# BOOK REVIEW

## "Radiology Where There Are no Radiologists"

### "Manual of Radiographic interpretation for General Practitioners"

*Palmer, PS., Cockshott, WP., Hegedüs V., Samuel, E.:*

*WHO Basic Radiological System WHO, Geneva, 1985 (SFr. 23)*

The WHO established a few years ago an advisory group on the "Basic Radiological System" as a parallel effort to make diagnostic radiology available to all mankind in the context of the ambitious aim of "Health for All by the Year 2000".

The group's aim is to provide technical expertise in the design and manufacture of appropriate radiological equipment of high quality at reasonable cost as well as to provide manuals on radiographic technique and radiological diagnosis.

This book is the first of 3 manuals to be published by the group. All the four co-authors are radiologists of international fame and have had extensive experience not only in Europe and North America but also in developing countries: Columbia, Greenland, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and the Far East.

During the course of eight chapters in 216 pages the authors cover the basic principles of radiation protection (in understandable language to the non-physicist!), management of adverse reactions to roentgen contrast media, the indications for and the interpretation of radiographs of the chest, skeleton, spine, skull, abdomen, pregnancy and the urinary tract. They do this with the aid of several diagrams and high quality radiographs. They cover most of the common diseases that are met in major hospitals in the industrialised as well as in the developing countries except for examinations requiring fluoroscopy. Though the presentation is compendium-like, the book is highly readable and provides a very systematic introduction to diagnostic radiology. It includes a full index.

A novel feature of the book is the emphasis in each chapter that radiographs are not a substitute for clinical judgment and each chapter begins with a narrowing down of the relevant indications and limitations of each type of examination.

It is difficult to find any shortcomings of the book within the context of its aim: to provide a guideline for the general physician who has to interpret his own radiographs. I can only recommend that in the next edition the figures on page 41 on pleural effusion should not be touched up and there is no need to use a 35 x 35 film to shown free flowing fluid in the decubitus position with horizontal rays when a 24 x 30 cm film is a degnate. On page 189 (on quality control of the survey film of the abdomen): the film should include the diaphragm and the symphysis pubis and not "the diaphragm and the pelvis" as it now reads.

More examples of benign and malignant bone tumours to demonstrate their differences from bone infections would be most helpful, as differentiation of these types of pathology is very difficult for the non-specialist.

The authors should also mention the technique of suprabic micturition cystourethrography, since the book is principally meant for countries with relatively high incidence of urethral strictures, and it is a cheaper technique with a higher success rate. A short bibliography would be most welcome to the keen reader who would like to read more on certain points.

The book is an essential reading for all general practitioners, district physicians, clinical and medical assistants in developing countries and for expatriate physicians involved in primary and secondary health care in developing countries, who invariably would not have had more training in diagnostic radiology than their local counterparts and who would have to interpret all their radiographs themselves. It should be compulsory reading for all trainees in the medical sciences as it is already in Iceland.

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