
For the paediatrician who needs access to only one book on paediatric ophthalmology, read no further, Pediatric Ophthalmology by David Taylor and colleagues, is it. For those who want to know what makes this book stand out among its competitors, read on. There are a dozen contributors, and while not detracting from their excellent individual contributions, there is no doubting the overriding influence of the former. The author's concise sections, and the clear logic underlying them, is a testament to the quality and consistency of the text. Given this, Pediatric Ophthalmology is its blend of surgical and medical aspects, but the ophthalmic genetics and the epidemiology is its blend of clinical history taking and examination, refraction, ophthalmic genetics and the visually handicapped baby and the family. The 21 appendices are concise sections on problem oriented topics. These include the red eye, reduced vision, optic atrophy, headaches, peculiar visual images, the abnormal pupil appearance in infancy, the child who fails at school, etc. Each chapter is divided by defining the problem, outlining a classification, and is then followed in most instances by a flow chart. These are a feature unique to this book, and especially valuable to the clinician who does not have the time to go through a whole section, or even in view of the range of topics covered, few do.

With such a wide range of subjects it is not appropriate to review chapters individually. Generally the standard is very high and many chapters are quite superb, setting a gold standard against which all future texts must be gauged. Given this high level of achievement it seems a pity that neither high or low points—there are too many of the former, and the latter are very few. The section on nystagmus is fine as far as it goes, but would have benefited from a discussion. Perhaps the author does not appreciate how difficult most of us, who only infrequently encounter this sign, find this topic. Nystagmus is all too easily and frequently labelled congenital or neurological, sections without adequately excluding an underlying subtle ocular disorder. Electrodiagnostic tests can be a vital component of assessment.

One of the major assets of this book is the number and excellent standard of the colour photographs, and as ophthalmology is such a visual subject they are important diagnostic aids. By intention this is not a research text, but as it contains over 3500 references and provides such an excellent clinical overview of the most clinical topics, it is a sensible starting point. Two minor quibbles: first, the spelling of paediatric, which is according to the preface a reflection of international market forces. Second, Marshall Parks in the forward states that nearly all specialties in medicine and surgery can be divided naturally into paediatric and geriatric portions. This is traditional and makes some sense with respect to older paediatrics, but ignores the decades in between, and it is not a fundamentally sound approach to concepts of development and aging, the understanding a disease process, credentials, fundamental definition of mechanisms. Further, it unmercifully limits the scope of this book, much of which is relevant to ophthalmology of all age groups.

For the paediatrician by David Taylor and colleagues is without doubt the best available. Every paediatrician should have access to it, and no library is complete without it. Although not cheap at £135, this is excellent value. Every paediatric ophthalmologist I know has already bought his/her own copy. My case rests!

ALISTAIR FIELDER
Professor of ophthalmology


The neonatal survivor about to go home probably deserves special attention. Whether you can write a whole book on the subject is another matter. This is an attempt to do just that and this is by a team of doctors mainly from Johns Hopkins University describes how the baby develops chronic problems, how best to detect them, and what the future may hold. Its very well written enough, notably for the acute neonatologist, but for the other doctors, physiotherapists, and community staff who could become involved in further management.

When I first scanned the book I thought it was a hotchpotch of topics all of which could be found in any standard neonatal text but relevant to the long term survivor. I still think that chapters such as those on skin conditions and hypothyroidism are out of place. They were patchy and not of relevance to the theme. The second time round, reading in more detail, the main thrust came over better. The key chapters on nutrition, viral infections, chronic lung disease, anaemia, and neurodevelopmental outcome were informative and written by people with expertise. The pathology of chronic problems was clearly explained without going over the heads of the wider readership at whom the book is marketed. I was left with a very favourable impression. I wouldn't put this book top of the list for the acute neonatal unit but somewhere on the shelf, there's a place for it.

J G BISSENDEN
Consultant paediatrician


This volume is part of a series of textbooks based on a meeting of Colorado paediatricians at Aspen, and represents the outcome of their meeting. The volume itself sets out to explore some of the more recent changes and areas of interest to paediatric gastroenterologists, and therefore is in contrast to the textbook of paediatric gastroenterology and nutrition, but rather represents the direction of the sub-specialty at the current time. The chapters are written by all with a well written and are in the form of presentation.

