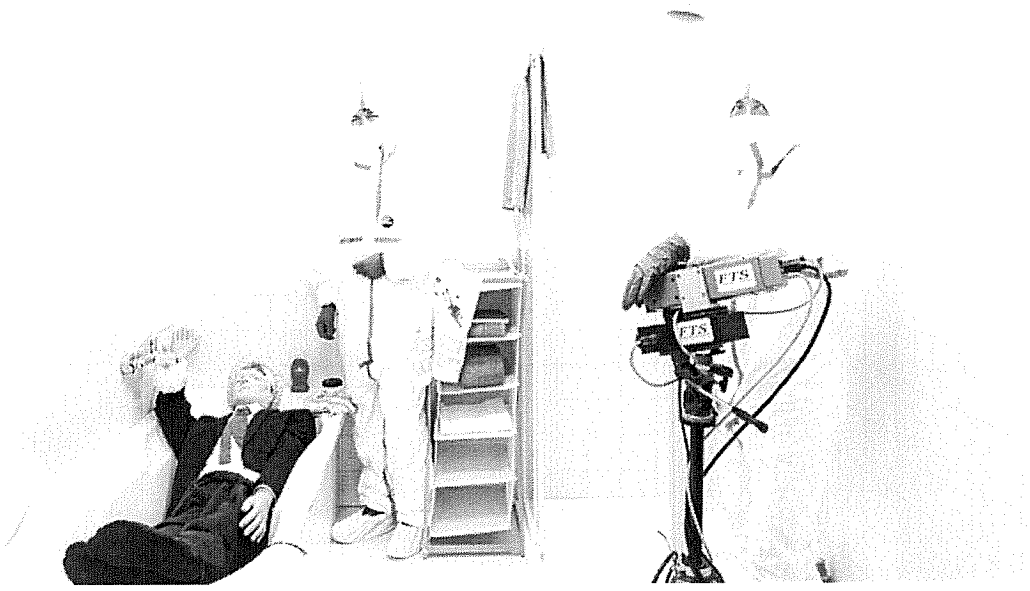
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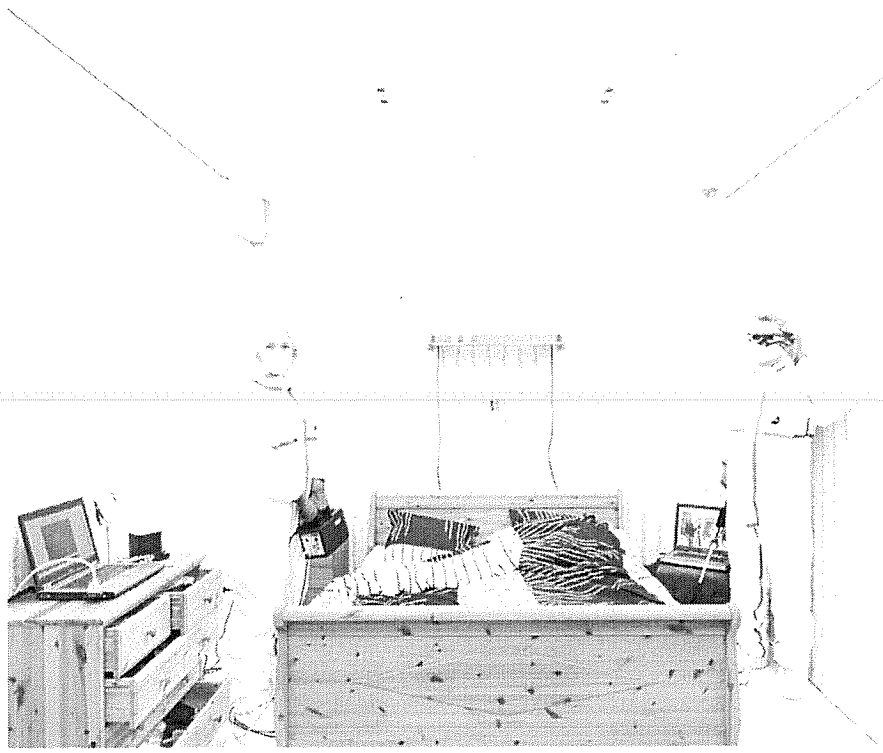
Jenna Garrett 04.22.15 7:00 am

The Bizarre and Grisly World of Forensics Training



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Spectral cameras detect residual biological material (blood, semen, etc.) invisible to the naked eye. They can also test the age of the material. Jeroen Hofman



