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Book Reviews

An Atlas of the Transverse Dimensions of the Face, Monograph 37, Craniofacial Growth Series (2001)

Authors: Ahmed A. Basyouni and Surender K. Nanda
Publisher: Center for Human Growth and Development, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Price: $75
ISBN: 0-929921-33-X

This atlas presents facial width data, as measured from postero-anterior (PA) cephalograms. Specifically, six parameters are covered, from bilatero-orbitale to bigonial widths. The data derives from the Denver Child Research Council Growth study; although the dates during which the material was collected are not given, it appears that the study was conducted many years ago and, indeed, the references provided were not readily traceable. The measurements were obtained from serial PA cephalograms taken from children between the ages of 5–18 years and, as a minimum of nine films were taken for each patient, the material is quite unique and would be virtually impossible to duplicate nowadays. Thirty male and 30 female patients' details are plotted and their dimensions clearly shown in tabulated as well as graphic form. For each dimension there are details of absolute size, annual growth curves with 95 per cent confidence intervals, as well as annual incremental measurements. It is clearly the intention of both authors that the data be used as standards against which an individual patient's dimensions could be compared, either as individual linear measurements or, if serial data is available, to identify any deviations in growth. There is a useful method for assessing asymmetry, both in the vertical and horizontal planes. As such, the atlas is probably extremely useful, however, it is a pity that more details of the original population studied are not provided. It would normally be expected that presentation of growth study material would be accompanied by details of the population, including sample attrition, and methodology, as well as the type of equipment used and especially with PA cephalometric data, details of the method error investigation. None of this is available, presumably mostly because of the age of the material, but these omissions do introduce an element of doubt when comparing one's patients' measurements with those in this atlas. The measurements themselves are clearly and logically presented and, indeed, the atlas is beautifully produced. If a later edition could possibly include further details of methodology, its credibility would be greatly enhanced.

R. J. Edler

Orthodontics Picture Test Atlas (2001)

Authors: Claire Nightingale and Jonathan Sandy
Publisher: Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford
Price: £19.99
ISBN: 0-7236-1072-X

As the title suggests, this book is designed as an illustrated question and answer guide to orthodontics. The first half of the book contains a series of pictures and questions related to various aspects of orthodontics, while the second half holds the answers and explanations. In the preface, the authors state that the aim of the book is to explain the basics of orthodontics with the help of visual aids. In actual fact, however, some fundamental and, in some instances, quite

advanced knowledge of orthodontics would be required to be able to understand the contents.

Ten areas of orthodontics are covered, namely: (1) Ideal Occlusion; (2) Examination and Diagnosis; (3) Treatment Planning; (4) Pathology; (5) Removable; (6) Functional and (7) Fixed Appliances; (8) Anchorage; (9) Problems; and (10) Retention. The chapters are structured in a logical way, the questions are easy to understand and the answers, although short, are to the point. In general, the illustrations are of high quality. No list of references is included.

In the question part of the book, each page contains an illustration (an intraoral image of a malocclusion, for example), and the reader is asked to describe what he/she sees. Up to eight additional questions related to the problem shown in the illustration are then asked. The number of such question/illustration pages varies from chapter to chapter. The section 'Examination and Diagnosis', for example, consists of 27 illustration/question pages, whereas other sections such as 'Ideal Occlusion', 'Functional Appliances', and 'Retention' only contain two or three pages.

The book has been written primarily for undergraduate students. Bearing this in mind, some of the topics dealt with seem advanced. A decision about extraction treatment, for example, is usually based on quite sophisticated analyses and diagnostic procedures, which may be difficult for the undergraduate student to understand. A further example is found in the 'Fixed Appliance' section where one of the questions and answers deals with the properties of heat activated nickel titanium alloys. Although the discussion of this topic may be very relevant in a book about orthodontics, it could be questioned whether undergraduate students in general have sufficient knowledge to understand the complicated characteristics of these materials.

By its nature, a book of this type can only provide limited and rather superficial information about such a specialized field as orthodontics. However, the book is very stimulating to read and the contents could certainly awaken an interest for further orthodontic studies. Moreover, as a complement to other literature, and as a basis for discussions about orthodontic topics, a question and answer book of this type could be very useful.

Carl-Magnus Forsberg

McMinn's Interactive Clinical Anatomy—Version 2.0, CD Rom (2001)

Author: Peter H. Abrahams
Publisher: Harcourt Publishers Limited, London
Price: £65.00
ISBN: 0-7234-3219-8

This is the first time that I have used this type of teaching media and, clearly, it is fascinating and highly informative. It is, of course, hard to throw oneself back to being a first year student faced with anatomy for the first time. Despite this some of the difficulties still remain etched in the brain, together with the smell of formalin and jokes in extremely bad taste. The primary problem for students is the terminology and trying to create a three-dimensional picture of the structures. In this respect, the CD still only provides two-dimensional images and often the illustrations are less clear than text books. The dissections, the biggest shortcoming of most students, are immaculate and clear. Added to this are many other facets, function, clinical notes, animated images, history and histology. This all results in a wonderful package.

Does it have relevance beyond medical and dental students? Certainly, it has uses for post-graduate examinations and, of course, illustrating lectures and papers. However, it does not have the specialized detail for modern surgeons who have sub-specialized into smaller and small compartments.

It is easy to use and reasonably quick to function, without too much loss of image quality. It is not a virtual body, but it is well worth purchasing.

Peter Ward Booth