

BOOK REVIEW

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Review of: *Forensic Engineering, Second Edition*

REFERENCE: Carper KL, editor. *Forensic Engineering, Second Edition*, CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 2001, 401 pp.

This is the second edition of a book first published in 1989, with the current edition consisting of 12 individual chapters on various topics written by specialists in their respective fields. Chapter headings are as follows:

1. What is Forensic Engineering?
2. Learning from Failures
3. Fire Investigation
4. Industrial accidents
5. Product Liability
6. Traffic Accident Reconstruction
7. Transportation Disaster Investigation
8. Civil Engineering Investigation
9. Environmental Systems Failures
10. The Report
11. Forensic Photogrammetry
12. The Engineer as an Expert Witness

A short conclusion of the editor follows along with a brief Appendix on "Recommended Practices." The chapters in the second

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edition are essentially revised and updated versions of the chapters in the first edition. This reviewer has used the first edition of this book as one of several texts and references in a junior/senior level forensic engineering course he developed and taught at the University of Pennsylvania. The book is intended to give an overview of the above listed topics within the very broad discipline of forensic engineering. Unfortunately, one reasonably sized book cannot cover the entire forensic engineering field and the coverage essentially restricts this overview to the listed specialty subfields and to matters involving civil litigation. Most AAFS members are involved in criminal litigation matters and may find it surprising that the practice of forensic engineering takes place predominantly, but not exclusively, in a civil litigation context. It is disappointing that the revised edition, which comes 12 years after the first edition, has retained its original chapter headings and has paid little or no specific attention to some very current and visible forensic engineering subfields such as forensic engineering in injury and death investigation, biomechanics, computer methods and animations, and the burgeoning field of forensic digital technology applied to computer and white collar crime. However, the book is largely successful in achieving its stated purpose of providing an overview of several fields within the discipline of forensic engineering. This reviewer recommends the book for general reading for those who desire an overview of forensic engineering, and would recommend that forensic engineers and scientists consider purchasing the book for their personal libraries.