BOOK REVIEW

Anna Barbaro (Ed): Manual of Forensic Science. An International Survey

Edward R. Adlard[1]
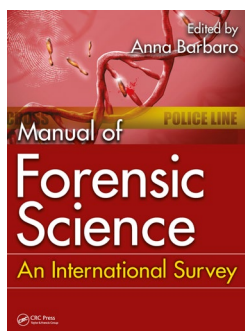
Bibliography
Manual of Forensic Science.
An International Survey
Anna Barbaro (Ed)
CRC Press, Boca Raton,
FL, USA, 2018, pp xii + 289
ISBN 978-1-4987-6630-2
GBP 104.99, USD 139.95

This book is A4, a size commonly associated with what is disparagingly known as "coffee table" books. This book certainly does not come under this category and is far from light reading. Numerous British and US TV programs featuring unbelievably clever forensic scientists have popularised the subject and a number of "new" universities in the UK offer forensic science degree courses. Unfortunately, the number of new employees per annum in forensic science labs required in the UK can be numbered on the fingers of one hand and if potential students think that forensic science is a soft option compared to chemistry, physics and maths this book would quickly disillusion them. The sub-title is "An International Survey" and indeed it lives up to this title in that it has chapters by experts from many countries and covers the whole gamut of subjects ranging from chemistry, law, dentistry biology, haematology and many more. I am not capable of commenting on much of the material in the book, but note that the chapter on forensic chemistry gives a lot of information on the relatively simple technique of TLC and nothing on GC, HPLC or MS. I would hate to think of someone being accused of a crime on the basis of TLC evidence. There is an interesting chapter by two UK contributors on facial recognition, but it gives nothing on the cognate topic of facial reconstruction. The latter technique has been developed over the last 20 years and has proved to be remarkably accurate when its results can be compared to authentic faces.

Clearly, this is a book written by experts for experts and as such it must be indispensable for such people, but it must have a somewhat limited market and is hardly suitable for a student text.

✉ Edward R. Adlard
   e.adlard77@btinternet.com

[1] Burton, UK