

Third Edition

Introduction to Private Investigation

Essential Knowledge and Procedures for the Private Investigator

Joseph Anthony Travers, C.P.I.
Joshua M. Travers, L.P.I.

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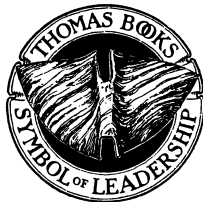
Essential Knowledge and Procedures
for the Private Investigator

By

JOSEPH ANTHONY TRAVERS, C.P.I.

and

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*For
My Lord and Savior
Jesus of Nazareth
And
My Son
Joshua of San Clemente*

FOREWORD

The Private Investigation profession is unique and very much unlike the way it has been depicted in movies and on television. One of the greatest challenges we meet in this industry is overcoming the misperception of PI's being shady ex-cops, or thug errand boys for corrupt politicians. Though many Private Investigators have transitioned out of careers in law enforcement, there are more PI's without law enforcement experience now than ever before. With excellent insight, guidance, and education provided by courses offered in colleges and vocational schools, as well as from books such as this one, the profession has become more mainstream and diversely populated than in previous years.

There has never been a better time than now to begin a career as a Private Investigator. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections Program, employment of Private Investigators is expected to increase up to 21% throughout the 2010–2020 decade due to the dramatic increase in the privatization and outsourcing of investigations and security services. Additionally, with society becoming increasingly more dependent upon information technology, there are new fields of investigation evolving, such as: identity theft, business intelligence, social media, high tech fraud, and due diligence.

I often meet people who, upon learning what I do, respond in ways like “I’ve always thought I would make a great PI because of my inquisitive nature”. If you are reading this book, you too probably think of yourself as inquisitive, analytical, and with a propensity for seeking out the truth in things. Those are great qualities to have as a technician but you must also have business skills, otherwise your career in the Private Investigation profession could be unprofitable and short-lived. Many former law enforcement officers become PIs and soon realize they struggle to obtain and retain clients because they were never taught business skills in the structured hierarchy of public service employment.

Jack Reed, founder of JHRI, Inc. and founding member of the California Association of Licensed Investigators (CALI) once told me, “It is better to be

a great businessman and a good investigator than to be a great investigator and a good businessman.” Mr. Reed’s message always reminds me that no matter how good you are at your trade, if you cannot promote yourself, your service, or run your business like a professional, you simply will not last in any industry.

After knowing Mr. Travers and working with him for years as an officer of the California Association of Licensed Investigators I can confidently say that he is uniquely qualified to provide the information and knowledge contained in this book. It should be required reading for every person with ambition to begin working in the Private Investigation industry. When you have finished reading it, you will have a complete, fundamental education of investigating in the private sector and be prepared to begin your new path. I challenge you to continue honing your craft by keeping an open mind and insatiable thirst for knowledge, and never stop striving to improve.

MICHAEL JULIAN, CPI PPS CSP

President, California Association of Licensed Investigators 2012-2014

President, National Business Investigations, Inc.

FOREWORD

I read the first edition of *Introduction to Private Investigation* while I was still a police officer. It prompted me to come to the realization that I haven't been objective in my career as a police officer.

As a police officer I was trained and programmed to believe that the police officers and the District Attorneys are on the same team, and we were the "good guys." Most police officers believed that all defendants and their defense attorneys were on the "opposing team." Therefore the mindset was that police work at times was a sport, we had to win. I didn't lie in my reports, or on the stand in the courtroom. But I frequently conducted my investigations in a way that would benefit the District Attorney's prosecution. My loyalty was always to the DA.

For 19 years I often handled my investigations without objectivity. Without properly conducting thorough investigations with due diligence. Without making every effort to turn over every stone. My thought process was, my job was solely to arrest the accused and believe the victim. Then I would leave it to the justice system to figure it out.

Sadly it wasn't until I became a private eye, that I came to understand the true meaning of the *Scales of Justice*, and the *United States Constitution*. I wish I could go back and regain my 19 years of police work. Doing it always with objectivity.

This book will help you accomplish that understanding. It will provide you with the basic skills, knowledge and required tools before you go into battle within the Scales of Justice. Because the truth never changes. It is "the same, yesterday, today and forever."

