

Medicolegal Scene Investigation and Forensic Autopsy in Cases of Pediatric Death

Interactions with CDR

Medical Examiner Jurisdiction

- State (§ 841-3):
 - “...the result of violence, or as the result of any accident, or by suicide, or suddenly when in apparent health, or when unattended by a physician, or in prison, or in a suspicious or unusual manner, or within twenty-four hours after admission to a hospital or institution...”
- County (Chapter 13, Section 6-1306.):
 - “... the medical examiner shall go to the body and take charge of it and shall make a full investigation concerning the medical cause of death.”
 - Section 6-1307: “If, in the opinion of either the medical examiner or the prosecuting attorney, an autopsy is necessary, the autopsy shall be performed by the medical examiner. A detailed description of the findings of such autopsy and the conclusions drawn therefrom shall be filed in the department of the medical examiner.”

Notification

- County (Section 6-1305):
 - “When any person dies in the city as a result of violence or by a casualty or by apparent suicide or suddenly when in apparent health or when not under the care of a physician or when in jail or in prison or within twenty-four hours after admission to a hospital or in any suspicious or unusual manner, it shall be the duty of the person having knowledge of such death immediately to notify the department of the medical examiner and the police department.”
- Death Certificate keywords:

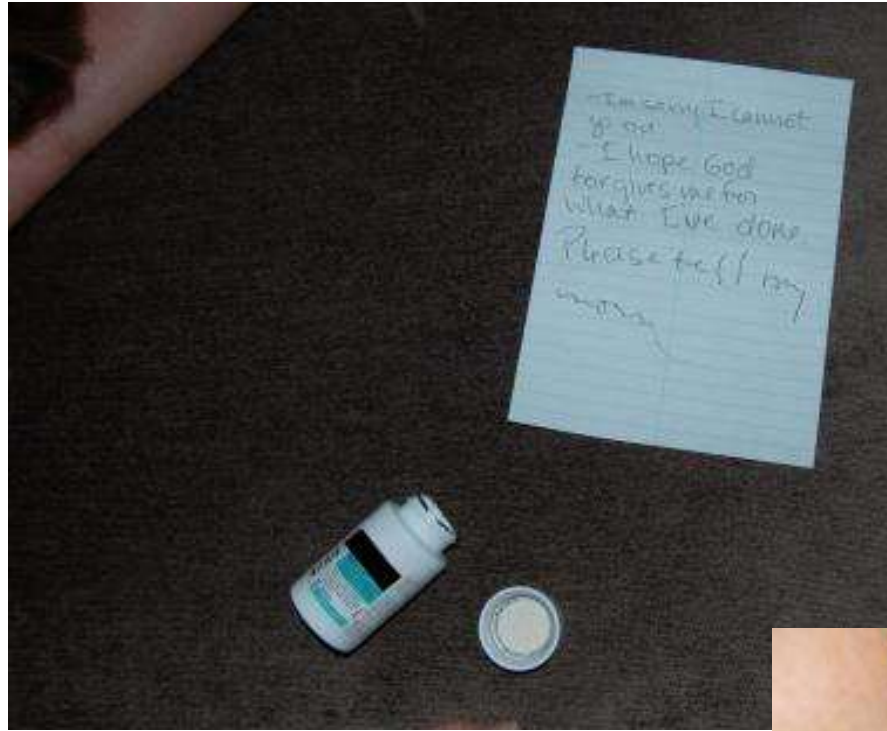
Medicolegal Investigators

- 9 medicolegal death investigators are employed by the MED and staff the office 24/7, 365 days/year.
- They are the “eyes and ears” of the Medical Examiner.
 - Take “death calls.”
 - Respond to, document, and photograph the scene of death.
 - Interview witnesses.
 - Work with HPD investigators and the ME if she attends the scene.
 - Take photographs of the body, if at the scene, or at the hospital.
 - Take possession of the body and arrange for transport.
 - Check the body into the morgue.
 - Notify N.O.K, if necessary.
 - Obtain medical, Police, CWS, military, and other records.
 - Obtain information needed to confirm the identity of the deceased.
 - Write the MED investigative report.

