

## BOOK REVIEWS

**MEDICAL MALPRACTICE LAW.** 2nd Edition, A. R. Holder. New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1978. 562 pp, \$25.00.

This book reviews pivotal malpractice cases according to classifications such as misdiagnosis, vicarious liability, injuries from therapeutic agents, etc. The number of cases discussed in each section, and the author's concise, pertinent synthesis of their legal implications make this a valuable reference guide for students of law and medicine and practicing physicians and attorneys. The concluding sections, "Defenses to Malpractice Actions," "Malpractice and Disciplinary Action," "Termination of the Physician-Patient Relationship," and "The Malpractice Case in the Legal Process," add to the comprehensiveness and practicality of the volume. A selected bibliography, complete notes on each case, and both alphabetical and jurisdictional case indices are helpful for follow-up.

Though much of the content relates generally to the practice of medicine ("Careful Examinations") and surgery ("Surgical Negligence," "Anesthesia"), there is a significant amount of information about other specialties, including radiology and nuclear medicine. "Use of Appropriate Diagnostic Test," "Diagnosis of Nonexistent Disease," "Liability of Physicians for Hospital-owned Equipment," and "Physician Liability for Negligence of Hospital Employee," all contain legal information of interest to the radiologist. A part of Chapter V, "Injuries from Therapeutic Agents," deals specifically with x-rays, although primarily with radiation therapy and radiation burns. Ms. Holder does not list a reference for the legal aspects of radiology or nuclear medicine in her bibliography. It can be assumed that those of us in nuclear medicine would need to look elsewhere for detailed case studies. I would qualify this book as a good initiation to the general study of malpractice.

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**COMPUTER METHODS—THE FUNDAMENTALS OF DIGITAL NUCLEAR MEDICINE,** David E. Lieberman, St. Louis, The C.V. Mosby Company, 1977.

Seldom does a book answer an urgent need and fill a substantial fraction of a vast void as admirably as Lieberman's book on computer methods. Written for clinicians, technologists, and other allied health workers, the book leads one through the complexities of digital systems in a style that is characterized by simplicity and clarity and is devoid of mind-cluttering details and jargon that have relevance only for computer scientists. The book successfully bridges the gap between the "cook book" instruction manuals supplied by the manufacturers and the more advanced reference materials. In the preface Lieberman points out three ways the book may be used: a) as a supplement to technologists training programs and to prepare students for a computer-oriented department, b) as a teaching aid to the working technologist who is suddenly faced with a computer for operation in a clinical setting, and c) as an aid to physicians in the selection of computer systems for purchase.

The book is organized into five main parts. Part one is an

introduction (two chapters) that gives basic descriptive information about the types of computers used in nuclear medicine with explanations of computer numbering systems (binary, octal, decimal) and a description of a digital computer (including the functions of the individual components). Part two contains two chapters on hardware configurations for nuclear medicine data acquisition, storage and display, and chapter four has a particularly good explanation of the workings of the ADC interface between the scintillation camera and the computer. Part three covers software considerations and includes one chapter on "executive" or "monitor" programs. Although the function of this software is quite general, Lieberman relates it well to nuclear medicine applications.

Part four consists of seven chapters on clinical applications. The chapters include: "Cerebral Blood Flow Analysis on a Nuclear Medicine Computer System; Computers in the Radioimmunoassay Laboratory; Computed Tomography in Nuclear Medicine; Functional Imaging; Inventory Software; Nuclear Cardiology; and Quality Control." These chapters were written by invited authors, all recognized authorities in their fields.

Practical applications, including the use of high level languages for user-written software for data processing, are discussed in Chapter 14, and Lieberman presents a nine-page introductory FORTRAN programming course. The intention is to develop an appreciation for the multiple uses of high-level languages, but certainly one would not be able to do significant software development without additional background. The final chapter summarizes hardware, software, and environmental factors to be considered before, during, and after purchase of a computer system.

Lieberman's first book is a highly creditable accomplishment, and no nuclear medicine unit with a computer or one that plans use of a computer should be without it.

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**ATLAS OF XERORADIOGRAPHIC ANATOMY OF NORMAL SKELETAL SYSTEMS,** J. N. Wolfe, C. C. Kapdi, H. S. Murphy. Springfield, IL, Charles C. Thomas, 1978. 193 pp, \$29.50.

This atlas of xeroradiographic anatomy contains three major sections. The first includes an historical review of xeroradiography, an explanation of the process of xeroradiographic image production, and details of contrast and density that influence the xeroradiographic image. The second section includes examples of axial skeletal anatomy. Especially clear are the images of the orbits; nasal bones; temporo-mandibular joints; cervical, thoracic, and sacral spine; and lateral view of the sternum. The airway is shown to such advantage on the lateral xeroradiographic view of the cervical spine that the utility of this method in evaluating adult and pediatric pharyngeal, laryngeal, and tracheal obstruction is obvious. The third major section contains examples of xeroradiographic images of the appendicular skeleton. Here the better anatomic displays are the elbow, shoulder, foot, ankle and knee; however, the quality of the reproduction of some of