

# Letter to the Editor

## Chest radiograph: 'Let the reader beware'

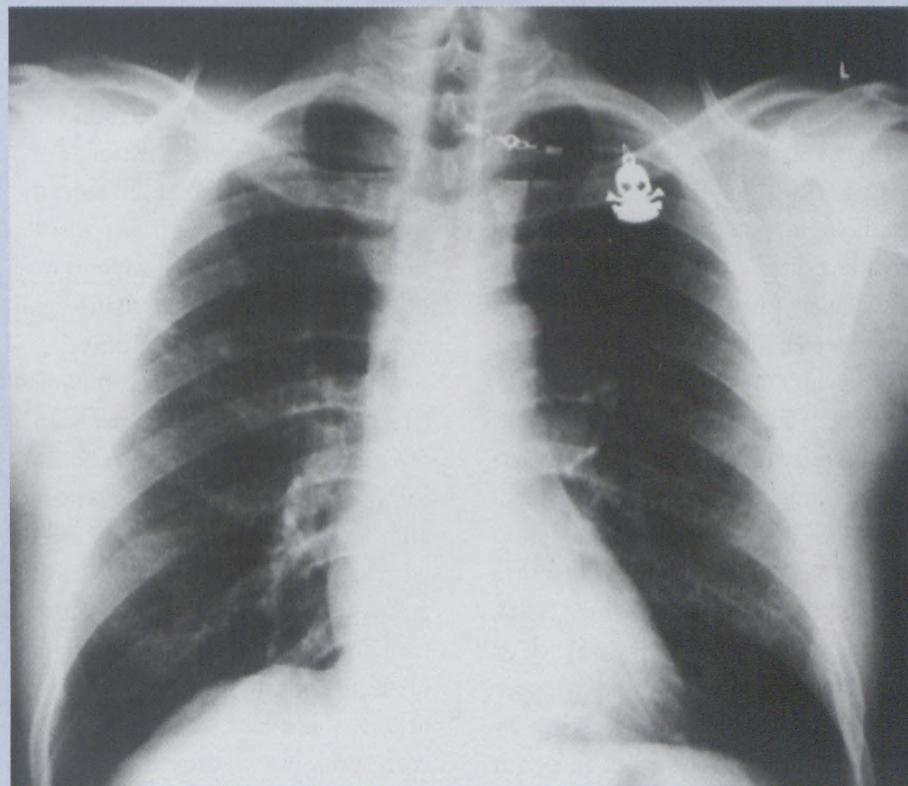
**To the Editor:** Enclosed is a photograph of a plain film chest radiograph showing a small metallic skull and crossbones projected over the left clavicle and into the left upper lung field (Fig. 1).

The skull and crossbones are due to a small metal charm worn around the neck of the patient, with the clasp of the necklace also visible.

I have entitled the photograph: 'Let the reader beware', as a general reminder of the need for eternal vigilance in our profession.

I enjoyed Ian Duncan's 'The ghost in the machine' in the June 2003 issue of the *SAJR*. I feel that such 'Pictorial Interludes' or photo pages add interest to journals.

I am not sure why the necklace was not removed prior to the X-ray being taken. Our radiographers are well aware of the need to remove radio-opaque items, but do not press patients to remove items from their persons where patients are reluctant



to do so (unless it is found that the item specifically obscures an area of interest).

The chest radiograph shows an old fracture of the right clavicle and streaky opacification adjacent to the

right hilum. Sputum culture from the patient was positive for tuberculosis.

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