

John Huckle; the Development of Radiography Education and Training from 1920 to 1961;
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Abstract

The Society of Radiographers has represented the professional interests of radiographers for over sixty years. For most of this time it developed diploma and post-diploma curricula, set boundaries of professional practice for radiographers and strove to achieve professional status. The thesis has analysed these issues, examining original minute books and other records of the Society of Radiographers and the British Institute of Radiology. Interviews were also conducted with two past presidents of the Society.

The thesis has demonstrated that for several decades the Society (and radiography in general) has been dominated by the medical profession, resulting in radiographers being restricted to a narrow, technically orientated role, subservient to radiologists. The medical profession (with the support of the Society) prevented radiographers from giving diagnostic reports on radiographs. Dissenting Society members either left the Society in protest (as in the case of the electrical engineers) or were expelled.

The restricted (non-reporting) role of the radiographer was reflected in radiography curricula, which contained little or no pathology and were mainly concerned with technical and physical aspects of radiography. An advanced examination was introduced for Fellowship of the Society but this did not significantly test higher level academic skills. Separate curricula for diagnostic radiography were introduced to reflect more closely the specialist nature of each discipline but for many years neither made any reference to image interpretation.

For many years radiographers worked with little autonomy. This was a major obstacle in the quest for professional recognition. In recent years, however, radiographers have extended their role into areas previously reserved exclusively for the medical profession, including reporting on radiographs. This has greatly strengthened the radiographers' claim for professional recognition.