

law," because "good patient care is lawful and right." From that lofty preface the author then lays out her theories of law and ethics and explains in compact, tightly-written prose the general concepts of the law.

This book is a good one for clinicians who want a "to the point" reference on law and ethics, but it is not as comprehensive as some other texts on this topic, and some of the more difficult areas of the law are oversimplified.

Ms Hall tells readers that the core principle of law and ethics is "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This recodification of the "golden rule" is referenced countless times in the book as the "downtoother" (do-unto-others) principle. As an author and lecturer, I have frequently given the same advice as Ms Hall, which, distilled to its essence, is: "people don't sue people they like." Though her explication of the ethical principles is sound and makes for good reading, it is but one example of oversimplification of legal issues in this text.

Moreover, not all the principles in the book are well explained. In one section Ms Hall writes that "more insurance means more lawsuits." Her explanation of this is convoluted and difficult to follow. It also does not accurately state reality. Having liability insurance doesn't make a person any more prone to lawsuits than having health insurance makes a person prone to pneumonia. Yet these few minor imperfections in a book that was obviously a labor of love should not cause a clinician to pass it by.

Key concepts in the book are well explained. Issues of strict liability and federal laws relating to health care are adequately detailed. Of course, the problem with any such book is that new cases and new statutes are created almost daily, and the laws differ radically from state to state. For this reason, if for no other, most clinicians won't simply lay down their legal texts, nor will they stop consulting with legal counsel. But a smart clinician, armed with this book, could adequately inform herself on a wide variety of issues, and use the book to determine when either to do additional research or to seek professional legal counsel.

Though much of my critical review of this book focuses on the legal insights it offers, the chief value of this book may lie more in its ethical insights for the busy clinician. Ethical values are difficult to codify and even more difficult to discuss, yet this author does a fine job of bringing into focus subjects such as the physician-patient rela-

tionship and the ethics of clinician education. In a chapter titled "Be Free" the author explores the subjects of autonomy, cognitive theory, egoism, and existentialism in concise form. Her writing on these complex issues demonstrates that she understands clinicians and their needs.

No book on ethics and law can be all things to all people, but this one is a fine attempt, and one can only hope that more editions will be forthcoming.

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Writing and Defending Your Expert Report: The Step-by-Step Guide with Models. Steven Babitsky Esq and James J Mangraviti Jr Esq. Falmouth, Massachusetts: Seak. 2002. Hard cover, 404 pages, \$99.95.

This is an outstanding book. For anyone who is now or is even contemplating preparing and writing expert reports, this is required reading. I have been preparing expert reports for nearly 30 years, yet I learned much from reading and rereading this valuable reference work, which pointed out many errors that I have, unfortunately, been making over the years. It also reinforced many of the appropriate things I do but that I learned in the school of hard knocks. Fortunately, not all lawyers are as malevolent and devious as those featured in the sample cross-examinations in this book, but you can never predict when you might come up against one of those attorneys. Following the guidelines in this book will spare you some potentially very uncomfortable sessions in deposition or in the witness chair.

Writing and Defending Your Expert Report is well organized, comprising 16 chapters and 2 appendixes. The Chapter 1 introduction is especially well written, providing easy-to-understand basics of preparing an expert report. Chapters 2 and 3 provide an extensive legal background about expert reports, with many case law citations. Although primarily meant more for attorneys, these chapters also provide a useful background that allows the expert to understand the basis for many of the book's recommendations. Chapters 4–8 provide the basic how-to-do-it of writing an expert report. Chapters 9–11 provide many suggestions for reinforcing the credibility and reliability of your reports and opinions. Chapters 13–16 point out how one can avoid getting into difficulties while on the witness

stand and also help in dealing with an aggressive cross-examining attorney if, despite reading this book carefully, one still makes one or more of the many potential errors. Appendix A provides additional general advice from other authors and Messieurs Babitsky and Mangraviti. Appendix B provides 12 sample reports, along with focused critiques.

The authors emphatically succeed in their aim of preparing the reader to produce an expert report that cannot be effectively challenged by an opposition expert or attorney. It is clear that they have had great experience in reading and critiquing numerous expert reports. Their positions are clearly stated, logically sound, and supported by legal precedent. In a book of this nature there is room for differences of opinion and/or emphasis, but I found nothing that was inaccurate. Despite involving both legal and scientific technical concepts, this book is quite readable and understandable.

The cover of the book is business-like and conservative, but of good quality. The paper and type are also of good quality and quite readable. I found only a few typographical errors. There are no illustrations. The case law references are appropriate and current and the index is adequate.

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Evidence-Based Herbal Medicine. Michael Rotblatt MD PharmD and Irwin Ziment MD. Philadelphia: Hanley & Belfus. 2002. Soft cover, 464 pages, \$35.

Somewhere around 80% of the world's population uses herbal plant medicines because they have no access to or money for orthodox western therapies. Increasingly in the western world there has, perhaps for philosophical reasons, been a swing back towards herbal therapies. Despite industrialization, about 50% of our current therapies are derived from plants, and we are belatedly rediscovering a whole range of potential herbal therapies. The difficulty with this rediscovery is that there is very little evidence to support the use of many plant medicines in their proposed clinical indications.

Increasingly doctors are encountering patients who wish to take herbal alternatives or who are taking them in combination with orthodox medicines; it is for this reason that