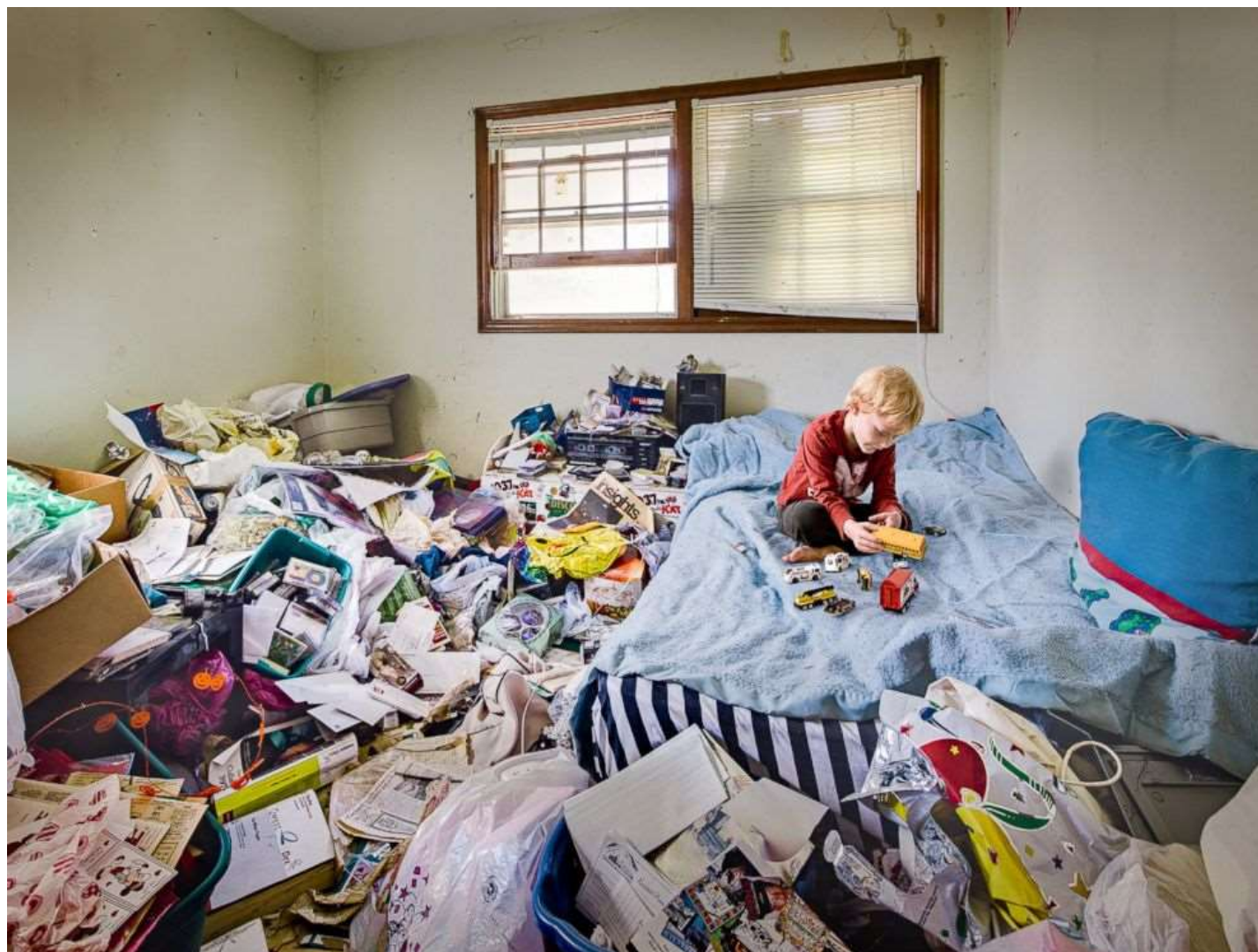
Scene Investigation: The Body



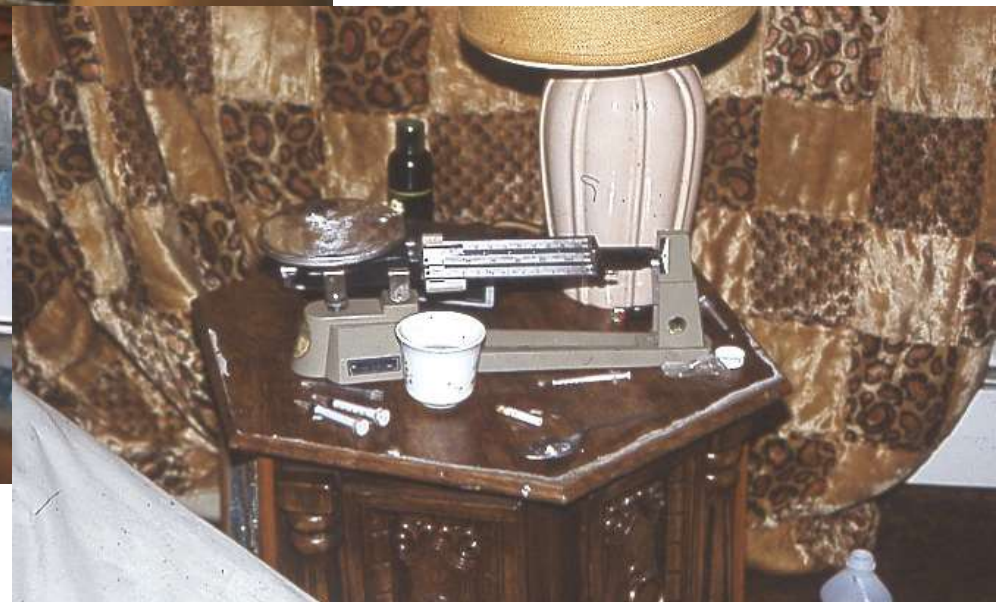
Scene II: The Body



Scene III: The Environment



Scene IV: The Environment



Scene V: The Environment



Doll Re-creation



Doll Re-creation



Clues!



Pediatric Autopsy

- Medical record review.
- Full body X-rays.
- Viral and bacterial cultures.
- Complete external and internal examinations.
 - Orbits and eyes.
 - Spinal cord.
 - “Cut the limbs down.”
- Histology of all major organs.
 - Also injury sites, eyes, and bone.
- Full blood (and occasionally other) toxicology.
- Analysis of vitreous humor.
- Neuropathology, radiology, anthropology, odontology, pediatric, and other consultation(s).
- Metabolic disease screening.
- Documented with photographs, diagrams, and forms, including a final growth chart.

Cause and Manner of Death

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CERTIFICATION OF VITAL RECORD

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

3002000003414 3200819027107

NAME OF DECEASED: MICHAEL JACKSON
SEX: M
DATE OF BIRTH: 08/29/1958
RACE: BLACK
MARRIAGE STATUS: DIVORCED
OCCUPATION: MUSICIAN
EDUCATION: HS GRADUATE
RESIDENCE: 4241 HAYVENHURST AVENUE, ENCHINO, LOS ANGELES, CA 91436
MOTHER: LADYA JACKSON SISTER, 8000 WILSHIRE BLVD, SUITE 200, BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90211
FATHER: JOSEPH WALTER JACKSON, KATHERINE ESTHER SERRANO, 1000 FOREST LAWN DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90008
PLACE OF BIRTH: FOREST LAWN MEMORIAL & MCHA, PD 934, LOS ANGELES, CA 90008
PLACE OF DEATH: RONALD REAGAN UCLA MEDICAL CENTER, 767 WESTWISSE PLAZA DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90024
CAUSE OF DEATH: DEFERRED
MANNER OF DEATH: DEFERRED
DECEASED'S SIGNATURE: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S ADDRESS: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PHONE: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S MARITAL STATUS: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S OCCUPATION: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S EDUCATION: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S RACE: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S SEX: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S DATE OF BIRTH: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PLACE OF BIRTH: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PLACE OF DEATH: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PLACE OF INTERMENT: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PLACE OF BURIAL: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PLACE OF CREMATION: [Redacted]
DECEASED'S PLACE OF OTHER INTERMENT: [Redacted]

DATE: 07/07/2009
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: CHERRY MAGWILLIE, DEPUTY CORONER

109006163

This is a true certified copy of the record filed in the County of Los Angeles, Department of Health Services if it bears the Registrar's signature in purple ink.

