

BOOK REVIEW

Larry R. Tate,¹ M.D.

A Review of Medicolegal Postmortems— Guidelines for Crime Investigation

REFERENCE: Parikh, C. K., *Medicolegal Postmortems—Guidelines for Crime Investigation*, Medical Publications, 6, Owners Court, Near Strand Cinema, Colaba, Bombay 400005, India, 1985, 184 pp.

Dr. Parikh has written a reference that may be consulted by the physician tasked with a medicolegal investigation of death who may have had little experience with forensic medicine. Specifically targeted by the author are Indian medical officers in the mofussil place (rural or provincial district), but others throughout the world in similar circumstances would find his book useful.

While this work may be read in toto, its design is such as to encourage the consultation of a particular chapter for guidance before undertaking the examination of a particular case. Dr. Parikh emphasizes the use of checklists to avoid any important omissions, and in most chapters provides a sample checklist which, if used, would prevent a medical investigator from going much astray.

The chapters are well organized and clearly written. The first portion of the volume provides almost step-by-step directions of special procedures to be used in selected circumstances. A large atlas of illustrations and photographs are at the back of the book. An impressive number of the photographs are in color. The grouping of all the visual materials at the back is understandable, given the intent and design of this reference, yet it is still awkward to have to turn from text to the back of the book, and back again.

Less a criticism than an observation is that given the primary audience for this text, Indian medical officers, some of the terminology was indigenous to that country and unfamiliar to this reviewer. In no instance did this prove a great detriment, nor did it ever obfuscate any medical point. In similar token, some small portions of the text are singularly related to practice in India, and are not applicable to physicians practicing elsewhere, or under other systems for death investigation.

Dr. Parikh has performed a service for the medical officers of his land, and in so doing has provided a work which should assist many others involved in death investigation.

¹Franklin County Coroner's Office, 520 King Ave., Columbus, OH 43201.