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Book Review

Clinical Cases in Orthodontics. By Cobourne, MT, Fleming PS, DiBiase AT, Ahmad S. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell: Clinical Cases Series, 2012 (456pp; £59.99). ISBN 978-1-4051-9779-3.

The publisher's stated aim in producing this series is to use the case-based format to encourage problem-based learning, foster independent thought and prepare the student for case-based clinical examinations. The authors have aimed this volume at dental undergraduates, orthodontic therapists and specialist trainees, as well as providing a reference for use in the clinic.

The chapter layout of the book tends to follow most traditional textbooks, but there the similarity ends. There is no section on basic sciences related to orthodontics at the start of the volume. The text starts with the basics of diagnosis and treatment planning in orthodontics, then proceeds directly to consider the developing dentition, Class I, Class II division 1, Class II division 2, and Class III malocclusions, tooth impactions, fixed appliances, stability and retention, orthognathic surgery and, finally, a short chapter on

the development of the craniofacial region. A good description of each malocclusion or clinical problem is given at the start of each chapter, with supporting references. Each section has a number of clinical cases demonstrating various aspects relating to that particular chapter. The text is punctuated throughout by questions and answers related to these.

The cases themselves are of widely differing problems, and the format of questioning would reflect the information gathering/summary/problem list/aims of treatment/treatment options that would be encountered in most university and royal college examinations. This is useful in that it introduces the reader to this method of learning at an early stage of his/her training. It is probably optimistic to suggest this should be an undergraduate text, as there are already a number of good textbooks in this area. Orthodontic therapists and specialist trainees would gain most benefit from this, in that it uses cases that they are most likely to encounter in their daily practice.

The range of cases is wide and encompasses the spectrum of

problems encountered in specialist practice. The quality of the photographs is in general good, but some are rather variable, and a number are from the pre-digital era. In some cases, the full progress of the treatment is not given: for example, clinical photos of Case 3.7 stop at initial alignment, while others show only the pretreatment photographs or radiographs, and others show the entire progress of treatment, with the relevant records at the appropriate time. Consistency of presentation would be useful – pre- and post-treatment radiographs, cephalometric tracings, and photographs should be standard in a text like this.

The most valuable part of this book is the problem-based learning approach to diagnosis and treatment planning in orthodontics and it will certainly be useful in this regard for specialist trainees and orthodontic therapists preparing for examinations. The range of clinical problems covered is impressive, and the question and answer approach will stimulate the reader to a more critical approach to clinical diagnosis and treatment planning.

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