

BOOK REVIEW

James G. Zimmerly,¹ M.D., J.D., M.P.H., LL.D. (Hon.)

Review of *The Scientific Expert in Court, Principles and Guidelines*

REFERENCE: Froede RC. *The scientific expert in court, principles and guidelines*. AACC Press, Washington DC, 1999, \$19.00

You could fill a small room with the books an expert witness testimony that have appeared in the last two years. This reviewer has read many and reviewed several. In terms of volume of text, this book is one of the smaller ones. Ninety-two pages including Index and Appendices. But this is a Guide Book and not a library reference text. The author, a very experienced forensic pathologist and seasoned expert witness, covers all of the important topics. The book is aimed at the novice expert witness and hits the target in providing basic guidelines to prepare for a court appearance.

After a brief introduction, the author covers responding to a subpoena. Chapter 3 deals with various types of evidence and how to best present that evidence to a jury. Another chapter lists the various actors in the courtroom scene and their respective roles. Trial preparation deals with review of materials and presentation of cre-

dentials. Very little is said about pretrial preparation as far as working with the attorney who has contracted your services. If the pretrial preparation is thorough, the trial should be a breeze!

Interviews with both sides, affidavits and depositions are explained, followed by a discussion of in court testimony, direct and cross examination. The Do's and Dont's for in court testimony are covered well.

Chapter 9, entitled "Angles of Attack on the Expert's Testimony" is inclusive and contains much good advice. "Use, misuse and abuse of the expert witness, while brief" also contains much valuable information.

Appendices contain Pretrial and Trial Checklists, a sample of direct examination dealing with qualifying the expert and a glossary of common legal terms.

The experienced expert witness will have faced all of the scenarios in this book. The expert witness, regardless of scientific discipline, who has been to court on fewer than a dozen occasions can benefit from perusing this guidebook. The novice expert witness would be well advised to read this book first and then, after this very good introduction, look to the more voluminous texts for greater detail on areas of special interest.

¹Georgetown University Law Center, Washington DC.