

TWO NEW BOOKS

I recently received two books. It must be pointed out that I am named in the Acknowledgment section and cited in the text of each of these books, and that two of the three authors are fellow faculty members of mine at SUNY. While some might feel that my opinions are consequently biased, I am certain that the quality and breadth of these books far overshadow any influence I might have. The proof will be in the pudding or, in this case, in the reading of these new additions to the optometric literature.

These two books, *Optometric Management of Nearpoint Vision Disorders* by Martin Birnbaum¹ and *Clinical Pediatric Optometry* by Leonard Press and Bruce Moore,² represent the latest in a number of superb publications that serve to solidify and advance the diverse knowledge base of the profession. While others have produced works on the same topics, I believe that these two books are unique in several ways.

First, both Birnbaum and Press are identified as stalwarts of the Skeffington philosophy by virtue of their writings and lectures over a long period of time. In each of these books it is clear that they continue to use this approach as the cornerstone of their clinical thinking and patient care. Yet it is equally clear that they have maintained an open mind to the contributions of other philosophies and to the responsibilities that an expanded scope of practice carries. One example is Birnbaum's concise but inclusive treat-

ment of what he terms the "vergence stress model." Here he presents some of the works of Sheard, Percival, Ogle, Schor, and Carter in a way that enhances one's appreciation of the original Skeffington "nearpoint stress model" and its elaborations, particularly by Kraskin, Forrest and himself. He accomplishes the same purpose in his treatment of graphical and fixation disparity analysis of binocular dysfunctions.

Press, in a similar manner, relies heavily on Gerry Getman's extension of the Skeffington philosophy to the special case of children. Getman's developmental approach is extant throughout the book, and the teachings of John Streff and Richard Appel from their days at the Gesell Institute are likewise evident. The concept of development is further enhanced by a chapter on genetic problems by John Griffin. But Press did not stop here. The fact that his co-author is Bruce Moore, who wrote most of the sections on pediatric ocular pathology and pharmacology, is evidence of the expansion of the teachings of Getman, Streff and Appel necessitated by the realities of optometric practice in the '90s. Further, Moore's collaborative efforts in several of the chapters with two physicians and a chapter on low vision and multiple impairment by Paul Freeman indicate a growth in the area of pediatric optometry that Arnold Gesell would undoubtedly have applauded.

I believe that these two books are texts that have been long overdue. Birnbaum's work is remarkable in that he has compressed into a single volume so much of the vision science and Optometric Extension Program research and writings pertinent to vision therapy and vision training. The Press and Moore book establishes pediatric optometry as a learned sub-discipline of the profession by virtue of the knowledge base and clinical skills they identify as prerequisite to optimal ocular and visual care of infants and children. These two texts will serve students, clinicians and researchers alike. They will stand as the definitive works in the areas of optometry that their titles specify for many years.

References

1. Birnbaum MH. *Optometric management of nearpoint vision disorders*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1993.
2. Press LJ, Moore BD. *Clinical pediatric optometry*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1993.



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