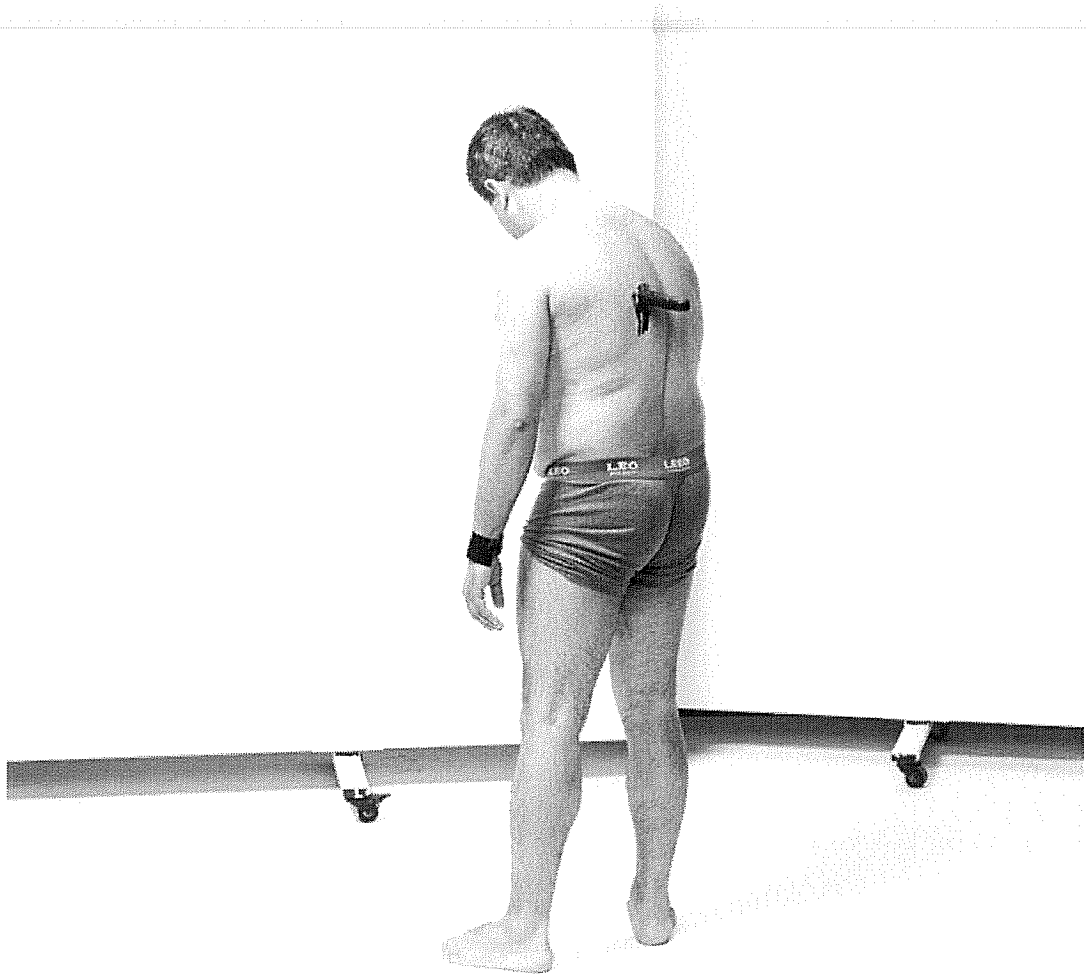
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Thermal imaging cameras show heat signatures or heat concentrations. A cup of coffee will leave a heat signature on a table after it is removed. Bodies also leave heat signatures. Jeroen Hofman



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A student recording the actions of the perpetrator using a motion capture suit which renders movement in 3-D. These animations are used to reconstruct crimes without the need for the physical presence of the perpetrator. Jeroen Hofman



