



Questioned Documents Section – 2004

J14 Twenty-First Century Document Examinations

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After attending this presentation, the attendee will learn how easily documents can be created or changed due to modern technology. Because of this technology, a document examiner must be cautious when examining non-original evidence, especially when the "original" does not exist.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by demonstrating numerous methods of creating bogus or altered documents in which document examiners will be more aware of the limitations associated with examining non-original evidence.

Before desktop publishing became affordable, it was not too difficult for the forensic document examiner to detect forgeries and manipulations. The traditional methods of tracings, simulations, and cut-and-paste left telltale signs to the trained eye. Today, however, with affordable computers, photocopiers, and digital cameras, as well as high quality scanners and printers, detecting forgeries and manipulations is no longer simple for the fully-trained document examiner.

Twenty-first century document examiners must take special care when examining non-original questioned documents, including photographs and carbon copies. Depending on the equipment and software available, an opportunist can create or recreate virtually any document in a short period of time.

This workshop will include a number of practical problems for the document examiners to examine for any signs of manipulations. The examiners will also observe many of the techniques utilized by criminals and opportunists to create bogus documents. Finally, issues will be discussed concerning what information should be relayed to the investigators and/or the court with regard to non-original evidence.

Manipulation, Non-Original Documents, Forgery