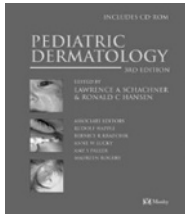


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BOOK REVIEWS

Pediatric dermatology, 3rd edition

Edited by Lawrence A Schachner and Ronald C Hansen. Published by Mosby, London, 2003, £170.00 (hardcover), pp 1340. ISBN 0-323-02611-7



Paediatric dermatology is one of the niche specialities of our field, but a relevant one. Paediatric dermatologists, or paediatricians with an interest in dermatology, face a workload that is challenging and growing. As well as conditions such as the

increasingly more common atopic disorders, new or rarely seen conditions have arisen in the context of progress in science, improved healthcare and survival, and global migration. Paediatric dermatology is a dermatological rather than a paediatric subspeciality; nevertheless, where a speciality service is not provided by an adult trained dermatologist with a paediatric interest, most paediatric patients with skin problems are actually cared for by general paediatricians.

The fascination of dermatology lies within its visual and almost purely clinical approach to the diagnostic challenge. This fascination is what the latest edition of *Pediatric dermatology* edited by Schachner and Hansen brings to light.

Dipping my nose into a copy of its competitor, the 2005 edition of *Pediatric dermatology* edited by Harper, I was very curious what the new Schachner and Hansen would have to offer.

Scachner and Hansen's book has come a long way since it evolved as "the" standard American textbook on paediatric dermatology in the 1980s. I well remember the first edition of this book, which contained everything I was looking for, but found only after trawling through heavy pages of text and too many black and white photographs. The strict division between basic and clinical

sciences, and the fact that different aspects of the same clinical condition were dealt with by different authors in different chapters, made it difficult to find the information I was looking for.

I was pleasantly surprised to see that the extended team of associate editors involved in the third edition has greatly improved this book. The expansion of contributors, now including many European and Asian authors, gives the book a more global perspective.

A stringent chapter template has been applied throughout the book, combining both a basic science and clinical approach, as well as all information relating to a specific diagnosis. The generous use of tables and algorithms aids understanding of the concepts of classifications, diagnostic features and therapeutic approaches.

The black and white photographs have been replaced by a large number of consistently good quality colour images. A great deal of attention has been paid to detail—this edition is exhaustively inclusive and up-to-date with new diagnostic classifications and disease entities (for example in the area of genodermatoses), as well as new therapeutic approaches (monoclonal antibodies and newer immunosuppressive drugs).

This book is written with the practising clinician in mind, and this is demonstrated nowhere better than with the chapter on surgical dermatology. Amazingly well written, this chapter contains everything from indications for surgery, consent, techniques and dressings, up to local anaesthesia and even child restraint techniques, all illustrated with excellent photographs and drawings.

Another gem hidden within the chapter on therapeutics is the section on skin care for the child with healthy skin, introducing a preventative aspect—from caring for the nappy area to sunlight exposure.

Putting this book to the test, I found that it does not just make interesting reading: it also serves well for finding information quickly in the setting of a clinic or on the ward. This is facilitated by its concise structure, and the many visual features such as images and tables—making it much more user-friendly than the Harper.

In summary, *Pediatric dermatology* is a mature, very well edited textbook. As the editors state in the preface, it is written for any physician with an interest in skin problems in children, and its balanced didactic concept of well structured text with good quality images, tables and algorithms makes this book the best on the market for clinicians who need to access the relevant information rapidly, but nevertheless thoroughly.

The only rather disappointing feature was the CD-ROM. Although it contains an impressive collection of images (extractable for personal use, such as PowerPoint presentations) I was missing a full text electronic version of the book, which would save me from having to carry around the weighty 9 lb tome.

Christian Harkensee

The child in mind (revised edition)

Edited by Judy Barker, Deborah Hodes. Routledge, 2004, London, £13.99 (paperback), pp 128. ISBN 0-415-32175-1



Imagine the frustration. You write a really good, useful book that sits comfortably in the category of "essential reading for all paediatricians", only to find that the cursed Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health sends every paediatrician in the country a copy of

a more or less definitive book on your subject.

Spare a thought then for Judy Barker and Deborah Hodes, whose book *The child in mind*, a child protection handbook, falls into this category, being trumped by the *Child protection companion* produced by the RCPCH in April 2006. After all, anyone who got the *Child protection companion* for free—OK as part of the college subs—is unlikely to go out and buy *The child in mind*.

The child in mind is concise, clearly written and well presented. It is a little gem, and since it was first published 4 years ago it must have provided great help and assistance to staff working in child protection, and hence to those children suffering abuse.

It is very good, but it has been superseded.

An afterthought: Claire Rayner, in her review of this book, writes that it "should be in everyone's back pocket". The book's dimensions are 18 cm by 25 cm. If this is now the size of an average back pocket, the national obesity crisis is many times worse than anybody has fully appreciated.

The *Child protection companion* is available from the Lavenham Press (Tel 01787 247436) at £10 per copy.

Anthony Cohn

CORRECTION

doi: 10.1136/adc.2006.100883corr1

Lewis N A and Lander A D. Trisomy 13 is associated with anorectal malformations. *Arch Dis Child* 2007;**92**:185. Owing to a typesetting error figure 1 of this Letter was not published. It is printed here.



Pre-published book reviews

Book reviews that have been accepted for publication but have not yet been published in the print journal can be viewed online at <http://adc.bmjournals.com/misc/bookreviews.shtml>