

Abstracts

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Editorial: What Good Is a College Degree for an FDE?

(Frederick H. Panhorst)

Habits Observed in Naturally Written Numbers

(Jan Seaman Kelly)

Naturally written numbers tend to be individualized to a particular writer as they depart from the copybook style. Initial and ending strokes, ornamentation, design simplification, overall slant and the interrelationship of component parts in the more complex digits "2," "3," "4," "6," "8," and "9" comprise these basic qualities. This paper will explore the formation of naturally written numbers and the frequency of occurrence of at least one set of numbers connected by the writer in their three-page exemplar. Two hundred participants completed a four-page exemplar consisting of three pages of naturally executed numbers and one page of disguised numbers. For this study, the three pages of naturally written numbers were examined and percentages determined as to frequency of occurrence of habits observed in the three-page exemplars. Out of the 200 participants in this study, 37% connected at least one set of numbers using a connecting stroke. The percentage of writers using the snowman "8" and the crossbar "7" were also assessed. This paper lists the combinations of numbers connected by a connecting stroke and the percentage of usage of specific number formations.

The Greatest Handwriting Mystery of the Eighteenth Century: The Junius Letters

(A Frank Hicks)

Between January 21, 1769, and January 21, 1772, a series of letters were published in a London newspaper. These letters were highly critical of King George and the British government. Although the letters were signed with several different names, they collectively came to be called "The Letters of Junius." The true identity of Junius remained a mystery for decades after the letters' publication. Many people conducted their own investigations in an attempt to identify Junius. Most of these investigations were not directed toward any handwriting comparisons. However, in 1868, a "general Expert in handwriting" named Charles Chabot was hired specifically to conduct handwriting comparisons in this matter. Chabot's reports were published in 1871. His examination techniques and reasoning processes provide ample evidence of his skills in this area and lend significance to his identification of the writer of the Junius letters. His explanations of the manner in which he conducted his comparisons also reveal that the principles used by today's Forensic Document Examiners originated much earlier than generally thought.

Effects of Water Temperature vs. Time in Humidifying Documents for Electrostatic Detection Apparatus Examination

(Bonnie L. Beal)

Forensic Document Examiners (FDE) use different time intervals and water temperatures when humidifying documents before examining them with the Electrostatic Detection Apparatus (ESDA). The purpose of this study was to determine the optimal conditions when humidifying documents for an ESDA examination, for a laboratory that does not utilize a temperature and humidity controlled ESDA room, by using the variables of water temperature and time. The study was conducted using the conditions set forth in the ESDA instruction manual by Foster and Freeman except for changes noted in this paper. The best conditions varied depending on the type of writing instrument and the paper layer examined. Overall, the ideal water temperature and time combination was 55° F for ten minutes.

Author's Introduction

Historical Review: How Much Do People Write Alike?

(John J. Harris)

This article was originally published in the *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, Vol. 48, No. 6, Mar/Apr 1958. The reprint is preceded by an introduction by author John Harris which addresses the claim by critics that the article invalidates handwriting identification.

Book Review: "Forensic Examination of Rubber Stamps, A Practical Guide"

(Brian Lindblom)