

Int Poster J Dent Oral Med 2001, Vol 3 No 4, Poster 104

The Photography in Forensic Odonto-Stomatology

Language: English

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Date/Event/Venue:

28./29.09.2000

Xème Congrès de l'Association Française d'Identification Odontologique en partenariat avec la C.N.E.J.O.S.

Dijon, France

Abstract

The photography shows an aid highly qualified to identify unknown bodies conserving characteristics of the bones of the upper and lower jaws, the teeth and dental restorations as well. It enables the storage of characteristics of dentures. Already one photograph allows to support information about the multitude of dental details and may lead to an identification.

Introduction

The identification of an unknown dead body is part of the competence of the state attorney (unnatural death, discovery of a body - § 159 StPO), who puts the services of the police in charge for the procedures of identification (Rötzscher 2000). Corresponding to § 163 StPO (first intervention of police), the services of the police are to guarantee the perpetuation of evidence. Already a black/white photograph may be sufficient. Nevertheless coloured photographs are of more importance for the perpetuation of evidence (Rötzscher et al. 2000). This method is qualified, has priority and is convincing.

Objectives

The question of identity has to be solved before the forensic autopsy of the body begins (§ 88 StPO). Taking photographs, fingerprints and measurements for the records of the police is legal (§ 81 b StPO) (Rötzscher and Solheim 1998). In the background of collecting details already one photograph means a highly qualified support of first class information (Rötzscher et al. 2000).

Whenever adverse circumstances prevent an identification (as a result of fire, decay, bad climate/weather conditions, long time floating, putrefaction, skeletonizing etc.) teeth and jaws - if available - as resistant evidence against the rigours have to be included into the proceedings of examination (Rötzscher 2000).



View of the head en face (Fig.1)



View of the upper and lower jaw in occlusion (Fig.2)



View of the separated lower jaw (Fig.3)



Lower jaw after maceration for control - view from the right (Fig. 4)



Model casting - view from the right (Fig.5)



Model casting denture - from reverse (Fig.6)

Results and Conclusions

Photography in forensic odontology shows characteristics of dental treatment as a matter of evidence. Especially bridges, fillings, removable prosthetics are stored for the examination/research of the forensic pathologist, the dentist and the police. Already one photograph of the jaws after dissection / maceration is helpful in identification cases of unknown bodies, supporting information about the multitude of dental details.

Material and Methods

Demonstration of the process before and after dissection / maceration of the jaws:

1. Photographs of the head before dissection of the jaws
 - 1.1 view of the head en face (Fig. 1)
 - 1.2 view of the head in profile
2. Photographic documentation of the jaws after dissection / before maceration:
 - 2.1 view of the upper and lower jaw in occlusion (Fig.2)
 - 2.2 upper and lower jaws separated (Fig. 3)
 - 2.3 separated upper and lower jaws after maceration for control - e.g. the lower jaw - view from the right (Fig. 4)
3. Photographic documentation of the jaws after dissection / maceration for the research of the police (Fig. 5 et 6)
4. Details are recommended of the fragments
 - 4.1 anomalies in the disposition of the teeth
 - 4.2 anomalies in the configuration of the teeth
 - 4.3 diseases of the teeth, i.e. caries
 - 4.4 form and material of fillings
 - 4.5 crowns, bridges, oral implants resp. combinations of fixed and removable restorations
 - 4.6 impacts of traumatic violence, e.g. fractures of teeth and/or jaws.

Bibliographic Data

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Abbreviations

StPO = Strafprozessordnung (code of criminal procedure)

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THE PHOTOGRAPHY
IN FORENSIC ODONTOLOGY.
A SUPPORT OF QUALIFIED
INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY DEAD
BODIES.

Grundmann C, Röttscher K



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View of the upper and lower jaw in occlusion (Fig. 2)



View of the separated lower jaw (Fig. 3)



Lower jaw after maceration - right side (Fig. 4)

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Model casting denture - right side (Fig. 5)



Model casting denture - from reverse (Fig. 6)

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