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BOOK REVIEW

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Review of: *Interpol's Forensic Science Review*

REFERENCE: Nic Daéid N, Houck MM, editors. Interpol's forensic science review. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2010, 786 pp.

In this first volume of *Interpol's Forensic Science Review*, editors Niamh Nic Daéid and Max M. Houck sought to compile reports from the triennial Interpol Forensic Science Symposium "in one source for reference, research, and teaching." The end result: One book, five sections, 16 chapters, and a global approach to well over 4000 cited references from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, internet websites, working groups, and papers presented at various meetings via the published proceedings. The included references generally span a 4-year time period (2004–2007), but older references appear throughout the book. Although critical reviews of the cited references are not given, the book successfully provides an organization of the available material with contributions from many different authors.

A quick look at the table of contents enables the reader to get a true feel for the organization and magnitude of the covered subject matter. The 16 chapters of the book are divided into five sections, with each section having a separate technical coordinator.

Section 1 – Chemical Criminalistics
- Chapter 1 – The Forensic Examination of Fibres
- Chapter 2 – Firearms
- Chapter 3 – The Forensic Examination of Marks
- Chapter 4 – Forensic Geology
- Chapter 5 – Paint and Glass

Section 2 – Drugs and Toxicology
- Chapter 6 – Drugs
- Chapter 7 – Toxicology

Section 3 – Electronic Evidence
- Chapter 8 – Forensic Audio and Visual Evidence
- Chapter 9 – Digital Evidence

Section 4 – Fire, Explosives, and Hazardous Materials
- Chapter 10 – Hazardous Materials: Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear
- Chapter 11 – Environmental Forensic Science
- Chapter 12 – Analysis and Detection of Explosives and Explosives Residues
- Chapter 13 – Fire Scene and Fire Debris Analysis

Section 5 – Individual Evidence
- Chapter 14 – Biological Evidence and Forensic DNA Profiling
- Chapter 15 – Questioned Documents
- Chapter 16 – Fingermarks, Bitemarks, and Other Impressions

Each chapter was written by a different author or set of authors, which consequently led to the slight variations in writing style and format between chapters. Fortunately, many chapters follow the general format of directly citing the reference within the text. The text of those chapters is similar to the example taken directly from Chapter 1 of the book: "Flynn et al. [20] analysed bicomponent fibres using infrared chemical imaging" (p. 5). The chapters following this particular format often include a brief summary of the reference, essentially providing a mini abstract of the cited material.

A few chapters deviate from the general format. Those chapters provide background information followed by a list of the references at either the end of the sentence or section.

Chapter 6 (Drugs) followed neither of the previously discussed formats. The author divided the chapter into categories, further subdivided the categories into topics, listed the references alphabetically by the first author's name, and provided a short explanatory note where appropriate. The chapter has over 125 combined pages of references and explanatory notes. The varying styles and formats are not distracting, but the reader should be aware of the variations.

Many references are listed for each chapter with the occasional duplicate citing between chapters, ultimately reducing the actual number of references. For instance, a 2005 article by van Oorschot et al. appears in two chapters, both within the same section. The article warns practitioners of the potential for DNA transfer when brushes are used to powder over biological stains. An emphasis is placed on the possibility of contamination during low copy number DNA analysis in Chapter 14 (Biological Evidence and Forensic DNA Profiling), whereas in Chapter 16 (Fingermarks, Bitemarks, and Other Impressions), the emphasis is naturally placed on the powdering aspect and the specific type of brush used. As mentioned earlier, the duplications do not occur very often, but they do indicate two things: (i) the known presence of overlap between the disciplines within the field and (ii) the thorough job in the research and subsequent reporting by the various authors.

The book organizes a tremendous amount of information in a relatively easy to follow format. Aside from the expected list of references, other bits of useful information are included, such as the website address for an e-vibrational spectroscopic database of fine art pigments (e-VISART) with the login and password in Chapter 5, a "Checklist for Field Kit Essentials, Health and Safety Items, and Optional Extras" as a table in Chapter 11, as well as various figures of the "Forensic Timeline for Biological Evidence Screening" in Chapter 16. Other website addresses were listed throughout the book, but it should be mentioned that some were found during the review process to be invalid.

This book would make an excellent addition to any reference collection. Its broad coverage and simple presentation make it an appropriate source book for the academic setting and professionals at all levels.

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