BOOK REVIEWS

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The recent considerable expansion in our understanding of human chromosome pathology in medicine has been reflected in the production of some excellent textbooks from the late 1980s to the present day. It is unfortunate that little or no discussion of the role of cytogenetic principles contained in this book.

This book is divided into four sections: “Basic Concepts and Background”, “Examining and Analysing Chromosomes”, “Clinical Cytogenetics”, and “Beyond Chromosomes”. The first chapter, “Basic Concepts and Background”, gets off to a good start with an entertaining history of clinical cytogenetics. This includes an account of various important events in the field such as the discovery of the human chromosome number in 1928 by the Norwegian cytogeneticist Aage Aas.

The equation should have been as follows: $\frac{3}{5} \times \frac{3}{4} \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{9}{60}$.

This video has been used as a training aid for ophthalmologists, ophthalmic nurses, orthoptists, genetic counsellors, and nurses.

The commentary and content of the video are the work of Mette Warburg, a respected Danish geneticist who has published extensively in the field of ophthalmic genetics. The aim is to outline a system for examination of the face and eyes of patients where a syndromic diagnosis is a possibility. She explains that the video does not describe the embryology or aetiology of the conditions nor the intraocular signs unless they form an important part of the syndrome.

The introduction details the frequency of congenital eye anomalies in dysmorphic syndromes before going through an approach to examination, starting with observation of the child’s eye contact and use of vision. She then goes on to discuss examination of the face followed by the ears, neck, and hands. Possible findings are illustrated in turn, using both well-recognised and rare conditions. The length of the video (40 minutes) means that only brief details can be given about each case and there are a few technical inaccuracies in the commentary which may have resulted during translation. The video has been shot as a series of still pictures and although this results in the loss of some information, especially when discussing observation of children’s behaviour, the unusual nature of some of the conditions indicates that they have been collected over a period of time, making it difficult to produce the video in any other way.

From an educational point of view, the video illustrates an interesting set of dysmorphology cases linked to a system for examination. Most of the cases will be familiar to doctors training in clinical genetics and so the video will probably be most useful to ophthalmologists interested in dysmorphology, who wish to familiarise themselves with some syndromic diagnoses and signs to look for in a general examination.

NOTICES

British Human Genetics Conference

This conference will be held at the University of York on 11-13 September 2000. It will include a one day joint symposium “Technologies in Genome Analysis” with the Genetical Society on 13 September 2000. For further information contact the Conference Office, British Society for Human Genetics, Clinical Genetics Unit, Birmingham Women’s Hospital, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TG, UK. Tel/Fax: 0121 627 2634. Email: bshg@bham.ac.uk Website: http://www.bham.ac.uk/bshg

7th European Meeting on Psychosocial Aspects of Genetics (EMPAG 2000)

This conference will be held in Manchester on 21-23 September 2000. Further information is available on our web site at www.cmht.nwest.nhs.uk/directory/depstmary/empag2000.htm or from the Conference Secretary, Barbara Egan, Department of Clinical Genetics, St Mary’s Hospital, Hathersage Road, Manchester M13 0JH, UK.