

An Introduction to the Work of a Medical Examiner: From Death Scene to Autopsy Suite

By John J. Miletich, Tia Laura Lindstrom

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Medical examiners play an increasingly important role in society as unexpected and violent deaths increase, not only due to crime, but also due to new toxins in the environment, emerging diseases crossing from animals to humans, bizarre suicides, sadistic sexual practices, and other non-natural causes. John Miletich and Tia Lindstrom take us into the world of these medical detectives. Biological clues from bite marks and skin abnormalities to blood chemical levels and brain oxygenation are just some factors exposed in their quest for truth and justice. We learn the basics of death determination from rigor and livor mortis to signs of death by design, drug use, disease, suicide, and more. We also come to understand the tools of this work, from the Stryker's Saw to the grocer's scale, and tests that reveal factors from DNA evidence to toxins from insect bites. Each case begins with a biological mystery and ends with a conclusion that can provide loved ones with relief, or shock.

Miletich, who trained at the Alberta Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, teams with Lindstrom to introduce readers to the medical examiner's role, including autopsy techniques and analysis. Twists and turns emerge as what was initially thought to be a murder proves to be suicide; what was suspected to be a natural death proves to be murder or environmental poisoning; or what was thought to be an accidental death proves to be something more sinister. This work includes appendices with guides to Medical Examiner organizations, seminars, and conventions.

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
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