

## V. Fineschi, G. Baroldi, M.D. Silver (eds): pathology of the heart and sudden death in forensic medicine

CRC Press, Boca Raton, ISBN 0-8493-7048-5, 519 pp

T. Fracasso

Received: 2 October 2006 / Accepted: 13 October 2006 / Published online: 18 November 2006  
© Springer-Verlag 2006

Every forensic pathologist has experienced the difficulty of interpreting macroscopic and histological findings in cases of sudden cardiac death. Many textbooks treat the pathology of the heart from the clinical pathologist's point of view. This book is, in contrast, written from the perspective of legal medicine.

After reviewing the functional anatomy of the heart, the authors extensively discuss the pathophysiological changes, the theories of heart damage, and their relation to histopathology. This chapter represents the core and foundation of the book in its description of the histomorphological changes on the basis of etiopathogenetic theories, which provide the reader with a useful tool for distinguishing agonal phenomena from chronic or acute changes thus explaining sudden cardiac death. This (mental) approach is maintained throughout the whole book. The subsequent chapters examine various heart diseases and the associated mechanisms that can lead to

sudden death. Two chapters are dedicated respectively to sudden cardiac death in infants and children and cardiac alterations in sudden infant death. A further chapter discusses the channelopathies. In the final part of the book, the authors describe the clinical techniques for the anatomical and functional evaluation of the heart and the possible forensic implication of cardiac surgery. This part also deals with the more classical topics of forensic pathology such as the effects of traumas or drug abuse on the heart.

The book includes numerous photographs illustrating both macroscopic and histological findings which support the understanding of the reader and can be useful in daily practice. The book is based on a rich, updated bibliography. In summary, Fineschi, Baroldi, and Silver filled up a gap in the forensic literature with this book so that it can be recommended without reserve as a reference work especially for forensic pathologists.

---

T. Fracasso (✉)  
Institute of Legal Medicine, University of Münster,  
Roentgenstraße 23,  
48149 Münster, Germany  
e-mail: Tony.Fracasso@ukmuenster.de