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## Book review

**Radiological Investigations in Rheumatology.** Clinics in Rheumatic Diseases, Vol. 9, No. 2. Eds. D. Forrester and J. C. Brown. Pp. 488. £11.75. Saunders: Philadelphia, 1983.

The old x-ray departments, which lasted from Roentgen in 1895 until when I knew them in the 1930s, began to take on scientific airs and became departments of radiology about 1940, with special interventionist procedures such as Jacques Forestier's introduction of iodised oil, and then other contrast media such as the barium meal. Now, however, a new revolution has started, based as always on new techniques, and this issue of 'Clinics in Rheumatic Diseases' successfully outlines the New Way - the department of imaging or imagery or imagology.

In a few instances these departments could be called departments of imaginary concepts or departments of the imagination, since statements or assertions are sometimes made without reliable anatomical, pathological, surgical, or other means of confirmation. In general, however, the new techniques of scintigraphy, computerised scanning,

nuclear magnetic resonance, and ultrasound, or even thermography, greatly improve our verification procedures, since they can be tested against each other as well as against the ultimate morphological anatomical standards.

This current assessment, edited by that well known team Brown and Forrester, engagingly starts with their own photogenic images and begins with a conservative statement on 'The plain film,' which 'remains the cornerstone in the diagnosis of arthritis'. There are usually four cornerstones in the average building, the others being occupied in this special respect by clinical assessment, laboratory tests, and follow-up. The last is the best, and even the pathological verdict depends on that.

Technetium and gallium imaging, sonography, and computed tomography, as well as nuclear magnetic resonance, are reviewed pithily. All in all, this is a timely and welcome publication. The reproduction of various images is better than most, and certainly better than in certain current rheumatological journals.

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