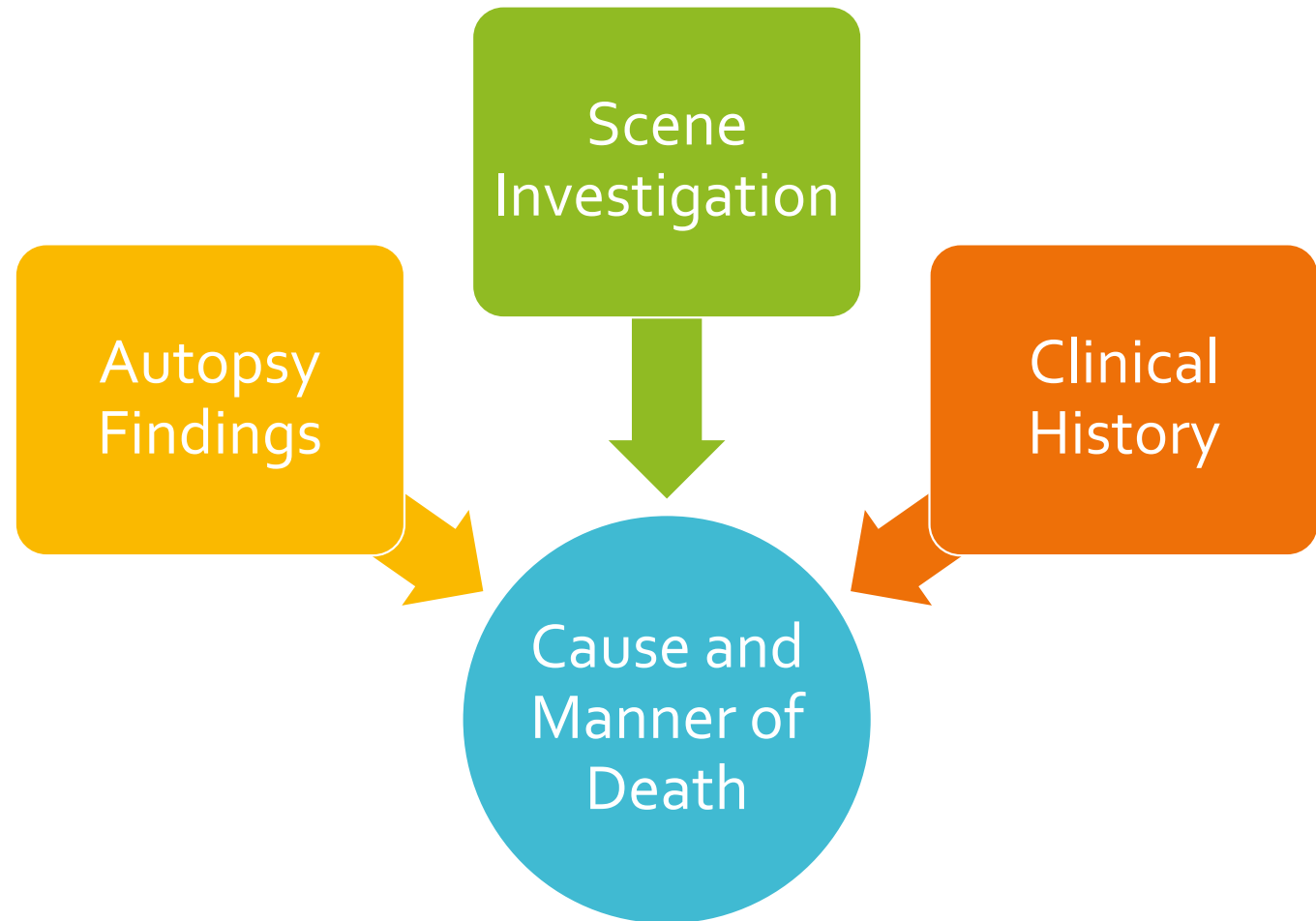
Jonathan Fielding M.D.
Director of Health Services and Registrar

JUL - 7 2009

This copy not valid unless prepared by sign-off device displaying seal and signature of Registrar.