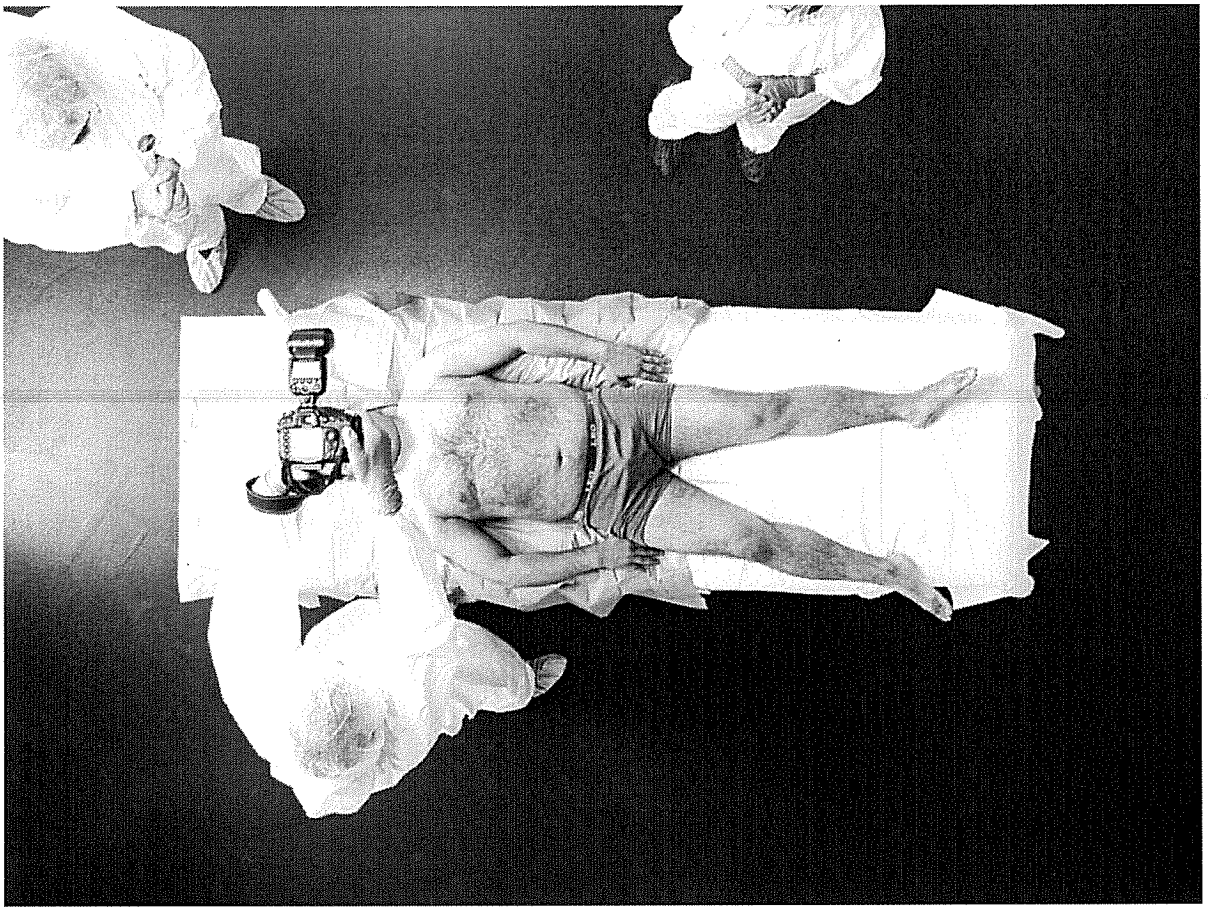
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A man with a knife in his back. All of the 'corpses' are actors made to look like dead bodies. Jeroen Hofman



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For this victim, what appears to be a head wound is actually the result of the body having lain in a pool of blood. Jeroen Hofman



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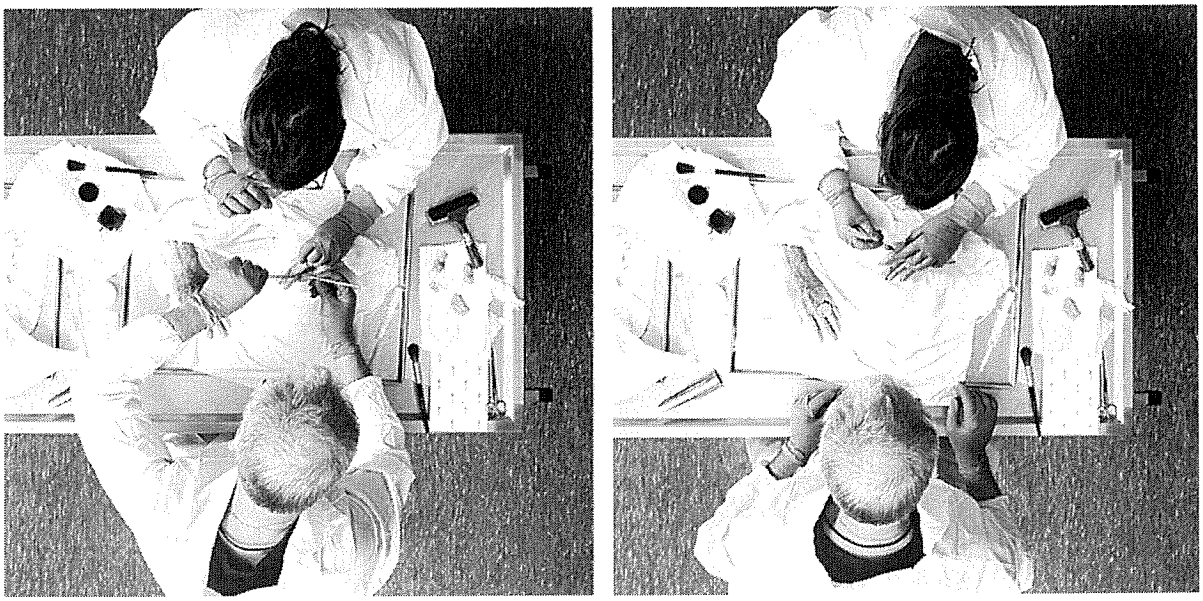
Under the guidance of an expert, students are taught how to photographically document a victim and perform a medical/forensic inspection. Jeroen Hofman

