

Centre for the Humanities and Medicine
The University of Hong Kong

Death: Philosophy, Therapy, Medicine

**“Hands Off – They’re Dead!!” Challenges to Post-Mortem Examination
in Death Investigations**

Philip Beh

In many modern legal jurisdictions there exist procedures for state initiated death investigations. The application of such procedures is dictated by societal and cultural norms to a greater or lesser extent. In Hong Kong, the Coroners Ordinance spells out twenty circumstances of death whereby death reporting for investigation is mandated. Despite the presence of such a death investigation system from the late 1800’s as part of Hong Kong’s British legacy, this aspect of the death and dying procedure is still a difficult and emotional one. This paper will present the factual data but will also discuss the emotional and the intellectual conflicts for the forensic doctor when managing the next-of-kin.