- Cause of death:
 - The underlying disease, injury, or poison which creates the anatomic or physiologic aberration that culminates in death.
- Manner of Death:
 - The classification of an individual's death based on the interpretation of the autopsy findings, scene investigation, and all available circumstantial data into one of the following categories: natural, accident, homicide, suicide, or undetermined. ("Pending" may also be used if additional studies are in progress).

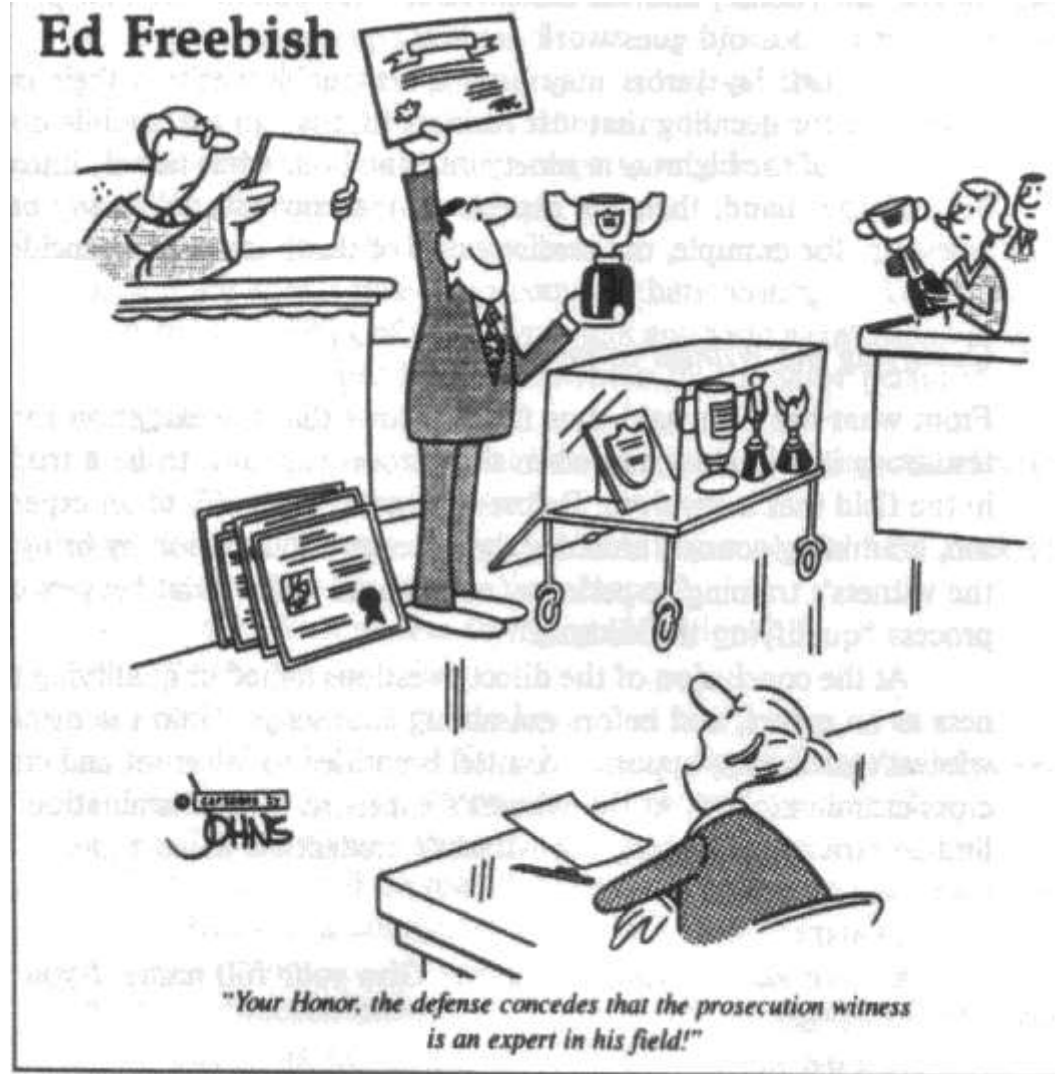
Integrating the findings



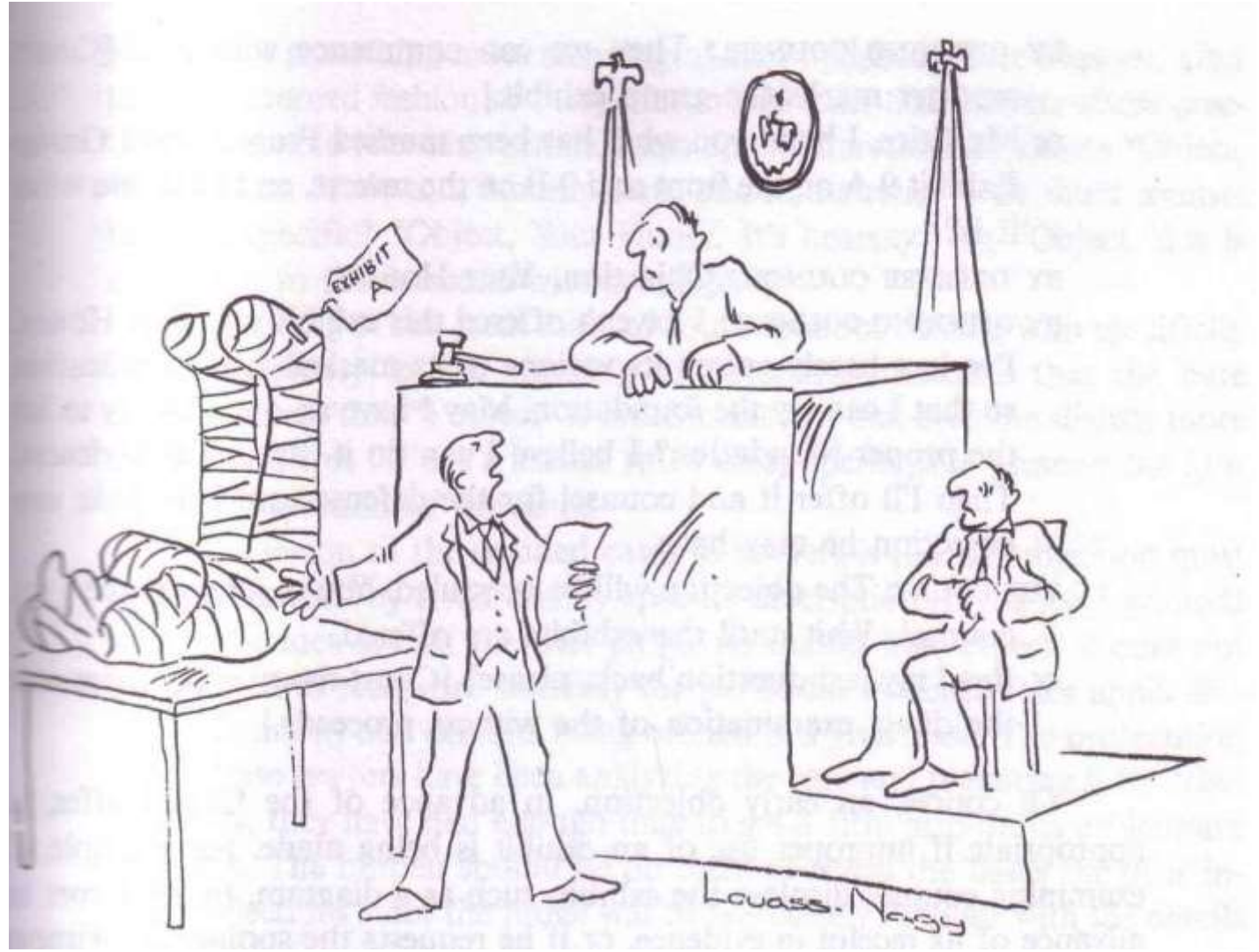
Maintain Records

- Identifying and demographic information.
- X-rays, scene and autopsy photos.
- Investigative, laboratory, and autopsy reports.
- “Stock jar”, tissue blocks, microscopic slides, and sometimes a portion of or whole organ(s).