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Students learning how to collect fingerprints from prepared specimens. The hands are from people who have donated their remains to science. Jeroen Hofman



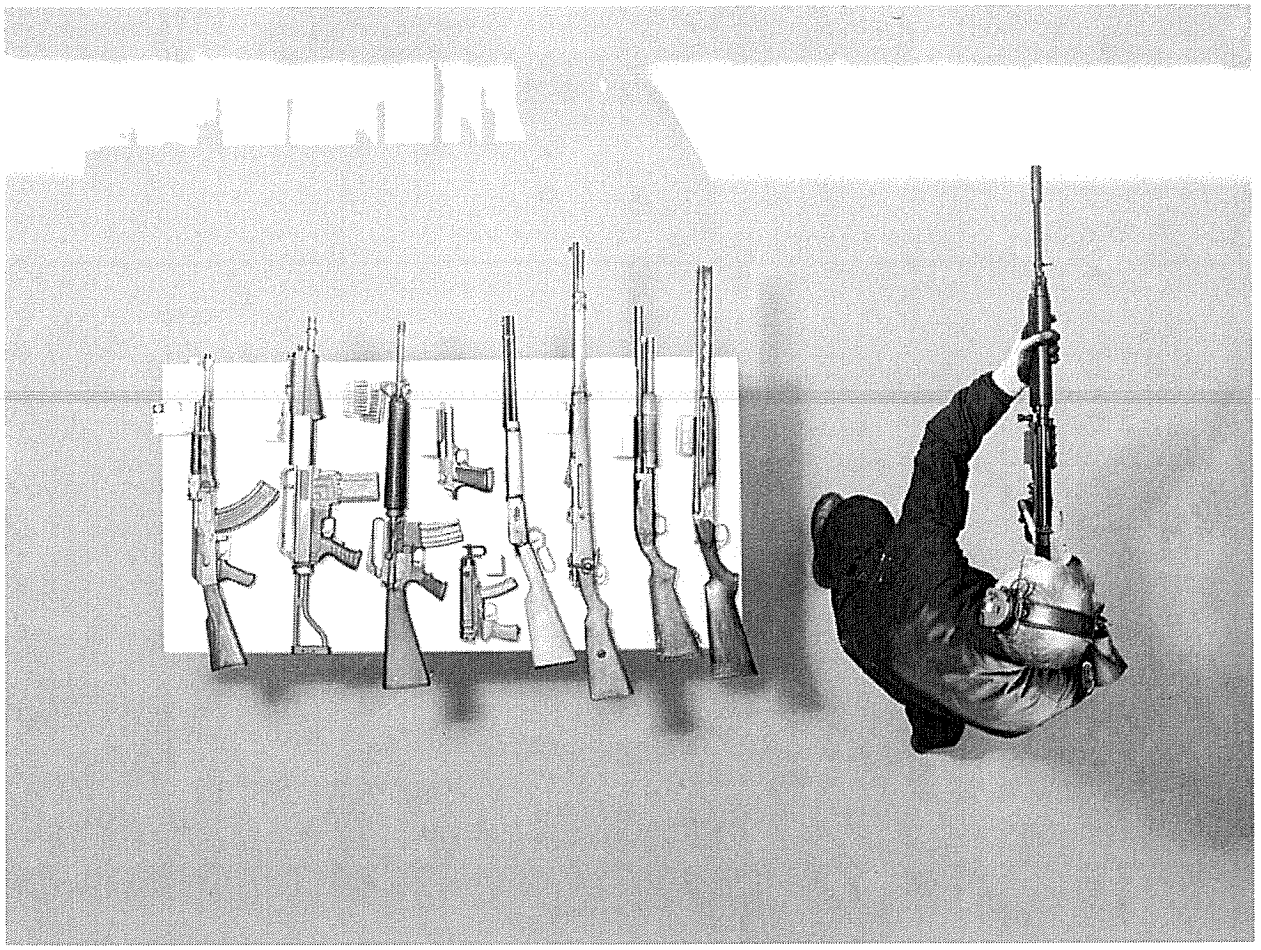
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Skin being removed from the fingertips for fingerprint identification (dactyloscopy). Jeroen Hofman



