

Book Reviews

Breast Feeding, Suckling and the Suckling Urge: Their Development and their Influence on the Developing Dentition.

Erik Larsson. 1999. 37 pages. (editor S Bishara)

Copies available from the author at \$25 each.

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This slim booklet has 5 chapters, the first three take the reader through the assumptions made about feeding and suckling in primitive man, followed by the cultural influences on breast feeding during the 14th–19th centuries, and finally on to the current attitudes towards infant feeding. Chapter 4 looks at artificial sucking habits that includes pacifiers and digits, and the final chapter is a single page of summary, conclusions and recommendations. There is heavy reliance upon the author's previous extensive work in this field, and no new evidence relating to dummies, digits

and their effects is presented. Nevertheless, the text is supported by several other publications, the most recent (apart from the author) being 1997 and the oldest being 1473! For this reviewer the most interesting part was the early history of infant feeding, and the hypotheses put forward to explain certain feeding habits in different civilisations. Presentation of this broad range of information is really only possible in a publication of this type, as it is unlikely to be acceptable for a journal article. Individuals with an interest in this topic may feel \$25 is money well spent, however this is not a 'must have' booklet. There should be a copy in every dental library as it is a valuable source document on infant feeding and artificial sucking habits, and it is a thought provoking monograph on social attitudes to infant feeding.

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