The opening section of the book deals with the physiology of small bowel dysfunction, particularly malnutrition and the response of proteins in relation to the small intestine itself. Although there is little of practical help to the practising paediatrician within these sections, they are well laid out and give basic understanding to some of the abnormalities of physiology encountered within malnutrition. The remaining section on small bowel pathologies undertakes chapters on coeliac disease reviewing the current developments in diagnosis, particularly antibody studies such as α-gliadin antibody and the management of the short bowel syndrome. These are, in general, very detailed and written by practising gastroenterologists, which is important.

There are sections relating to some of the newer enteric infections, which again concentrate predominantly on the pathogenesis and are in the main research based, but do give an understanding of some of the problems associated with the newer pathogens, such as cryptosporidium and also the management of acute infantile diarrhoea. There are some practical recommendations for rehydration, although these are very locally based to the American audience. Celiac disease is also covered, although this forms rather a small section of the book and is not really very much help regarding some of the newer issues within the management of these disorders. Finally the book closes by primary sclerosing cholangitis, which is a rare syndrome and I would have felt that some more common paediatric liver disorders would have been of more use and interest to practising gastroenterologists and paediatric gastroenterologists. Nutrition is represented in this work by cystic fibrosis and some eating disorders in adolescents such as anorexia and bulimia. In both these disorders presenting to paediatricians may have been helpful such as obesity.

In summary—this is a book produced by a group of American paediatric gastroenterologists and very much represents their own experiences and research directions. This volume makes fascinating reading and in general is well laid out and well illustrated, with those sections without adequate excluding an underlying subtle ocular disorder. Electrodiagnostic tests can be a vital component of assessment.
within the subspecialty. It would also be of interest to those about to embark on the Membership Examination, but is not a substitute for a basic textbook of paediatric gastroenterology.

NIGEL MEADOWS
Consultant paediatrician


This book should be compulsory reading for anyone involved in caring for children, particularly those without children of their own. First published in 1953 and now in its 10th edition, it provides one with the benefit of Professor Illingworth's vast paediatric experience combined with sound common sense, in an eminently readable form.

The aim of the book, stated by Professor Illingworth in his preface, is to aid the recognition of 'normal' and 'normal variants' in all aspects of child health and development. He believed that a thorough knowledge of the normal is an essential basis for the knowledge of the abnormal. Discussion of pathology and other medical subjects is therefore deliberately avoided, although physiology and psychology are mentioned where appropriate.

There cannot be many paediatricians who have not at some stage of their career seen a copy of this book. Several sections have been rewritten in this edition, including those on breast feeding, sleep problems, and the chapters on prevention. There are 300 new references, and 12 colour plates appear for the first time.

The five first chapters cover all aspects of infant feeding and weaning, with plenty of practical advice and an expanded section on colic. Next comes a description of common physical variants and symptoms that concern parents. The chapters on development begin with a summary of the basic principles of development which put what follows nicely into perspective. Sketches and tables are used to good effect, and particular attention is paid to differences in the development of the preterm infant. Normal developmental variants are then discussed at length, with a section on the advanced infant.

The highlight of the book for me was the section on behaviour. All common problems are covered, with emphasis on underlying causes and aggravating factors, and plenty of advice on management. These chapters provide a fascinating insight into the mind of the egotistic, negativistic toddler. The section on 'annoying characteristics of the developing child' could be put to good use in a family planning clinic.

This edition has two new chapters. The first, on helping children to fulfil their potential, covers aspects of child care relevant particularly to parents, including play, suitable play materials, television, parental example, and ambition. The final chapter is on child health surveillance. It seeks to emphasise the wide range of topics to be covered and the need for staff who appreciate normal and normal variants. Specific subjects are also dealt with, including dental health and child abuse.

Professor Illingworth's writing is entertaining and includes some interesting historical background (did you know that Julius Caesar had neonatal teeth, or that blow fly larvae were used as a galactogogue in days gone by?) The book is full of common sense and practical advice, and should appeal to anyone concerned with children, including parents. At £22.50 it compares favourably with other standard paediatric texts, and is excellent value. Above all, it is a classic, and every paediatrician should have a copy.