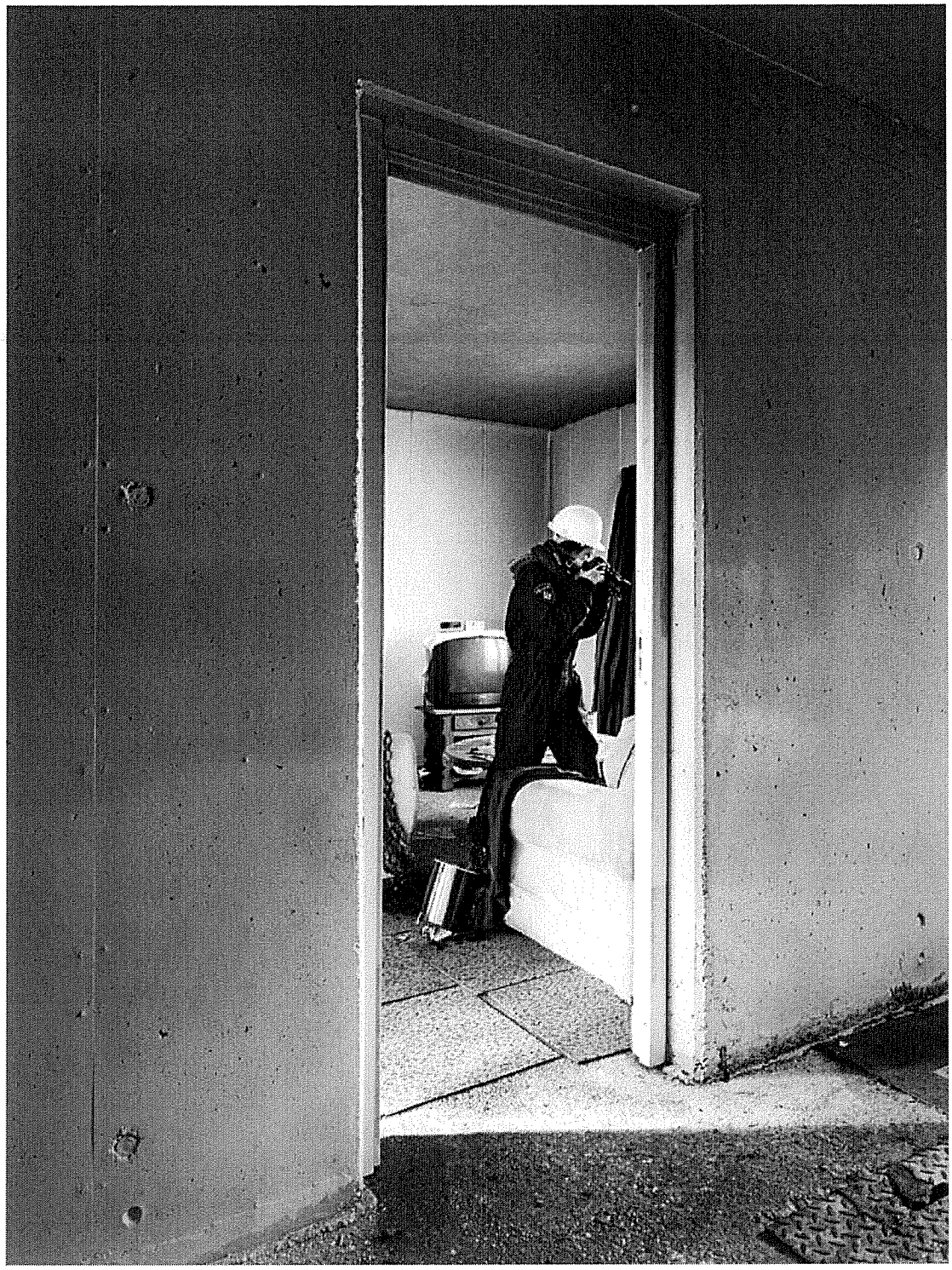
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Dummies ready to be used as victims at simulated crime scenes. Jeroen Hofman