BILL RHETTS, LPI
HI-CALIBER Investigations
Chief Investigator

Chaplain
Inland Police Officers Coalition, Inc.
Founder and Executive Director

Note: In the year 2001, Bill received "Special Congressional Recognition" for "outstanding and invaluable service to the community."

FOREWORD

Over the years, the most curious phenomenon that I have encountered in my work as a Private Investigator is the misconceptions of what a P.I. does, and the “glamorous” lifestyle we lead! Our public image is so far off the mark; it was refreshing for me to see a book introduced that helped to clear up this distortion, and also, to bring us closer to the 21st century! Joseph Travers’ *Introduction to Private Investigation* creates a realistic account of just what is expected of a P.I., and what types of people are cut out for this type of work. Also, we are brought up to date on laws, technology, equipment, and case studies that are more pertinent to the 90s, and to the types of challenges facing the P.I.’s of today.

Our world is changing at such a rapid pace, and it is difficult to keep up with that pace. It is equally difficult to choose a career that is both rewarding and financially lucrative. The good news is that the field of investigation is becoming more and more diverse, offering opportunity in every direction, not just from the standpoint of law enforcement, but in the private sector as well. Mr. Travers’ book deals with material that has never been touched on before in a book designed to educate private investigators about their craft. His information is accurate, current, and practicable.

I am personally a strong believer in specialization. My advice would be to find a niche that you enjoy, educate yourself to the level of “expert,” and design and implement a marketing plan, to begin your journey into this exciting field. *Introduction to Private Investigation* opens the door to that journey. I highly recommend anyone presently involved in or considering a career change into the field of professional investigation to allow this book to help guide the way.

GLEN S. GOODMAN
Chairman
California Institute for Professional Investigators

FOREWORD

The private investigation industry has changed dramatically in the past half-century. From a time when the typical P.I. had the reputation of being a booze-slugging, woman-chasing roughneck – to today’s investigators, professional men and women dedicated to preserving justice in the public and private sectors.

Investigators play an important role in the civil and criminal justice systems in this country. Their contribution to the war on crime is largely unknown and unrecognized. Today’s investigators search out the facts for many crimes, including insurance fraud, arson, industrial espionage, theft, and drug abuse. Their clients include insurance companies, attorneys, private employers, and government agencies.

The science of investigation is a learned profession. Webster’s Dictionary describes the word “investigate” as “to observe or study by close examination and systematic inquiry.” And “learned” is “to gain knowledge of understanding or skill in by study, instruction, or experience.” Therein lies the purpose of this book. There is a constant need for up-to-date technical information to assist professional investigators in their quest for the truth.

This book will enable the professional investigator or apprentice to sharpen the skills they use every day. Be it undercover, surveillance, interviewing, case preparation, or courtroom testimony, even the most seasoned veterans understand the need to be on top of their game in order to provide clients with the best possible results.

We have seen the need for specialized education in the investigation field in order to serve our clients in the private sector. While many investigators have a law enforcement background, and received training to deal with the public and criminal activities, the private sector must play by a different set of rules. Today, sexual harassment and violence in the workplace top the headlines, and require investigations that ferret out civil liability, not just criminal intent. The need for specialized skills has developed into schools that teach the art of private investigation, how to avoid invasion of privacy, the ability to search public records, and so on.

I applaud the efforts of Joe Travers to write an easy-to-read textbook for investigators. It is filled with practical information and stories which will provide extremely valuable training for us all.

MARK A. McCLAIN, C.P.I.

Past President

California Association of Licensed Investigators

PREFACE

Introduction to Private Investigation is designed to provide the essential knowledge and procedure needed to operate successfully as a private investigator. It is both an instructional textbook for those individuals desiring a career as a private investigator and a resource manual that can be an invaluable tool for later reference. The approach is a direct, concise style, which facilitates comprehension by novices as well as experienced private investigators, and makes possible competent and professional performance of all types of private investigation. The purpose for writing this book is to fill the existing need within the field for a precise comprehensive text detailing the development of skills necessary for professional investigative work. In addition, there is a lack of recent, up-to-date textbooks currently available to individuals wishing to learn about private investigation. *Introduction to Private Investigation* will help fill this void.

