

## BOOK REVIEW

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### *A Review of Postmortem Procedures*

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**REFERENCE:** Gresham, G. A. and Turner, A. F., *Postmortem Procedures*. Year Book Medical Publishers, Chicago, 1979, 160 pages, \$24.95.

*Postmortem Procedures* is designed primarily for the autopsy assistant and consists of 159 pages with 168 black and white photographs. The ten chapters are arranged in the sequence the body proceeds through the mortuary, that is, receiving area procedures and design, postmortem room design, special autopsy procedures, and preparation of the body for the funeral director.

The first four chapters (body in the mortuary) contain useful information about dealing with special religious practices, families viewing bodies, knife sharpening, and traditional mortuary room procedures and record keeping.

The conventional postmortem techniques of Rokitanski and Virchow are described and well illustrated, although the illustrations are usually several pages away from the narrative text, requiring much page-turning by the reader attempting to correlate the two. The technical procedures are in great detail; however, the narrative form makes it more difficult to follow than the step-by-step format used in some other autopsy manuals.

Some special autopsy techniques such as bacterial and viral sampling and pneumothorax demonstration are described. A glossary and chapter summary as well as an appendix of useful chemical tests that can be done in the autopsy room are included.

Unfortunately, there is very little information about forensic science methods. Photography and radiology in the postmortem room are very briefly described. There is some legal advice and a chapter on death certificates and coroner's cases, as practiced in the United Kingdom.

In summary, it is a well-illustrated, well-written book for autopsy technicians who practice in the United Kingdom and who are not required to process forensic science material.

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