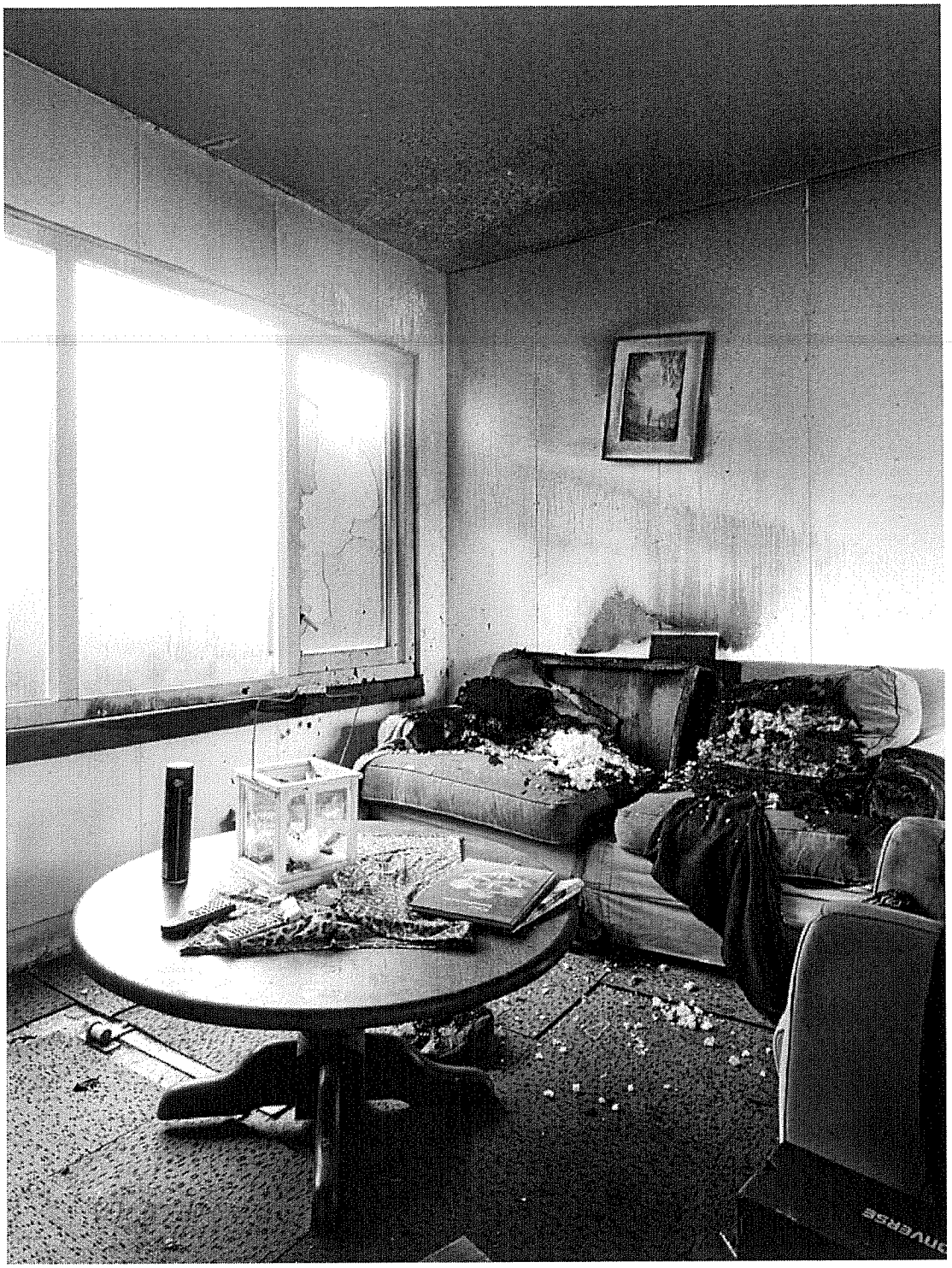
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Forensic weapon analysis at the Ossendrecht Police Academy. Jeroen Hofman



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Fire Investigation. Documenting the 'virgin' (untouched) scene is crucial. Before the actual investigation is started and things get moved around, every detail is meticulously photographed. Jeroen Hofman



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Fires break out in several specially prepared homes. For every new training session all the walls, ceilings and floors are completely refinished. The whole interior is adapted to a desired scenario and specific trace evidence is left. The domestic fires are set by the instructor who keeps a close eye on the behavior of the fire. After sufficient fire patterns have emerged, the fire is extinguished. Jeroen Hofman

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After having been taught the theory of investigating vehicle fires, students get to set fire to cars themselves. Students observe as the fires evolve and fire patterns emerge. When the vehicles have cooled down sufficiently, students investigate each other's cars. Jeroen Hofman



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Students examine the debris layer by layer to determine the order in which these layers have collapsed before conclusions can be drawn. Combined with the fire patterns and heat indicators, evidence seems to point to the fire starting in the back seat. Jeroen Hofman



