

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of *Topics in Forensic and Analytical Toxicology*

REFERENCE: Maes, R. A. A., Ed., *Topics in Forensic and Analytical Toxicology*. Analytical Chemistry Symposia Series—Volume 20, Elsevier Science Pub. Co., Inc., 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, NY 10017, 1984. 214 pp., \$57.75.

This volume consists of the proceedings of the Annual European Meeting of the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists, held in Munich, 21–25 Aug. 1983.

There are 27 papers presented by European authors with a few by representatives of developing countries. The opening lecture by A. S. Curry, "Toxicology—Past, Present and Future," is one of the highlights of this book, in which he takes us from the practice of toxicology in the 1950s (essentially pre-instrumental era) through the development phases that led to the 1980s GC/MS being the state of the art. His firsthand, graphic comments on diagnosis of phosphorous poisonings by distilling tissues in a darkened room, for example, give us a nostalgic appreciation for the dedication and perseverance of the early toxicologists, who often had to spend many hours on manual analytical procedures to obtain successful results.

The succeeding papers do not follow any special theme, but most (13) deal with analytical procedures. These include evaluation and use of enzyme immunoassays (EMIT®) in clinical and drug abuse applications, use of various extraction parameters (such as subtilisin hydrolysis and Extrelut® for basic drugs), HPLC, and GC/MS procedures for various applications.

Five interesting papers report unusual intoxications, including tetrahydrofuran, arsenic, a case of hair analysis for opiates, and analides toxicity (stemming originally from the contaminated olive oil epidemic in Spain).

The final section is a summary of round table conferences on three timely topics: Quality Control in Forensic Toxicology, led by C. B. Walberg, Documentation in Analytical Toxicology by Rokus A. DeZeeuw, and Education in Forensic Toxicology by John S. Oliver.

In summary, a book with some interesting papers worth perusing for the forensic toxicologist, but with little new information for most.

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