The text material has been class-tested from an accredited curriculum approved by the California State Department of Consumer Affairs: Bureaus of Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education, and Security and Investigative Services, and the Arizona Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education. This curriculum has been taught by Educational Designs Institute of Los Angeles, California, and by Private Investigative Research Company of Rancho Cucamonga, California; U.S. Colleges, Inc. at Rancho Cucamonga, Riverside, Santa Ana, Carlsbad, and San Diego, California, and Phoenix, Arizona, and by Four Star Incorporated, in San Juan Capistrano, Temecula, and San Diego, CA. The curriculum is currently being revised, updated, and taught by the CIA: School of Investigation.

This book is intended for both the individual without prior investigative experience and the newly licensed private investigator who lacks formal education in a private investigations vocational school. It is also written for those persons possessing a background in police or law enforcement.

One unique attribute of *Introduction to Private Investigation* is its commitment to the practice of private investigation in the private business sector (civil justice) as well as the public sector (criminal justice). Another notable quality is

its concern with both the portrayal of private investigation as a legitimate professional discipline and the subsequent degradation of the popular, media propagated misconceptions of private investigators.

In the second edition, I have added two new chapters on “Criminal Defense Investigation” and “Bioethics, Investigation, and the Occult.” My first reason for the addition is due to a complete lack of material for each subject pertaining to professional investigation. The other reason, a more personal one, comes from my calling as a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, the Creator of all things, seen and unseen, whom I owe all without reservation. After personally conducting several criminal defense investigations involving major felonies, I found most criminal behavior is connected to the works of darkness . . . evil. The third edition is an update of the laws of technological advances since 2005 and the addition of Chapter 14, “Private Investigation and Computer Technology,” due to the rapid advances in the field of computer technology as it relates to investigation.

JOSEPH A. TRAVERS, CPI, CCDI

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*I*ntroduction to *Private Investigation* is a result of many years of education and experience. I have not “reinvented the wheel” so to speak, but with the help of many colleagues I have only attempted to improve upon the profession of investigation.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many in the field of academia, to those who promote Truth and Integrity. Among the many I have gained inspiration from include Dr. Albert C. Germann, Professor Emeritus Criminal Justice, C.S.U. L.B. and Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel Bible College and my Pastor – Peter-John Courson of Capo Beach Calvary.

Professionally, I have acquired many skills and techniques from many investigators all too many to mention. Among these include James F. Broder, C.P.P., Vice President of Confidential Management Services, Inc.; Mark A. McClain, C.P.I., President of California Association of Licensed Investigators, and Vice President of Krout and Schneider Investigations; Joel C. Villasenor, C.P.P., CIC Investigations; Vern Horst, LPI, Retired Chief of Investigations for Riverside County District Attorney’s Office; Albert Rusas, LPI, Sergeant for Bell Police Department; Chaplain Bill Rhett, LPI, Hi-Caliber Investigations; Jerry Steering, Attorney at Law; of SteeringLaw.com; the Honorable Alexandra Phillips, Judge, Orange County Superior Court; and Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher Burroughs, USN. Special thanks to Born Again – The Way Motorcycle Ministry: Dana Griffith, CPI; Fred Moreno, LPI; Richard Rivero, LPI; Cpl. Joshua M. Travers, LPI, and “Blues Hall of Fame” recording artist Darrell Mansfield. I would also like to thank the “Team Guys,” and Jeffrey Bramstedt, LPI, Jim Woods, LPI, and Rodney “Wayne” Stansel, LPI.

A sincere appreciation for technical assistance goes to two of my former students and graduates of Private Investigative Research Company School of Investigations, Julia Cosmides, graduate student at the University of Notre Dame. A special thanks goes to my former office manager, Carol, for preaching Jesus. Another heartfelt thanks to my son and co-author of Chapter 13 and 14, United States Marine Cpl. Joshua Michael Travers, LPI, Christian Intelligence Agency, Liberty University Student, and All-American Wrestler. With-

out their contribution this could not have been possible.

Finally, the continued moral support of my business partner, the Holy Spirit, has allowed me the time and opportunity to complete this endeavor.

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INTRODUCTION TO PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

Chapter 1

INVESTIGATION CONCEPTS

Courage

Why is it that most men's lives are controlled by small and petty circumstances? I am saddened as I watch people love the good and great things that are within their reach and could be theirs with "BUT A LITTLE ACT OF COURAGE!"

