
Diseases specific to the paediatric period are intimately related to the processes of growth and development and thus tend to be expressed at the time when development progresses most rapidly in fetal and early neonatal life. Scientific and diagnostic advances have moved inexorably towards the point of inescapable involvement of structural and various chemical anomalies in the embryo and immature fetus. To many non-medical and some medical people the termes perinatal pathology and paediatric pathology have become synonymous. There is thus an almost insurmountable problem in presenting an overview of a subject which is so heavily weighted towards the fetal end but contains important conditions that present only in infancy or childhood.

This task is one that is now attempted only by Professor Berry, whose book thus occupies a unique position. How has Professor Berry succeeded in putting together the fetal and perinatal pathology in producing a second edition? The new edition is as well produced and illustrated as the original and is clearly written through-out with an easy flow by some 250 pages. The book has not changed in overall emphasis, perhaps because neither editor nor many of the contributors are practising paediatric pathologists.

In the first chapter, on examination of the fetus, there is a new section on the neonatal necropsy and a few additional tables to aid in determining fetal maturation. The chapter on the placenta has been excluded in favour of a new chapter by RO Kaschula on infectious diseases. The rest of the book has been updated to varying levels by the original authors. Although some chapters, such as those on the respiratory system and sudden unexpected death, are replete with recent references, others contain relatively few references to work published within the last 10 years. Surprisingly, the new chapter on infectious diseases, while dealing at length with congenital syphilis, contains no mention of AIDS, although the topic is touched on briefly elsewhere in the book.

Many of the chapters in this text are good introductory reviews of the subject and some are extremely useful for reference purposes. The work as a whole remains in that indeter-minate position as neither an everyday bench book for the practising pathologist nor a comprehensive academic reference book on paediatric pathology. It is a work for the departmental or hospital library rather than individual purchase.


With nine editors, 305 (largely American) authors and nearly 2000 closely typed pages one would be disappointed if this book did not prove to be the single most comprehensive source intended by Professor Becker and his colleagues! The only practical approach to a review of such a tome for this journal was to see if it fulfilled such a remit for a paedia-trician with an interest in endocrinology.

The work is laid out in a disease oriented format with specific chapters on anatomy, physiology, and pathology within the affected system. Each section includes a chapter on the paediatric aspects of each condition where appropriate. This design means that it is often necessary to look in several places to gain the information desired, but there is a most comprehensively comprehensive. There is little historical information and the references are very topical.

Although references are provided at the end of each section, paediatric endocrinologists will find the coverage of their interest rather skimpy and lacking in discussion of the more current controversies and research. For in-stance, there is very little concerning non-conventional indications for growth hormone treatment or the surgical approaches to short stature in skeletal dysplasias. The therapeutic options for juvenile thyrotrocinosis are men-tioned but not assessed critically. For a clinician used to focusing on the impact of an endocrinopathy on the rate of growth the section on axiology is also disappointing. Many of the named drugs are given at inappropriate American equivalents and SI unit conversion factors are only given in an appendix. The doses for children are often stated baldly, without allow-ance for body size or individual variation.

The book succeeds best as a reference for those seeking information outside their usual field of interest and those needing an up to date account of the physiological and meta-bolism basis for a disease process. There is also entertaining coverage of some extremely rare conditions (such as "hamburger thyrotoxicosis") secondary to the ingestion of thyroid gland in mincemeat from contaminated horses and some high quality black and white illustration. At only $125, which puts the cost of many comparable recent British editions to shame, this reference text should find its way on to the shelves of our libraries as a source book for a wide range of clinicians and scientists. A paediatrician wishing to own a definitive textbook specifically relating to endocrinology in childhood might find the second edition of Brook's Clinical Paediatric Endocrinology a more appropriate choice.


Operative Paediatric Urology raises the technical manual to the level of an art form. David Frank and Herbert Johnston have produced a beautiful account of the open operations of the specialty. The text is concise, the layout stimulating and the illustrations, to the surgical eye at least, visually pleasing. The illustra-tors, Philip Wilson, should be credited for his contribution to the success that this book will undoubtedly enjoy. Paediatric urology is breaking new ground. The editors have endeavoured to reflect this in their choice of subjects and authors. The powerful influence of Liverpool upon the specialty is clearly ev-ident. Mr Johnston has contributed a number of chapters himself and the affected author pool has written an excellent chapter on urinary diversion. There are also excellent contributions from some of the many distin-guished Americans who spent time as visiting fellows.