

BOOK REVIEW

J. A. Perper,¹ M.D., LL.B., M.Sc.

A Review of *Forensische Histologie*

REFERENCE: Janssen, W., *Forensische Histologie*, Verlag Max Schmidt-Tomhild, Lübeck, West Germany, 1977, 388 pages.

Most medicolegal treatises concentrate on the macroscopic aspects of the forensic autopsy and do not accord sufficient importance to histological patterns of injuries. Books on forensic histology are rather sparse and, for this reason, any new addition is welcome in the library of the forensic pathologist.

Forensische Histologie is one of the better books on this subject. The text is adequately supplemented with good quality black-and-white photomicrographs. The subjects span a wide spectrum of forensic problems, including postmortem artifacts, differential diagnosis, aging of thrombi, foreign body emboli, histology of hypoxia and shock, sudden infant death syndrome, pathology of perinatal death, microscopic patterns of hypothermia, thermal and electric burns, irradiation, and poisoning.

The chapter on poisoning is rather short though the basic presentation of the major types of toxic injury is sound and clear.

The book lacks a chapter on the microscopic examination of hair and fibers. However, this is not a major shortcoming, considering that forensic pathologists are not very often required to display such expertise, usually assumed by criminologists. Another deficiency of the book is its total lack of reference to electron microscopy, a promising technique in forensic histology.

In conclusion, *Forensische Histologie* is a good basic book on forensic microscopy. Unfortunately, to a large number of our readers who are not multilingual, the German text is inaccessible.

¹Chief forensic pathologist, County of Allegheny, 542 Fourth Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219.