

Preface

The human foot is a complex body part composed of 52 bones, which are 25% of all the bones in the body. Because of the foot's unique structure it allows the human being to stand up and walk on two feet with a stride that cannot be duplicated by any other creature on earth. That being said however, the foot is viewed by the public and the medical professions as a "minor" part of the body, held in low esteem and hidden in a shoe.

Forensic Podiatry – Principles and Methods has finally been completed after numerous requests by the podiatric community for such a work. The main premise of Hilderbrand's book, *Footwear – The Missed Evidence*, is the underutilization of footwear evidence.

Coincidentally, the importance of pedal evidence has also been undervalued. As footwear evidence has become more commonly utilized in forensic situations so has pedal evidence. Over the past 20 years, the discipline of forensic podiatry has grown and developed to become an important addition to the forensic community.

Since this field is still in its relative infancy compared with the other disciplines, this work should be considered as capturing developments in the field to date and these developments are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The principles and methods utilized in this text are scientifically based, and have been accepted and tested by the general and podiatric communities over the years. One caveat that must be emphasized is that teamwork is important, whether it's pedal evidence or baseball. The forensic podiatrist is part of the forensic team including, most commonly, the footwear or marks examiner, laboratory personnel, criminalist, case detective, investigator, and forensic anthropologist.

This book can be utilized in many different areas in the forensic and medical fields. The undergraduate and postgraduate medical students and the student of criminal justice studies should find this text an excellent resource. The podiatrist who is well-versed in foot morphology, pathology, and biomechanics will find this book helpful relative to the forensic sciences that must be understood fully. The criminalists will utilize this as a review of the techniques used at the crime scene as well as the techniques used to fabricate exemplars. The footwear examiner, forensic anthropologist, attorneys, lawyers, and investigators will find it invaluable in researching the field as well as understanding the methodologies and principles used in determining the value of the pedal evidence.

This book is divided into four parts:

Part I discusses general forensic concerns, including the crime scene, from an informative perspective as well as the tasks performed by the crime laboratory. For the forensic podiatric practitioner this will be informative and apply to the general knowledge that is required. It also includes forensic podiatry principles and the subject of human identification. The basics of the forensic methodology that are utilized for physical evidence, the method, ACE-V (R), and other aspects of human identification are presented.

Part II deals with specific forensic podiatry concerns. Included is a chapter on digital photographic techniques that will provide a review for some and teach the basics to others who are interested in performing these tasks themselves. The reader will find the chapter on bare footprint identification and footwear examination and analysis undeniably the most important chapters in the book relative to the majority of pedal evidence concerns. Chapter 6 on forensic gait and analysis presents what might be considered the newest exciting addition to the podiatrist's forensics armamentarium. Chapter 7 deals with the identification of pedal remains from podiatry records that are important primarily but not exclusively in mass disaster scenes.

Part III of the book deals with actual forensic podiatry cases from the UK and the USA. These case summaries will give the reader a perspective of what case work entails in different situations.

Part IV of the book concentrates on forensic podiatry practice standards that in many instances parallel expert witness responsibilities. It is essential to understand and comply with rulings, such as Daubert and others to integrate adequately with the law enforcement community. The "Ten Essentials for Forensic Podiatry Practice" should be part of any forensic expert's standards.

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