Teresa Kowalska, Mieczyslaw Sajewicz and Joseph Sherma (Eds): Chromatographic Techniques in the Forensic Analysis of Designer Drugs

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Bibliography

Chromatographic Techniques in the Forensic Analysis of Designer Drugs
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This is a multi-author book and, as a previous reviewer for *Chromatographia* has pointed out, such books are potentially recipes for disaster unless the editors exert strict control. In this case, two of the editors are Polish, so not surprisingly many of the contributors (of whom there are over 30) are also Polish. I lost count of the exact number by being mesmerised by the surnames of authors that contained an extraordinary number of consonants, illustrating that the English language is not alone in possessing a difficult orthography.

After a rather prolix introduction, the editors (authors) define designer drugs as “.....structural or functional analogs.....that have been devised to mimic the pharmacological effects of known and classified drugs....” The next two chapters cover the law relating to designer drugs in various parts of the world including the USA, the UK and Germany. The fourth chapter is concerned with pharmacocognosy and gives an interesting account of the drugs (legal and illegal) that can be obtained from poppies, foxgloves, mushrooms and the plant from which cocaine is derived. Chapter 5 is

the start of the main topic of the book—chromatographic analysis of designer drugs and is followed by a further 17 chapters covering various aspects of drug analysis.

The contents of the book are divided into two sections—the first dealing with techniques (mainly chromatography with a number of exceptions) and the second dealing with specific compounds/mixtures apart from the final chapter on TLC which appears to be a valedictory in honour of Sherma, well known for his work on TLC over the years, and would have been more appropriate in Section 1.

The title of a book is the ultimate short summary of its contents so it is something of an anomaly that many of the chapters in Section 1 have little or no chromatographic content and it would have been more accurate if the book’s title was just “Techniques in the Forensic Analysis....” There is nothing wrong with these chapters; it is just that they are not as covered by the title.

Dismissing my editorial quibbles, this is a book which should be of value to all those interested in drug analysis in general and specifically in illicit drug analysis.

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