

Abstracts

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Original Research Paper: Influence of Writing Posture on the Dimensions of Signatures

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In order to study the influence of writing posture on the dimensions of signatures, the authors asked 21 volunteers to sign their names in 4 different writing positions. Such items as receipts, checks, or short notes are sometimes written or signed in unusual writing positions, which some claim may influence the dimensions or proportions of the writing. The measured parameters (length, height, proportions) that are modified when writing under unusual conditions, as well as the range of these modifications, proved to be variable from 1 writer to another. While the average variation for the writers in this study was low, great variations were observed in some cases. Furthermore, no correlation could be established between the kind of variation observed and the graphical appearance of the signatures. Forensic Image Analysis of Laser-Printed Documents

Case Report: Can You Have the Perfect Training Case?

Janette Dove Guscott

This case involves a bomb threat letter listing the Aurora Police Department in Colorado as its intended target. When responding to the return address on the letter, officers retrieved multiple harassment letters with pornographic material and were informed by the individuals at this address of stalking by a suspicious neighbor. The recipients of these harassing letters offered that there were additional victims in the neighborhood. Examination of the initial bomb threat document using the elements of document examination tied the multiple cases in the neighborhood together. This case involved handwriting identification, indented writing, observations of an ink defect in the printing process of a notepad and a crease in another notebook, and a physical match to prove the connection between the multiple cases. The results of these examinations were instrumental in obtaining a conviction.

Microsoft Access in the Questioned Document Laboratory

Linda J. Hart and Lamar Miller

Microsoft Access is a readily available database program suited to assist questioned document examiners with extended writing cases, especially those involving voluminous exhibits. Questioned and known samples are scanned into a Microsoft Access database table. Access sorts the handwriting characters into charts and organizes the groups into the questioned and known samples. Once the database table is populated, an infinite variety of comparison charts are easily prepared. Charts may be used for the examination process and as demonstrative evidence. As an example, Microsoft Access is capable of easily preparing a comparison chart of all the words which end with "ing," all the words which begin with a "B," and all the words containing "th." Any characters or combinations of characters are easily sorted and printed in a comparison chart. In addition to organizing voluminous exhibits, the program's flexibility allows the examiner to remake charts on the eve of trial in cases in which some of the exhibits cannot be used in trial.

Neurosciences Applied to Handwriting Examination

Raymond Orta M. and Magdalena Ezcurra G.

Some difficult cases for forensic document examiners can be related to brain illnesses that affect handwriting. As a brain-governed function, handwriting has been studied by medical science for many years. Those studies could be crucial to guiding the expert in evaluating causes of variability in handwriting. A. R. Luria was a neuropsychologist at the University of Moscow who studied consequences of different injuries to the human brain. Part of Luria's work focused on the handwriting of patients with brain wounds. Our objective was to review some of Luria's most relevant findings compiled in the book, *The Working Brain, An Introduction to Neuropsychology*. Some neuroscience findings from other authors who studied handwriting from a medical point of view are also included.

The Effect of Water Soaking on Ballpoint Pen Writings

Atul K. Singla, Ph.D.; O. P. Jasuja, Ph.D.; and Sarbjit Kaur

A forensic document examiner may be confronted with the problem of restoration and examination of water-soaked documents. Various methods have been recommended by different individuals and are being applied to restore water-soaked documents. The present study has been conducted to determine the effect of water soaking on ballpoint pen writings on different types of paper; at different intervals; and in neutral, acidic, and alkaline aqueous media.