

## BOOK REVIEW

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### *A Review of Scott's Fingerprint Mechanics*

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**REFERENCE:** Olsen, R. D., Sr., *Scott's Fingerprint Mechanics*, Charles C Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Ill., 1978, 460 pages.

Excellent textbooks on the fingerprint profession are extremely rare. This text must be included in that group. It examines all phases of latent print development and crime scene procedures and provides the reader with keen data on the equipment necessary for these methods. This reviewer is impressed with the detailed but easily understood explanations given to each facet of fingerprinting discussed. The structure of the book indicates that substantial consideration was given to the arrangement of the subject matter. Illustrations are both current and lucid.

The numerous references provide the reader with many additional sources of information. The study and review questions at the end of each chapter will make this publication very useful as a classroom text.

There are two important areas of the latent print work which this text treats too lightly. More emphasis should have been made on the verification of identifications. This is mentioned briefly in Sections 34 and 134; the latter section states that a request by the defense counsel to have the identification verified by another examiner should be complied with without hesitation. It is a sound administrative policy to require that all identifications (latent and inked) be verified by a second person. It is a form of quality control that precludes any possibility of an erroneous identification being presented in court. The other area that should have received more emphasis is the successful introduction of latent print testimony during judicial proceedings. This is briefly mentioned in Section 134. It must be emphasized that although a technician may have the technical ability to develop and identify latent fingerprints, he must also be able to testify convincingly in court to the examination he has conducted. Otherwise, his efforts will have been wasted.

This publication is recommended for the student of fingerprint identification matters. It will serve as a useful reference for the attorney, criminalist, and identification officer.

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