The mediocre man, "Average Man," is the one I speak of here. He is the one who has so little self-esteem that he cannot trust his own thoughts and judgments, but in the final analysis must rely upon outside sources for his decisions. This is the man who is ruled by the mob, or who accepts all that he reads as truth and finally becomes like the mob. This is the man who has some degree of success only when he is caught upon the crest of a wave generated by the few exceptional self-directed individuals.

This is the man who has a positive attitude for that moment he is in the presence of positive individuals, but when left alone, "falls to his negative knees." This is the man who sells his birthrights (commitment to his own thoughts) for fear of what he thinks his neighbor might think. This is the man who stands tall as he is prompted by the actions of the mob, but is terrified with the silence of his own presence.

This is the man who follows and fears to lead. This is the man who hides his deeds in the cloak of nobility, since his dishonesty prevents him from dealing with truth and reality. This is the man who cries "foul" when life has passed him by.

This is the man who is ruled by circumstance.

Strong men create circumstances which serve their needs and desires. If you are a man of circumstance, the cure for this disease is courage.

Courage is the most beautiful of all human expressions. Courage as I see it is "an act in the face of fear." We only need courage when we are afraid, which means that we need courage almost all of the time, because we are afraid of something all of the time.

I have discovered that fear becomes a coward when faced with but a small act of courage, and further, that the muscle of courage will grow strong with continued use.

My advice to myself is, “do those things which you fear, and keep doing them until you are no longer afraid, and then you will have become the master of your fate.”

I have studied the deeds of men both great and small, and I have studied those men who are great and small. In this study there appears to be many differences. All of the differences which count have at their base, one single thing—COURAGE.

Courage is that one ingredient which separates the weak from the strong, the successful from the weak, the great from the average.

All the things you desire in life have one common handle, which is made for the hand of the man of courage.

To be afraid is to be alive. To act against that fear is to be a man. William Penn Patrick once said, “I HAD RATHER DIE ON MY FEET THAN LIVE ON MY KNEES.”

WILLIAM PENN PATRICK

Private Investigations is a field that requires a great deal of I courage. It is one which you as the investigator will be called upon to make quick decisions, create inventive solutions to problems and deal with a wide range of people and situations. It is one that requires both skill and experience; no amount of “book learning” or head knowledge can take the place of actual hands-on, practical experience in investigation. As Edward Smith in his book *Practical Guide for Private Investigators* has pointed out, proficiency in private investigation can be compared to acquiring proficiency at the piano¹ you can’t just read a book on music theory and expect to step out upon the world’s stage as a concert pianist without spending hours practicing on the piano.

In this chapter, you will be given an introduction to private investigation. You will be provided with a brief overview of the history of investigations, the criminal justice process, and civil law. Finally, you will be shown the relevant legislation about private investigators, the code of ethics for professionals in the field, and the necessary tools for skillful report writing.

¹ Smith, Edward. *Practical Guide for Private Investigators*. Boulder: Paladin Press, 1990.

DEFINITION OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

Charles Sennewald, the former Security Director of Broadway Department Stores, defines investigation thusly: “An investigation is the examination, study, searching, tracking and gathering of factual information that answers questions or solves problems.”² In addition to mere fact gathering, the private investigator is also called upon to formulate logical hypotheses and conclusions that are based upon the available information. Thus, the desired result of an investigation is “the factual explanation of what transpired.”³

It would be more than simplistic to say that an investigator deals exclusively with facts – it would be untrue. While he or she is concerned with uncovering the actual details of a particular event or situation, there is also the need to determine *why* such things went on, how they are all related, and what relevancy each piece of information provides the case at hand. The facts themselves are useless if you are unable to apply logic, discern connections, and arrive at the correct conclusion.

The Investigator’s Code

Every thorough investigation answers the following basic questions:

1. Who?
2. What?
3. When?
4. Where?
5. Why?
6. How?

When looking to determine the “who” portion of an investigation, some types of questions that you might ask include who discovered the crime, who reported it, or who saw or heard anything. You might also ask who had a motive for committing the crime, who did it, and who helped, if there were any others involved.

Some examples of “what” questions are to find out what exactly happened, what crime was committed, what the actions of the suspect were, and what weapons were used in the commission of the crime.

² Sennewald, Charles A. *The Process of Investigation*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1981, p. 3.

³ Ibid.