

**Commentary on:** Bottrell MC, Webb JB. Book Review of: *Forensic Interpretation of Glass Evidence*. J Forensic Sci 2002;47(4): 926–7.

Sir:

The review of *Forensic Interpretation of Glass Evidence* by Bottrell MC and Webb JB, which appeared in *J Forensic Sci*, July 2002, Vol. 47, No. 4 came to our attention (1). We are appreciative of the general tenor of the opening remarks on the importance of our research, and perhaps even more so of the criticisms numbered 1–7 on factual matters. We would like to say, in fairness to our readers, that a revised printing is in preparation, and in fairness to ourselves, that many of the objections raised had not escaped our attention (a list of errata will be offered by the editor to those who do not desire to purchase the revised printing). It also seems to us that some objections stem from matters of expression, or perhaps from a less than punctilious reading, than in matters of substance. But generally speaking, the remarks on factual errors are well taken, and efforts are being made on the part of the authors to secure the more detailed account forgone by the reviewers for reasons of brevity, and which did not appear in the review (nor in other reviews available to this date in forensic literature).

The review concludes on a more serious note, concerning the relative value of the Bayesian method as opposed to the empirical (or traditional approach, here unspecified), specifically in the matter of their presentation before a court of law for the appreciation of those ordinary people called upon to serve as jurors. It was not our intention, nor do we believe it in the interest of progress in our field, to enter into an evaluative or polemical discussion of these issues. We would like to repeat here our remarks in the opening pages of our study, which state the position from which this book (as opposed to

another, possible book) was written: “We have followed the Bayesian method of reasoning in this book. This has been a deliberate choice, and we have not argued its advantages extensively here. It may become apparent to anyone reading this book what these advantages are by simply noticing that the Bayesian approach has allowed us to handle some difficult casework problems with the assistance of logic.”

To conclude, we would like to cite a previous review of our book (2): “*Forensic Interpretation of Glass Evidence* contains valuable information for the practising forensic glass examiner and should be included on any trace evidence bookshelf”.

## References

1. Bottrell MC, Webb JB. Review of: *Forensic interpretation of glass evidence*. J Forensic Sci 2002;47:926–7.
2. Sandercock M. Review of: *Forensic interpretation of glass evidence*. J Can Soc Forensic Sci 2001;34(2):91–2.

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