



Association of Forensic Document Examiners

Continuing Education Symposium

November 5-9, 2009 ❖ Milwaukee, WI

Resources for Print Process Identification

Joseph G. Barabe, Senior Research Microscopist
Director of Scientific Imaging,
McCrone Associates, Westmont, IL

As the modern office continues to evolve, it has become increasingly important for the forensic document examiner to be able to discriminate among the myriad of print processes in use today.

There are a number of resources available to FDEs interesting in improving their competence in this fascinating field. This paper will examine some of these resources in some detail, and will also explore strategies for study and the assembly of a reference collection. This presentation will also include a brief survey of some of the more important print processes in use today, and their detection.

Physiology of the Hand and Writing Process

Teri Bielefeld, PT, CHT Milwaukee, WI

Ms. Bielefeld's experience as a clinical specialist involves working with patients whose writing ability is impaired or interrupted through trauma. Her presentation will focus on the hands, wrists and elbows during the writing process in order to better understand disturbances in writing.

Challenges to Forensic Science: Implications for Forensic Document Examiners

Heidi Harralson, MA, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Tempe, AZ

This presentation summarizes the 2009 National Academy of Sciences report on *Strengthening Science in the United States: A Path Forward*. Some of the issues that are challenging the forensic sciences include research, education and training, certification, methodology, and bias. Recent conferences held at law schools and Law Review articles regarding forensic document examination will be reviewed. There will be an open discussion to identify critical points, evaluate the issues that have been addressed, and possible solutions.

Impeaching Case Review Evidence and Excluding Case Review Testimony by a Second Forensic Document Examiner

Andrew Sulner, MSFS, JD, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner & Attorney, New York City, NY

In 2008 and 2009, ASTM Subcommittee E30.02 on Questioned Documents disseminated (for ballot) a SWGDOC drafted guide seeking to create a standard practice for use by document examiners in conducting case reviews of the work product of other forensic document examiners. The proposed standard defines case review as "an administrative or technical review of an examination, or both." An administrative review is defined as "a form of case review involving an assessment of the clerical detail associated with an examination." A technical review is defined as "a form of case review involving an assessment of the examination methodologies and the resulting conclusions." Mr. Sulner will demonstrate how lawyers should impeach experts who attempt to use case reviews to buttress their qualifications and/or support the validity of their conclusions. Mr. Sulner will also discuss the legal basis for obtaining a court order precluding the admissibility of testimony by a second expert concerning a case review conducted with respect to the work of the first expert.

Photoshop Techniques

Dick McEvoy
President, Forensic Imaging, Inc., Victor, NY
Charla Janney
Forensic Document Examiner, Lakewood, CO.

The program will address working methods and techniques acceptable within the forensic community for enhancement of images to use in demonstrations, reports and court exhibits. Emphasis will be on tracking adjustments to document all techniques used.

Differentiation Between Two Black Ballpoint Ink Pens Using Photoshop

Barbara Downer, CDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Oxford, KS

A Photoshop technique of ink separation useful to the forensic document examiners.

Handwriting Variability in Movement Disorder Patients and Effects of Fatigue

Heidi Harralson, MA, D-BFDE (presenting)
Forensic Document Examiner, Tuscon, AZ
Hans-Leo Tueling, Ph.D.
Becky G. Farley, Ph.D.

A comparison of pre-fatigue and fatigue handwriting conditions between movement disorder patients and normal controls was conducted of on-line recordings and off-line samples. The off-line analysis showed differences due to fatigue. The differences were more pronounced in certain movement disorder patients (e.g., printing, size, tremor or baseline) than in the control subjects (e.g., expansion).

In the on-line analysis, patients were slower and more variable than the controls. Certain patients exhibited increased speed and decreased pen-down durations when in the fatigue condition. Individual responses to fatigue have relevance in the assessment of the range of variation within individuals. Fatigue increases in motor disorder handwriting more severely than in healthy handwriting.

A Case of Multiple Personalities and Seventeen Handwriting Styles

Richard Baer, M.D. Chicago, IL
Medical Director for Medicare in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio

Dr. Baer had a private psychiatry practice for fourteen years and served as President of the Illinois Psychiatric Society. He is author of *Switching Time - A Doctor's Harrowing Story of Treating a Woman with 17 Personalities*. Dr. Baer documented that each personality had a separate and distinct handwriting style and he will share this fascinating case along with the writing samples.

A Multiple Personality Case from both the Legal and Handwriting Perspective

Elizabeth Neary, Attorney at Law, Milwaukee, WI
Bonnie Schwid, D-BFDE, Milwaukee, WI

Ms. Neary had a client diagnosed with multiple personality disorder and retained a document examiner to assist with the handwriting issues. Counsel will discuss the legal issues and mishaps of the case. Mrs. Schwid will present the handwriting of the various personalities, discuss the differences and the subsequent testimony.

