**BOOKS, BRIEFLY NOTED, PEDIATRIC RADIATION ONCOLOGY, 5TH EDITION**

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It is remarkable that the relatively small sub-specialty of Pediatric Radiation Oncology has been able to support such an extensive and authoritative tome in the first place; it is an extraordinary accomplishment that the interest has been increased so that five editions have now been published in the space of twenty-five years under the same editorial leadership.

The book is in itself comprehensive in that it runs 467 pages. It is supplemented by online access to the text and the images that can be magnified. This is particularly useful in viewing the histological examples.

There is a currently a trend for Radiation Oncologists to become more and more technical and procedure oriented; this book helps us not to forget that we are physicians first, in that the technical aspects of our specialty, although important and given emphasis, must blend into the overall management of the child and the family. Of the 26 chapters in the book the last five cover the important general topics that we all need to understand. The final chapter deals with the particularly important psychosocial aspects of radiation therapy on the child that in general are not well understood by physicians and health care professionals.

Although there are a number of individual outstanding chapters in the book, the whole is much greater than the sum of its parts. This is largely because it is much more than a collection of monographs written by experts. There has been a mainly successful attempt to integrate the style and the substance to allow the reader to be able to follow the familiar framework of the book.

Particular features include excellent diagrams and tables throughout. The tables presenting the results of all the recent clinical trials and the discussions of European and other global data along with the North American experience are invaluable.

In summary the only book that could possibly outdo this one will be the Sixth Edition, which will be eagerly anticipated in a few years.

Patrick Thomas