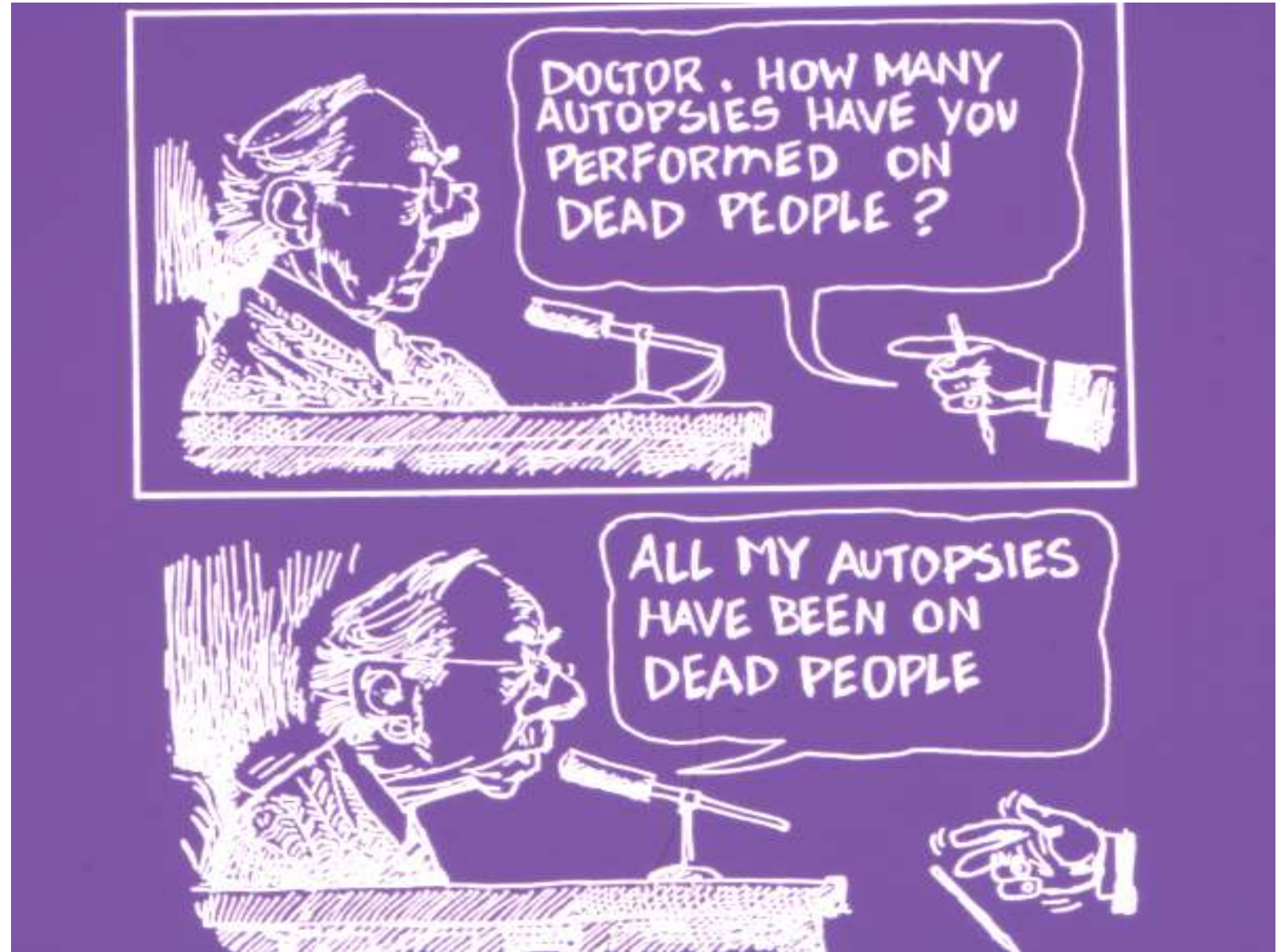
Testify in Court: Sworn in as an Expert



Testify in
Court:
Present and
Give an
Analysis of the
Evidence



Testify in
Court:
Undergo
Direct and
Cross
Examination



Testify in Court: Competing Expert Opinions



Participate in
Multi-
disciplinary
Conferences

