

BOOK REVIEW

*Morris Reyna*¹

A Review of Practical Homicide Investigation, Tactics, Procedures and Forensic Techniques

REFERENCE: Geberth, V. J., *Practical Homicide Investigation, Tactics, Procedures and Forensic Techniques*, Elsevier Science Publishing Co., 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, NY 10017.

The author's stated intention in this book is to provide a homicide investigators' handbook with emphasis on "The New York City Experience which falls between the medicolegal and academic textbooks." He succeeds in providing the "New York City Experience" by filling the book with his experiences as a supervisor for the New York City Police Department but fails to achieve his second goal by falling below the quality of both medicolegal and academic textbooks.

The book is well organized, providing numerous case histories that are used to stress investigative techniques. Sections are included on forensic techniques in death investigation that are either incomplete or erroneous. An example is the statement by the author that, "the presence of larvae from a housefly found on a body outdoors will indicate that the body had previously lain indoors (p. 179, paragraph seven). What are the origin of "houseflies"? Another technical error is the author failing to mention that the fingerprint will be reversed (negative fingerprint) by using the method described by the author to lift fingerprints from the fingers of a deceased person (p. 193, paragraph two).

Many of the photographs are too dark for interpretation and others, which are blurred or unclear, may be a result of using color photographs or transparencies to make black-and-white photographs.

This book, in spite of its shortcomings, is recommended as a practical guide to homicide investigation and should be of particular assistance to the inexperienced or infrequent homicide investigator.

¹Chief medicolegal investigator, Forensic Sciences, Department of Pathology, Arizona Health Sciences Center, 1501 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson, AZ 85724.