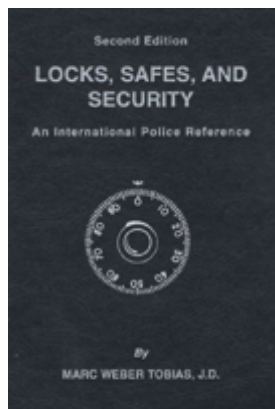# Reviews

October 2005

Stars denote reviewer ratings, with ***** **being the highest and** ***** **t**he lowest.

***** **Locks, Safes and Security: An International Police Reference. Government Version 5.0**
Marc Weber Tobias; book published by Charles C. Thomas; the full set is available from
www.security.org (Web); 1,400-page book plus 14 CD-ROMs; $600.

Michelangelo had the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Cervantes had Don
Quixote, and Rodin had The Thinker. The comprehensive Locks, Safes and
Security can be considered Marc Weber Tobias?s masterwork. What it lacks
in the grace and beauty of virtuoso pieces of art, it makes up for with a
mountain of usable information.

Some background on this combination book/CD-ROM set is necessary.
Originally published in 1970 as a hardcopy treatise on locks and safes, it has
added a fully searchable electronic component, with the last update having
been released in July 2004.

Three versions of the set are available. The government version (reviewed
here) contains the book and 14 CD-ROMs. The locksmith and alarms versions (reviewed below)
contain the book and six and four disks, respectively. The government and alarms versions are
available only to the law enforcement, intelligence, and defense communities.

This set is the result of the author?s life quest to discover weaknesses in security procedures and
faults in security devices and systems. Commonly called LSS+, the electronic version features a
tremendous search engine that allows security professionals to retrieve extremely detailed information
in the form of text, graphic, audio, and visual files.

Woven together, these materials allow users to traverse an incredibly broad range of topics, most
notably how to circumvent the latest technical security devices and alarm systems. Even the most
experienced locksmith or security professional is likely to be enlightened by the revelations provided.

Targeted to law enforcement agencies, this version can be used to gather evidence about high-tech
burglaries and intrusions. Its plethora of information details the tools that are used in covert and forced
attacks and describes evidence that is likely to be left at the scene.

Thirty hours of video show specific techniques for defeating locks and alarm systems. The multimedia
approach makes the work an excellent learning tool. The offerings range from showing
demonstrations of how to bypass master-key systems to depicting experts from around the world as
they describe specialized tools and techniques for opening locks and safes.

Learning how to defeat locks is key, but Tobias also shows how they can be protected. Still, even the
more sophisticated protection systems can be overcome, and Tobias shows that as well. This
masterpiece will be of immense value to security professionals.

*Reviewer: David D. Daily, CPP, is the founder and part-owner of Dakota Security Systems Inc., a
nationwide installer of physical security equipment since 1979. He is current chapter secretary for*

ASIS International?s South Dakota chapter.

★★★★★ **Locks, Safes and Security. Locksmith Version 5.0, Alarms Version 5.0**

By Marc Weber Tobias; published by www.security.org (Web); 1,400-page book plus six CD-ROMs (locksmith version) or four CD-ROMs (alarms version); $350 (locksmith version), $200 (alarms version).

A facility director with the latest biometric access-control system may not realize that the system can be easily circumvented by a backup mechanical-key bypass. A forensics investigator who is unfamiliar with the latest technology may conclude that a burglary was an inside job rather than a sophisticated break-in. In short, security depends on an integrated, multidisciplinary approach. For that reason, security directors, locksmiths, alarm and CCTV installers, and others must work together and understand each other?s fields.

The locksmith and alarms versions of this set represent a big step in that direction. From its convenience to its enormous range, the book/CD combination is an impressive display of research. While the disks won?t win an Academy Award for artistic achievement (sound and pictures are sometimes out of sync, for example), that shortfall is negligible given the scholarship behind this effort.

Because the set is all-encompassing, not all sections will appeal equally to everybody. U.S. locksmiths might not spend much time working with the many European locks and keys shown, for example. But that?s the beauty of an encyclopedia such as this: Everyone can pursue their own interests, with the chance that they will stumble on a fascinating piece of unexpected information.

Reviewer: Merrill Hoffman, CRL (Certified Registered Locksmith), is president of Santa Barbara Locksmiths in Santa Barbara California. He is a member of ASIS International.

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