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An introduction to orthodontics, 3rd edition (2007)

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This is a new edition of Dr Mitchell's readily understandable and well-illustrated textbook. This is used as the basis both at the undergraduate and postgraduate level at the Orthodontic Discipline, Prince Philip Dental Hospital, Hong Kong. For more than 10 years, this textbook has been the core of the BDS orthodontic seminars. It has also become a useful literature reference for solving orthodontic 'problems' in the problem-based learning for BDS 1-V.

Compared with the second edition, this new publication has two added chapters: 'retention' and 'orthodontic first aid'. The retention chapter is informative and a pedagogical build up, but missing examples of other removable retainers, for instance, in the upper arch a Jensen retainer and a wrap-around (Begg) retainer, and in the lower arch a spring retainer. The chapter on orthodontic first aid is an excellent handout for general practitioners.

Generally, the design and layout are improved with a larger and increased number of photographs and improved illustrations. The content in some chapters has been modernized, coming closer to current orthodontic practice. I have only positive comments on adding 1.7 temporomandibular joints, 2.4 Andrews' six keys, 4.2 craniofacial embryology, and 6.3 evaluation of cephalometric radiographs.

The chapters by Dr Littlewood have been redesigned, made clearer, and updated, but in chapter 19, 'Functional appliances', information on headgear activators is still missing. Lastly, why is the Palmer system still used to illustrate a specific tooth when internationally the Federation Dentaire Internationale system is generally accepted?

Margareta Bendeus Hägg

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