Professionals who share knowledge
increase their own skills. (AFDE motto)

Writing Deviations and Considerations Following Neurological Insults

Dr. Gary Cohen, Ph.D., CCP-SLP Mequeon, WI
Sarah Pelishek, OTR, CW Manitowoc/2 Rivers, WI

The presenters will discuss vision processing and the resulting problems expressed in handwriting when visual deficits occur. Writings of patients (with permission) will be used to demonstrate.

A Technical Review of MiScope MP-IR Handheld Digital Microscope

Emily J Will, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Raleigh, NC

The MiScope has been available for several years, and the device has now come of age. There are several models at reasonable prices, and many document examiners are using this instrument. This presentation will explain the capabilities of the various MiScopes and demonstrate some uses for the MiScope MP-IR.

The Bulgarian Case

John Gorajczyk, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Phoenix, AZ

An challenging case of a Last Will written in Bulgarian will be presented in two segments. Participants will be given instructions and the case documents to examine. In the second segment, participants will bring their finding for further discussion of the case. This is intended to be a learning experience, inasmuch as the case was examined by several examiners who proffered conflicting opinions.

Double Jeopardy

Steven Slyter, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Louisville, KY

A controversial case involving the murder of a female, the acquittal of suspect and evidence proving his guilt uncovered months after the acquittal.

Scratchings by a suspect on a pocket calendar were examined by a federal agency and, for whatever reason, they were unable to read what was beneath the obliterations. Subsequently, the prosecution retained a private examiner. After a lengthy examination, the examiner was able penetrated the obliteration using IR and light microscopy techniques. The state could not retry the suspect due to double jeopardy, but they could charge him with perjury. Based on the evidence uncovered by Mr. Slyter, the case avoided dismissal. The suspect finally admitted his guilt and was convicted of perjury. This presentation will discuss the process used to uncover critical document evidence.

Conflicting Opinions and Procedures

Robin Williams, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiners, Green Bay, WI

Evaluating case work where experts proffer conflicting opinions. Exploring the procedures and methodologies used by the experts.

Rhythm and Fluency in Handwriting and Music

Bonnie L. Schwid, BC-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Mequon, WI

An integral part of both handwriting and music is rhythm and fluency. Rhythm is reflected in patterns of sound in music and patterns of movement in writing. Rhythm contains tempo — it slows down and speeds up, starts and stops, becomes louder and softer. In music rhythm is heard; in handwriting it is observed in various components of writing. In this presentation we gain a better understanding of rhythm.

Legal Issues Encountered by Document Examiners

The Honorable Charles Kahn,
Circuit Court, Milwaukee WI
Professor Dan Blinka,
Marquette University Law School, Milwaukee, WI

A legal panel will comment on and discuss situations that confront document examiners. Issues involve deposition tactics, preparing cross examination questions for an opposing expert, digital evidence, dealing with attorneys who push issues, handling a subpoena by opposition.

Questioned Document Examination in South Africa and Surrounding Countries

Sarel Snyman, Forensic Document Examiner
Randburg, South Africa

The presenter will discuss the role of government examiners and private examiners in the South Africa legal system and surrounding countries. He will provide background on how the document examination has evolved over the years and the type of case work commonly encountered.

ASTM Guidelines and the FDE

Barbara Shipper, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Beaumont, TX

A review of the most current ASTM standards applicable to document examination and voluntary adoption. A list of all standards will be provided.

Forensic Document Examination Course at Eastern Tennessee State University: An Update

Dr. Larry Miller, D-BFDE
Professor and Chair, Dept. of Criminal Justice
and Criminology, ETSU, Johnson City, TN

The Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology is now offering an online graduate certificate in Forensic Document Examination, as approved by the Tennessee Board of Regents. The four areas covered by the four courses are, an introduction to Forensic Document Examination, handwriting identification, technical aspects of forensic document examination, and practical problems in forensic document examination. The program will be reviewed.

The Importance of Appropriate Exemplars and Procedures for Obtaining Same

Robin Williams, MS, MFS, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Green Bay, WI

Various kinds of exemplar will be discussed and the proper procedure for obtaining requested writing samples. Several cases will be discussed in which appropriate and inappropriate exemplars were obtained and how that affected the examiners ability to render an opinion.

Forensic Linguistics

Allan M. Perlman, Ph.D. , Highland Park, IL

Dr. Perlman is a practitioner of forensic linguistics. He applies the principles of linguistics to the resolution of legal problems involving authorship, copyright, and language interpretations.

Qualitative forensic linguistics which is as old as the original scientific question of who wrote the Bible and which has been used in legal cases as far back as the 18th century, is both an art and science. It is a science in that it uses the agreed upon tools and concepts of linguistics, especially semantics and stylistic analysis, and deals only with the data at hand. It is an art in the application of the linguist's judgment of authorship. Dr. Perlman will discuss the ways in which the linguist's expertise can be of assistance to attorneys. He will provide illustrations from past cases.

ASTM Updates: Subcommittee E30.02 on Questioned Documents

Vickie L. Willard, D-BFDE
Forensic Document Examiner, Cleveland, OH

A review of the latest events in the subcommittee.