

BOOK REVIEW

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Review of: *Contrast: An Investigator's Basic Reference Guide to Fingerprint Identification Concepts, 2nd edition*

REFERENCE: Coppock CA. *Contrast: an investigator's basic reference guide to fingerprint identification concepts, 2nd edn.* Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher Ltd., 2007, 193 pp.

The author has done a disservice to his work by identifying this book as *only* an investigator's reference guide. This is an excellent book that should be read by crime scene technicians, criminal investigators, lawyers, latent print examiners and those with an interest in the field. Coppock formulated *Contrast* in such a way that it is an ideal reference. The author has added 61 pages, three chapters, two appendices and an abbreviated glossary since the 2001 edition. Much of the additional information deals with advancements in technology and expert requirements (ACE-V).

Contrast begins with a brief history detailing the role of fingerprints as a means of personal identification, and the scientific explanation of fingerprint uniqueness and permanence. Chapters devoted to latent fingerprint development and recovery provide insight to and instruction on proper search and processing techniques. Flow charts are included that provide step-by-step instruction for the processing of both porous (paper) and nonporous (glass, plastic) evidence.

The chapters of *Contrast* devoted to classification and computerized fingerprint databases are ideal reading for ten-print examiners. They provide an overview of current classification systems, as well as AFIS, IAFIS, and Live-Scan technologies. Latent print examiners will find the chapters that discuss the ACE-V methodology

appealing, as Coppock draws from the theory of the scientific method to articulate this methodology.

Contrast concludes with a training and protocol outline for both ten-print and latent print examiners. This protocol is designed to work in conjunction with protocols established by SWGFAST and the IAI Latent Print Training Manual. Coppock also includes several appendices, enabling the reader to quickly reference information. The abbreviated glossary provides one with the tools to properly document and interpret fingerprint terminology with a reference for additional terms.

The book is not without its faults. There are several editorial issues that should have been corrected by the second edition. For example, the table of contents has exemplar misspelled in Chapter 4. Coppock also has a habit of referencing figures in the text without a page number (e.g., page 23 refers to Fig. 3, which is on page 12; page 39 refers to Fig. 50, which is on page 83). This can be distracting to the reader that wants to refer to the figure. Finally, Appendix B discusses dye stains, chemiluminescence, and photoluminescence, but uses black and white photographs. Color photography would have added a visual impact to his discussion.

Coppock's work makes an excellent reference book. It covers the who, what, when, where, how, and why of fingerprint collection, preservation, enhancement, and identification. The author makes excellent points on the use of "Live Scan" and ACE-V. By arranging his book in such a logical, easy-to-follow manner, Coppock has provided material that will be well-received by a wide audience beyond the investigator.

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