tongue along with the neck organs.

Other chapters of the book discuss problems created by the surgical patient including cardiac surgery, transplantation problems, special problems with deaths resulting from various types of malignancies, tissue samples for microscopic examination, and technical aspects of the use of the camera at the autopsy table. The authors encourage pathologists to be involved in clinical medicine and education and not to sequester themselves within their laboratories.

The only aspect of the medicolegal autopsy presented is a short section giving a superficial discussion of deaths from multiple trauma. It is mentioned that bile should be saved for toxicologic studies if indicated, but no discussion is given of the indications for a complete toxicologic work-up or the specimens to be submitted for this study. Admittedly this book is not primarily written concerning the medicolegal autopsy, but almost all pathologists occasionally are required to perform this type of autopsy and a discussion of general principles would have been valuable.

This volume is highly recommended for the pathology resident or medical student beginning his training in autopsy pathology. The discussion of basic techniques illustrated with numerous detailed photographs is invaluable.

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