MARY FEWTRELL
Paediatric registrar


Those writing a textbook on tropical paediatrics face a formidable task. Around two thirds of the world's children live in these areas and most estimates suggest that over 95% of all deaths in children occur in the tropical areas of the world. Hendrickse and his Liverpool team have assembled a remarkable team of writers to undertake this task and all those concerned with children must congratulate them on what they have achieved. They have very adequately covered the more common paediatric problems that fill the textbooks used in the industrialised world but they have also included the particular differences that will be found in tropical areas.

They have also found space to cover the specific diseases of the tropics that develop in children.

This reviewer would like to have seen rather more emphasis on common conditions—just two pages on whooping cough and only four on measles in a book of nearly a thousand pages seems too little. Particularly, little mention is made of the new understanding of the relationship between severe measles and the size of the infecting dose. In an excellent chapter on the respiratory system no emphasis could be found on the importance of rapid respiration in the diagnosis of pneumonia at community level. The district paediatrician who looks for guidance on how to supervise the cold chain for vaccines will not get help from this book. However, the authors are to be congratulated on all they have managed to achieve and include in this volume.

Who will get this book? It must be hoped that a volume like this will be available in every teaching hospital; however, the chances of this are at the present time remote. Those paediatricians with a private practice may be able to afford the £95 but few in government services could consider it, and the resources of even university libraries may not allow this book to be found on their shelves. Unfortunately, the maldistribution of resources in our world will seriously limit the enormous potential of this book to improve the health care of children in the tropics.

DAVID MORLEY
Professor emeritus

Lactation Education for Health Professionals. By R Rodriguez-Garcia, L A Schafer, and J Yunus. (Pp 213; paperback.) Pan American Health Organisation, 1990. ISBN 92-75-12024-2. (Obtainable from Georgetown University School of Medicine, Department of Ob/Gyn, 3800 Reservoir Road, NW Washington, DC 20007, USA.)

This book arrived in the post during National Breastfeeding Week (20–27 May). First time you heard of it? This would be understandable—press treatment of breast feeding tends to be confined to images of starving Sudanese children or to jokey pieces about complaints from a library official when a mother feeds in public. National Breastfeeding Week was organised by the National Breastfeeding Initiative, which aims to combat the high attenuation of breast feeding over the first six weeks of life (the 'lost 25%'). Responsibility for this high drop off rate must be placed at the door of health professionals, whose education on lactation management is inadequate.

This book on lactation education is therefore timely. Targeted primarily at nursing students, but readily adaptable for doctors, the book comprises a teaching module with supporting papers for the use of teachers, giving scientific background.

The product of a PAHO (Pan American Health Organisation) symposium, the text has an American flavour and a developing country orientation. The greater part of the book is taken up by a description of the module. It is very comprehensive and reveals the enormity of the gaps in medical student teaching on lactation (the whole of nutrition frequently falls between six or seven disciplines in UK medical schools). There are 15 topics within the module, from the sociocultural, technological, and political factors influencing breastfeeding practices through lactation management to evaluation of breast feeding promotion activities. Each topic is broken into objectives, core content, teaching methodology, audiovisual materials, and evaluation questions. An example of the last, in 'supporting the maintenance of breastfeeding', is 'develop a list of instructions to be given to the breastfeeding mother before she leaves the hospital concerning what she should expect in the first few weeks at home ...'. Enviably thorough, or boringly minute details? UK teachers are more laid back (almost horizontal) in their approach, and perhaps could fill all their knowledge into one lecture comparing breast with cows' milk. The planned length of the module is not mentioned, and must last several months—an impracticality in UK medical schools. However, certain technical aspects not normally taught to doctors could be extracted from the book which I personally found extremely helpful. For example, how many doctors are aware of the importance of positioning technique, which holds the key to successful breastfeeding? The picture says it all:

© 1990 by Kaiser Permanente. Kaiser Permanente has granted permission to reproduce this drawing.

Teachers of child health should certainly have this book in their library.