

**LEGAL ISSUES IN THE CARE OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS: A GUIDE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL.** By Robert L. Sadoff, MD. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1982. 123 pages.

Reviewed by Leonard J. Hertzberg, MD

During the past two decades the busy mental health practitioner has been bombarded with a deluge of legal issues. In this concise publication Dr. Sadoff has successfully addressed a myriad of these issues with clarity and much wisdom in providing practical guidelines for clinical judgment. Dr. Sadoff has noted the mushrooming of forensic texts for psychiatrists and psychologists; however, this book seeks a broader base of clinicians including the clinical social worker, psychiatric nurse, and other mental health practitioners. A comprehensive reading list is provided in the appendix for further pursuit of the topics presented.

There are a total of thirteen chapters within two major sections. The first section relates to the legal regulation of mental health practice; significant issues reviewed include confidentiality, informed consent, involuntary hospitalization, the right to treatment as well as the right to refuse treatment, rights of the mental health practitioner in providing care, and psychiatric emergencies. Additionally, there are extremely valuable chapters on keeping records for mentally ill patients as well as malpractice considerations. The second section includes four chapters relating to areas of general concern to the mental health specialist; issues addressed include aspects of competency determination in psychiatric patients, personal injury, domestic relations, and criminal law.

This book is distinguished not only by Dr. Sadoff's scholarly knowledge of forensic issues and his lucid writing style, but each chapter is filled with sound practical recommendations regarding evaluation and treatment issues. There is little likelihood that mental health legislation will de-escalate in the foreseeable future, but the mental health practitioner will benefit greatly by having incorporated guidelines in this book into this clinical practice.

In summary, this is a book well worth reading. □

**THE PSYCHIATRY-LAW DILEMMA: MENTAL HEALTH VERSUS HUMAN RIGHTS.** By Elio Maggio, MD. Vantage Press, 1981, ISBN 0-533-04795-1, \$13.95.

Reviewed by Frank Eisenberg, MD

The author introduces his work by comparing the problems of psychiatry and law to the difficulties of a patient in treatment. The "situation is reminiscent of that which the mentally disturbed patient, and the schizo-