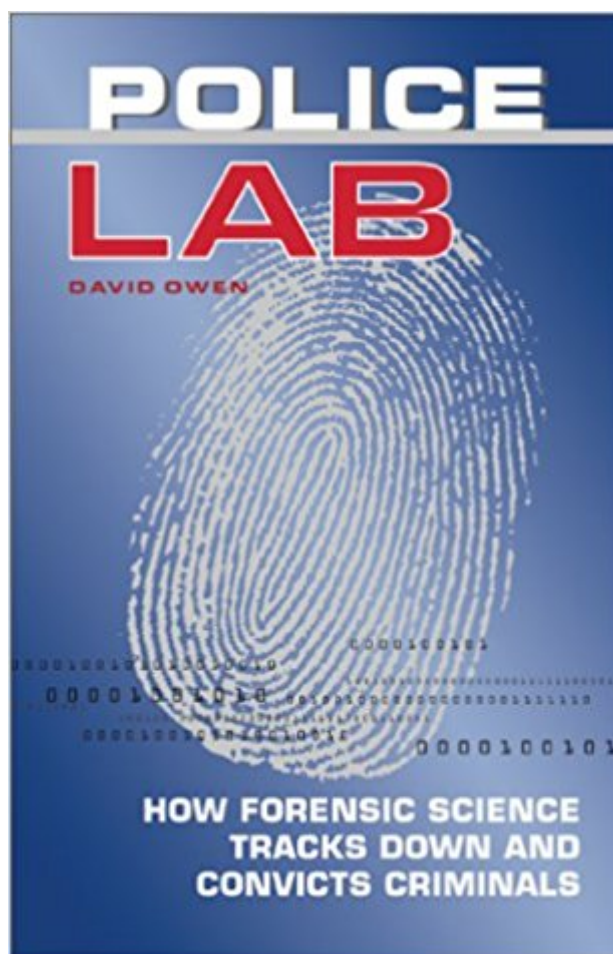


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# Police Lab: How Forensic Science Tracks Down And Convicts Criminals



## Synopsis

Is there such a thing as the perfect crime? In 1979, US Army captain, Jeffrey MacDonald claimed that three "hippies" broke into his house and attacked him and stabbed his wife and daughters. Despite the Army Captain's careful attempts to conceal evidence, forensic scientists were able to prove that MacDonald himself was guilty. Police Lab shows how forensic scientists gather and analyze evidence, examine weapons and bodies and use DNA testing and other techniques to help solve crime. Twenty real-life case studies show forensic scientists in action and demonstrate the fascinating secrets of police labs. Police Lab includes: analyzing physical evidence and weapons fraud and forgeries including handwriting analysis DNA testing and the future of forensic science "forensic facts" sidebars throughout the book explaining how even the smallest detail and shred of evidence can help solve crime 20 real-life case studies including: The World Trade Center bombing, O.J. Simpson trial, assassination of John F. Kennedy and the conviction of serial killer Ted Bundy more than 200 color photographs

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 14 years

Grade Level: 7 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Grade 6-8-What with CSI one of the more popular shows around, forensic-science methods have made an entrance into many living rooms around the country, and there has been corresponding activity in the previously placid 363.25s. This addition to the genre discusses current methodology

interspersed with actual forensic investigations into crimes as diverse as a brutal murder in 1889 to the causes of the gun turret explosion on the USS Iowa in 1989. Poison, strangulation, burning, drowning, shooting, and stabbing are some of the murderous methods explored in the readable text, as are such forensic tools as facial reconstruction, bite matching, ballistics, DNA screening, and the old standby, fingerprinting. Color photos abound, as do "Forensic Fact" and "Crime File" boxes. This title is on a comparable level with Andrea Campbell's more stolid *Forensic Science* (Chelsea, 1999) and Brian Lane's *Crime & Detection* (DK, 2000), and more difficult than Charlotte Foltz Jones's chattier *Fingerprints and Talking Bones* (Delacorte, 1997). Couple Owen's book with Mark P. Friedlander, Jr., and Terry M. Phillips's competent *When Objects Talk* (Lerner, 2001) and Donna M. Jackson's superb *The Bone Detectives* (Little, Brown, 1996) and put CSI on TiVo. Patricia Manning, formerly at Eastchester Public Library, NY Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 6-12. Part forensics lesson and part historical crime review, this book blends fascinating and manageable detail with specific examples of famous cases most readers will recognize. Owen does an excellent job of explaining how forensics experts gather, analyze, and assess data on forgery, poisoning, suicides, explosions, and murder by fire, water, suffocation, and various weapons. Detailed descriptions of the forensics process are always put into historical context, with brief, gripping summaries of many famous cases and historical events, including the assassination of JFK, the discovery of diaries attributed to Hitler, the crimes of such serial killers as Ted Bundy, individual high-profile murders, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The durable, glossy pages contain eye-catching color photos of criminals, crime scenes, and lab work, as well as occasional gruesome shots of victims. Whether moved by morbid curiosity or by Owen's command of his topic, both middle- and high-school readers will find this book an exciting, enlightening read. A lengthy glossary is appended. Roger Leslie Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

For those interested in how forensic science works, then *POLICE LAB* is a must-read. Author David Owen presents a great beginning presentation into how forensic science works in regards to ballistics, DNA processing, fingerprint evidence, bite marks, tire imprints, and even handwriting analysis -- and how they can be used to figure out the person who has committed a crime. Using more than twenty true-life cases, from the death of INXS rocker Michael Hutchence to serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, Mr. Owen takes us inside the science that helped cracked the case. Although there

are other books that delve deeper into the actual workings of the science behind the science, this is a great starting point for teens interested in the forensic field. Be warned, though -- the book includes several full-color photographs of actual dead bodies, which might not be suitable for everyone. On the other hand, if you're planning on a career in the field of forensic science, you might do well to get used to such things now! Reviewed by: Jennifer Wardrip, aka "The Genius"

This is an easy read for those wanting an introduction to forensics. All the basics are covered: scene investigation, identification, poisons, weapons, fingerprints, ballistics, blood, DNA, etc.

Accompanying each subject are a couple of case studies that explain how that particular subject was used to solve a crime. Many of the crimes are well-known and the well-read student of crime will already have a knowledge of them, but there's also lesser-known crimes covered. What makes this book really stand out is the presentation: the layout is superb with hundreds of photos and illustrations. For a crash course in forensics this book is ideal.

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