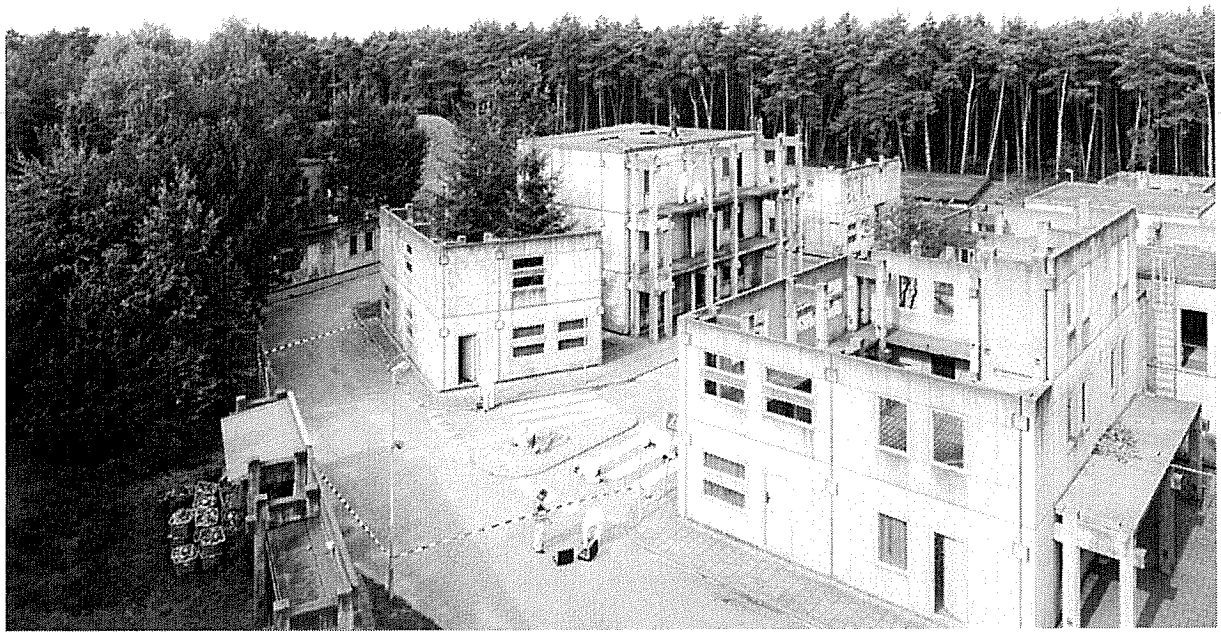
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Under the supervision of the Netherlands Forensic Institute, students of the Police Academy are taught how to locate and excavate bodies. These bodies are actually plastic skeletons which were buried together with animal meat three months prior. Jeroen Hofman



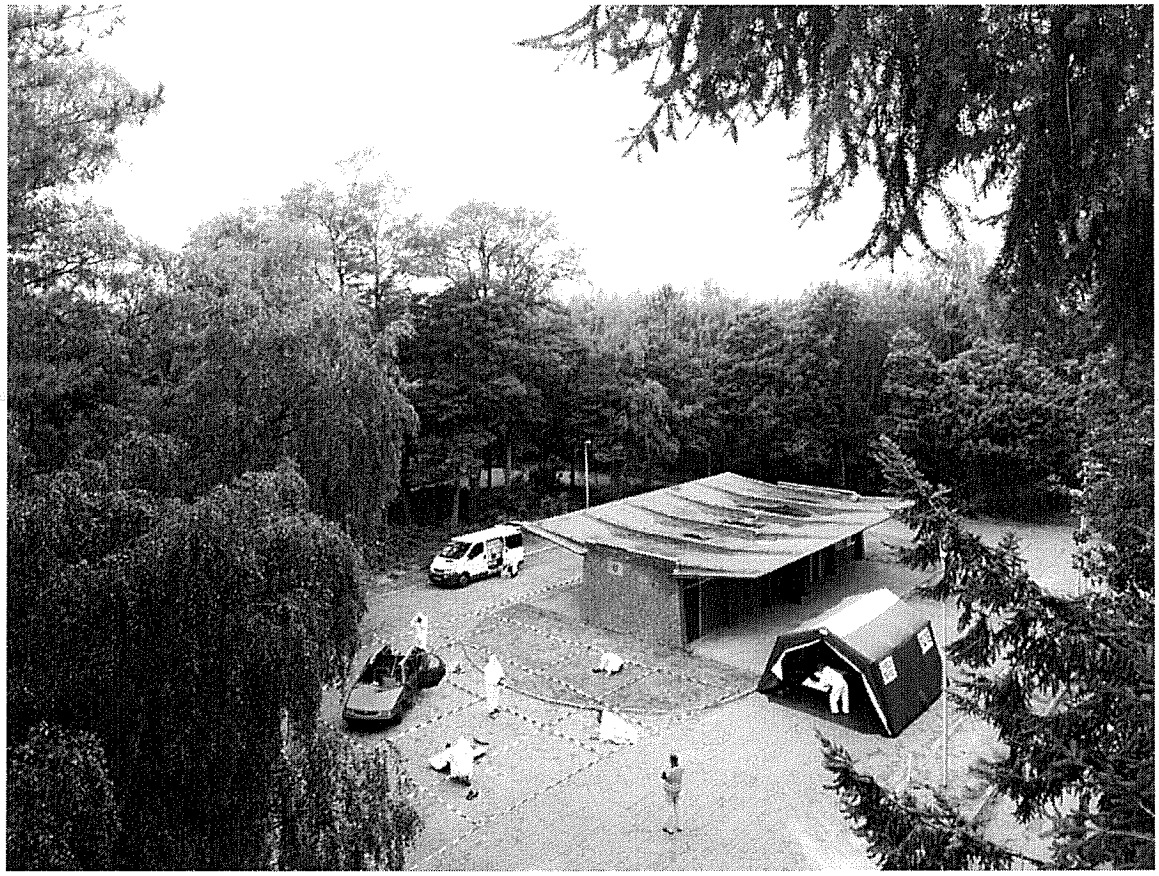
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Members of the Police Academy in Ossendrecht practice recovering victims from a disaster area for identification. Jeroen Hofman



