

BOOK REVIEW

*B. A. J. Fisher*¹

A Review of *Criminalistics*

REFERENCE: Saferstein, R., *Criminalistics: An Introduction to Forensic Sciences*, 2nd ed., Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1981, 470 pages, no price listed.

The second edition of Richard Saferstein's book *Criminalistics: An Introduction to Forensic Sciences*, like the earlier edition, offers the beginning student of forensic science as well as the nonscientist criminal justice practitioner an excellent overview of criminalistics and the capabilities of today's crime laboratory. The practicing criminalist will likely find the text too elementary for his own use but could well recommend it to prosecutors and defense attorneys to help them understand different laboratory analytical techniques.

The book is well illustrated with many excellent photographs, line drawings, and a few spectra. These are well integrated into the text and serve to clarify certain concepts.

Certain aspects of the book could be presented in greater detail. The chapter on forensic toxicology, for example, discusses the Breathalyzer but ignores the Gas Chromatograph Intoximeter and Intoxilyzer used in many jurisdictions. The text covers laboratory analytical techniques of the more commonly encountered types of physical evidence but is somewhat sketchy on the proper techniques to use in the collection and preservation of evidence.

In spite of these few shortcomings, the text is an excellent introduction to forensic science for the nonscientist and would make an excellent choice in a police science curriculum or as a basic introductory reference book.

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