

## BOOK REVIEWS

**THE HERITAGE OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE.** Marshall Brucer, C. Craig Harris, William J. MacIntyre, and George V. Taplin, Eds. New York, The Society of Nuclear Medicine, 1979, 191 pp, illustrated, \$14.50.

To paraphrase one of the classic expressions, we see things so clearly because we stand upon the shoulders of giants. After reviewing this book, I can only say that our specialty owes a debt of gratitude to many individuals with whom I was not familiar. Undoubtedly, it was the intention of the editors to remind us of the contributions made by our colleagues in the late 19th and early 20th centuries upon which rests our practice of nuclear medicine today.

This special book cannot be reviewed in the fashion commonly used, but rather should be looked upon as an extraordinary and unique type of presentation. It has little relevance to the day-to-day practice of our specialty; however, it has great significance to each physician in terms of his being a knowledgeable member of the profession with an appreciation of the past. It is valuable in pointing out, without editorial comment, the necessity and validity of the scientific method as applied to medicine. At the same time it reassures us that human intuition and intelligence combined with logic may lead to significant discoveries that seem beyond our "scientific" abilities.

The opening article, "Nuclear Medicine Begins with a Boa Constrictor," by Marshall Brucer, surely one of the premiere medical educators of our time, is an enticing introduction. Brucer's style, familiar to so many of us from his "Vignettes" series of a number of years ago, is as fascinating as ever. With his unusual wit and humor, Dr. Brucer presents a thumbnail sketch of the history and major figures in the development of nuclear medicine.

The only criticisms that I make of the book are those relative to the technical aspects, particularly the printing, to which more attention should have been given, and there are a number of illustrations that are not well reproduced. In a book, such as this one, however, which assembles major articles in the field spanning more than a hundred years, it is probable that some of the originals may not have been up to current standards.

I heartily recommend the book to those who practice nuclear medicine, radiology, or pathology. It is not only academically and historically fascinating, but also should serve as a reminder that we haven't discovered everything.

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**PATHOLOGY OF SOFT TISSUE TUMORS.** Steven I. Hajdu, Philadelphia, Lea and Febiger, 1979, 572 pp., illustrated, \$65.00.

Dr. Steven Hajdu, of the Memorial-Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, is a widely published author of numerous papers on a large variety of topics in the fields of surgical pathology and cytology. He has now published one of the first attempts at a general textbook on soft-tissue tumors. He accomplishes this formidable task admirably, despite the complex nature and relatively infrequent occurrence of soft-tissue tumors. The book begins with a chapter on history and classification, which is followed by a logical division

into chapters on fibrous, fat, muscle, vascular, nervous, and tendosynovial tissue tumors. In addition, chapters are included on extraskelatal bone tumors and miscellaneous entities. Each chapter contains numerous illustrations (about 300 in the entire book); frequent tables concerning age and sex, locations, series and clinical course; and often additional historical notes on the various entities under discussion. Each chapter contains a color plate illustrating important histologic features.

I found very few problems on points of a technical nature. On page 179, a paragraph on intraosseous synovial cysts is seemingly misplaced, because it is out of context, and the same paragraph, in context, appears 10 pages earlier. Two more general critical comments can be made. First, an annoying lack of synchronization frequently exists between text and illustrations, the latter lagging several pages behind. This shortcoming causes a considerable waste of time in flipping pages if one is to follow both in order. Second, the bibliography for each chapter is presented in chronologic order (that is, by date of publication) and not alphabetically or in order of reference in the text. I found this unorthodox arrangement to be rather unwieldy. One would hope for improvements on these two points in future editions.

Philosophically, since the field is full of conceptual difficulties, many persons will take issue with various parts of the book. In particular, the term "tendosynovial sarcoma"—an entity that encompasses such tumors as synovioma, epithelioid sarcoma, clear-cell sarcoma, and others—will be questioned. Time and further studies will show whether this concept is valid. Similarly, combining fibrous and fibrohistiocytic lesions will be difficult for many to accept, although here there is more of a scientific basis for the arrangement.

The book concludes with two interesting features: an appendix of tables on various subjects (age and sex prevalences, most common tumors, and so forth) and a self-assessment examination of 140 questions. It will serve the student and the practicing surgical pathologist or oncologist as a basic textbook on soft-tissue tumors. Supplemented by other illustrative material—The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology fascicle on soft-tissue tumors, for example—this book is a worthwhile addition to the literature.

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**BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING.** Jacob Kline, Ed, Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1976, 919 pp, \$42.50.

The physical basis for a discipline is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in nuclear medicine. Indeed, in at least one country, there are departments of Biophysics and Nuclear Medicine. Since physicians in the field have a background in biology, they are usually interested in techniques that will update their physical or mathematical understanding. This volume, approaches just the opposite problem—it attempts to appeal to those with a physical science background who wish to master biomedical concepts. Unfortunately, the goal was not attained. To "understand" biology means to be able to identify key processes and then to apply