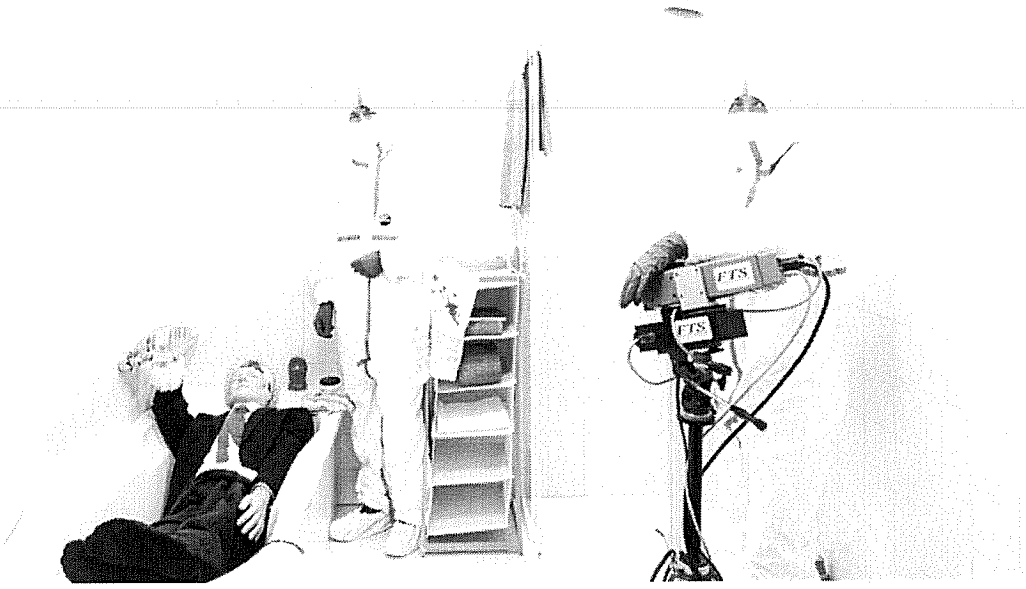
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Forensic researchers investigating a simulated crime scene where a person has been killed with a firearm at the Ossendrecht Police Academy. Jeroen Hofman



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Members of the Police Academy in Ossendrecht training for a crime scene investigation after a car bomb attack. Jeroen Hofman



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Spectral cameras detect residual biological material (blood, semen, etc.) invisible to the naked eye. They can also test the age of the material. Jeroen Hofman

The grisly crime scenes in Jeroen Hofman's photos aren't real. They're painstakingly detailed, remarkably realistic simulations designed to teach would-be cops in the Netherlands the art and science of forensic investigation.

The sets, inspired by actual events, are meticulously modeled by instructors who go so far as to dress actors as corpses and torch fully-furnished rooms to make everything as real as possible. Hofman documents the exacting and surreal world of forensics training in his latest series.

The Dutch photographer always has been interested in criminal investigations. "Finding the truth in forensic science is a fascination I've had since I was a little boy," he says. "Television and series like *CSI* dragged me into the subject."

He's been working on the project for more than two years, chronicling students training at police academies in Apeldoorn and Ossendrecht and at the Netherlands Forensics Institute in The Hague. It takes four years to become a forensic investigator, and students dabble in all disciplines before choosing a concentration like homicide or cybercrimes.



Using forensic stepping plates, an investigator has made his way to the victim. In this simulated crime scene, every detail of the victim is captured with a handheld 3-D scanner. Jeroen Hofman

Beyond the classroom and laboratory, students work in simulated crime scenes crafted with the greatest attention to detail. Instructors want their students to experience situations—be it a homicide, a car bombing, or explosion—in as lifelike a situation as possible. Actors in make-up and fake blood portray murder victims, for example, and cars are tossed down hills to depict an accident. In one image, Hofman photographs students excavating bodies. Instructors buried plastic skeletons alongside animal meat three months before, so presumably students would experience the sight and smell of rotting flesh.

Students also gain first-hand experience with advanced forensic technology. Crimes scenes are recorded with a 3-D scanner, for example, to carefully document everything from furniture placement to bloodstain patterns. Thermal imaging cameras reveal heat signatures, and spectral cameras detect biological material. Students are taught to be hyper-vigilant of preserving the crime scene and not contaminating evidence, which is why they use plastic stepping plates to move around a room without leaving shoe prints.

Hofman captures the gadgets, sterile lighting and grim scenarios with a macabre curiosity. His clinical photos reveal the incredible skill and prowess of forensic investigators, and the surreal, occasionally twisted humor of simulated death and destruction.

"Everything that is shown in my pictures is already common for the students. They don't seem surprised anymore when a semi-naked actor is in full dead body make up. Victims can even simulate rigor mortis. And at the end the actors just get up and walk away like nothing happened," he says.