

BOOK REVIEW

Review of *Document Examination on the Computer, A Guide for Forensic Document Examiners*

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Herbertson, Gary. (2003). *Document Examination on the Computer A Guide for Forensic Document Examiners*, Berkeley, CA: WideLine Publishing, 158 pp. \$59.95.

In 1984, Gary Herbertson retired from Federal Bureau of Investigation Laboratory as the Unit Chief of the Questioned Document Section. He holds a Masters of Science in Forensic Science from George Washington University. He is an internationally known teacher, lecturer and researcher in the field of Questioned Document Examination. He has made over 100 presentations in 26 different countries.

This 158-page book is a roadmap directing its reader over interesting and exciting roads of travel in forensic digital image processing. The book serves as a good starting point for the Questioned Document Examiner of the 21st Century in establishing a good foundation and understanding of what will become standard procedure to aid forensic document examination in the digital age. The book discusses the current techniques available to document examiners. It is written in straightforward, non-technical English, although the reader should have an understanding of the tool bars and menus used by Adobe Photoshop.

The book will help the dedicated professional make the most of computer resources for forensic examination of many types of questioned document problems, such as restoring faint, faded and fuzzy images; comparing and contrasting images; color separations; removing obliterations and courtroom chart preparation. Further, Herbertson provides an overview of the use of the computer as an aid to document examination and discusses the specialized use of scanners and

the creation of forgeries using digital image processing. This book fills a need in the profession. It is the first text of its type written specifically for the Forensic Document Examiner. It will also benefit attorneys in the preparation of their case involving a document examiner's testimony that includes digital image enhancement, as well as other forensic scientists from other fields who want to investigate capabilities and techniques that may transfer to their own discipline.

The teaching approach used in this practical guide to forensic digital image processing is to first present the information for the reader to think over and then by attempting the procedure, follow each lesson's step by step approach to repeat the results. To assist the reader, standard operating procedures for performing the techniques are provided. The book goes a step further by describing protocols that as Herbertson describes it "are based on the higher demands of the law and of the ethical consideration of this practice."

With this book, Herbertson provides his peers with an outstanding resource in the field of forensic document examination. It should be one of the books in every questioned document examiner's library.