

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL SKILLS

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Foreword

Welcome to the latest edition of the International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS), Volume 8, Issue 4, July 2014.

Studies demonstrate that medical students and newly qualified doctors feel underprepared with respect to writing prescriptions safely, with many suggesting there is insufficient formal teaching and a limited opportunity to practise the basic prescribing skills required during clinical attachments. Dr Stephen Knight and colleagues present a study which suggests that in a student's first clinical year a Peer Assisted Learning approach can link theory to practice and thus increase the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for safe prescribing. This study comes at a crucial time, when electronic prescribing is rapidly becoming the norm.

In the event of a lower limb injury, splintage is one of the most basic forms of initial management. It helps reduce movement, prevent further tissue damage and reduce pain. Whilst a number of splintage options are available to those in a hospital type setting, splintage options for an unprepared bystander are likely to be scarce. Mr Angus Maclean presents a method for quickly applying a splintage to a patient's lower limbs. This method is intended to be used in the pre-hospital setting, where no specialist equipment might be available.

Also in this issue, IJOCS Book Reviewers Dr Nahida Khan and Dr Jonathan Bath review 'The Top 100 Drugs' and 'Clinical Skills for Medical Students' respectively. When considering the fact that there are many drugs and clinical skills with which medical students and junior doctors have to familiarise themselves with, these two books are a valuable resource and they present all the necessary relevant information clearly and concisely.

As always, your feedback is invaluable for the continued development of the International Journal of Clinical Skills – the only peer reviewed international journal devoted to clinical skills. E-mail: feedback@ijocs.org

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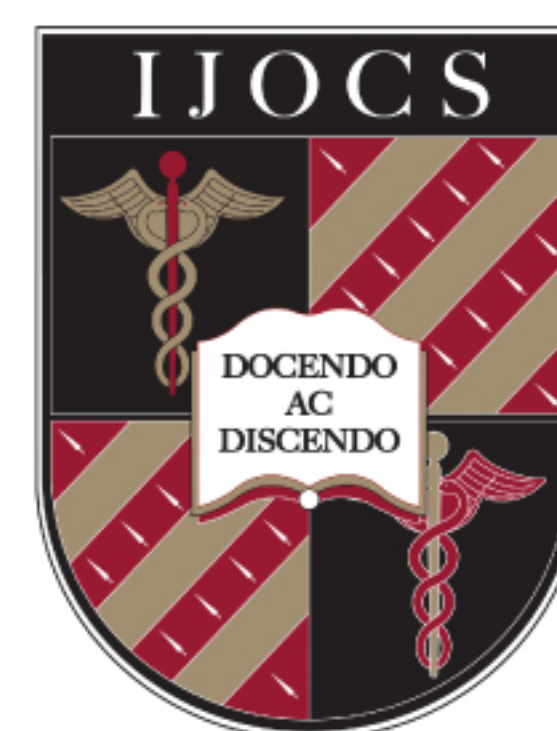
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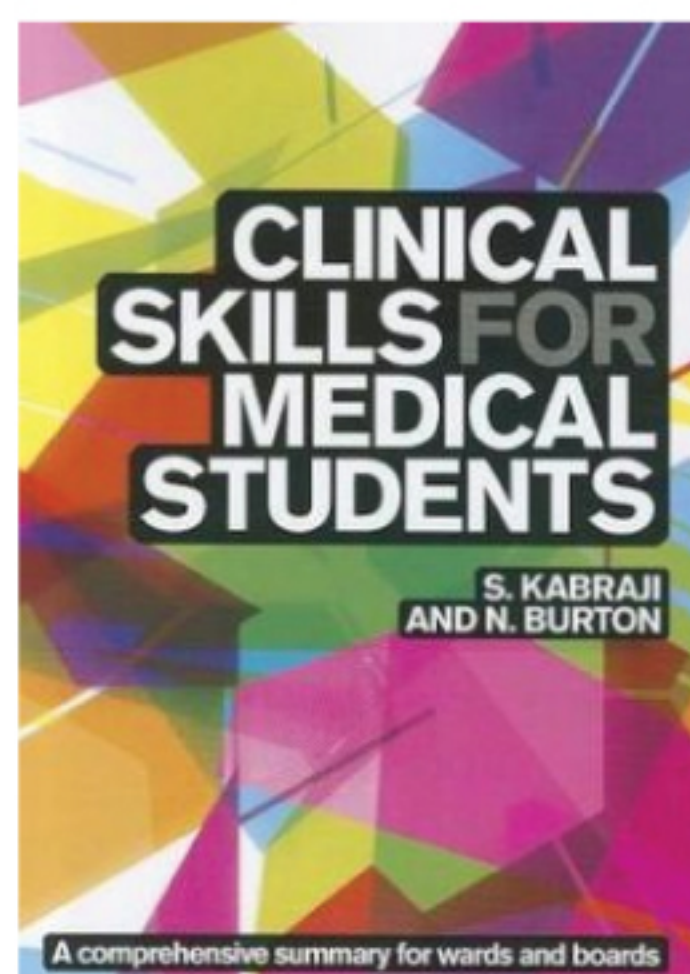
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IJOCS Book Review



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Book Review: Clinical Skills For Medical Students

This book is aimed at medical students in the clinical phase of training and provides a summary of clinical skills and examination techniques central to successful performance on the wards. Clinical Skills For Medical Students utilizes a systems-based approach, e.g. cardiovascular and respiratory medicine or orthopaedics and rheumatology. The book is an adaptation of the highly successful UK textbook of clinical skills and is themed similarly.

Clinical Skills For Medical Students is well-organized and succinct. The use of concise boxes with key information points helps to focus and summarize the clinical skill while the step-by-step guide to the examination reinforces the details and allows the scenario to be reproduced and practiced.

The use of color diagrams greatly enhances the learning environment as many facets of the skill are experienced most notably through observing the technique rather than reading purely on the page. Useful mnemonics are incorporated throughout the text allowing the reader a structure upon which the history and examination is built. For example, Station 15 details the essential features of taking a good chest pain history and introduces the mnemonic SOCRATES regarding the site of the pain, onset and character etc. These unique tips for a complete history, when applied appropriately, are often the bridge between an adequate performance and an excellent one.

The color photos incorporated throughout sections is an essential portion of any great clinical skills text and the

authors of Clinical Skills For Medical Students have firmly adhered to this mantra. The ENT, ophthalmology and dermatology sections harbor good quality photographs and as a result the sections are of undeniably higher yield.

The addition of sections dedicated to pain control and communication skills provide breadth that is not found in comparable clinical skills books and provides testament the experience of the authors in creating educational resources that are not only useful from a practical and examination standpoint, but which additionally prepare the reader for situations faced in actual clinical practice.

Clinical Skills For Medical Students is a worthy addition to the ranks of clinical examination texts and provides a comprehensive system-based approach to skills training that lends itself well to self-study or study in groups. As a practical guide to performing safe and educated clinical examinations there are few books that will rival this US edition.

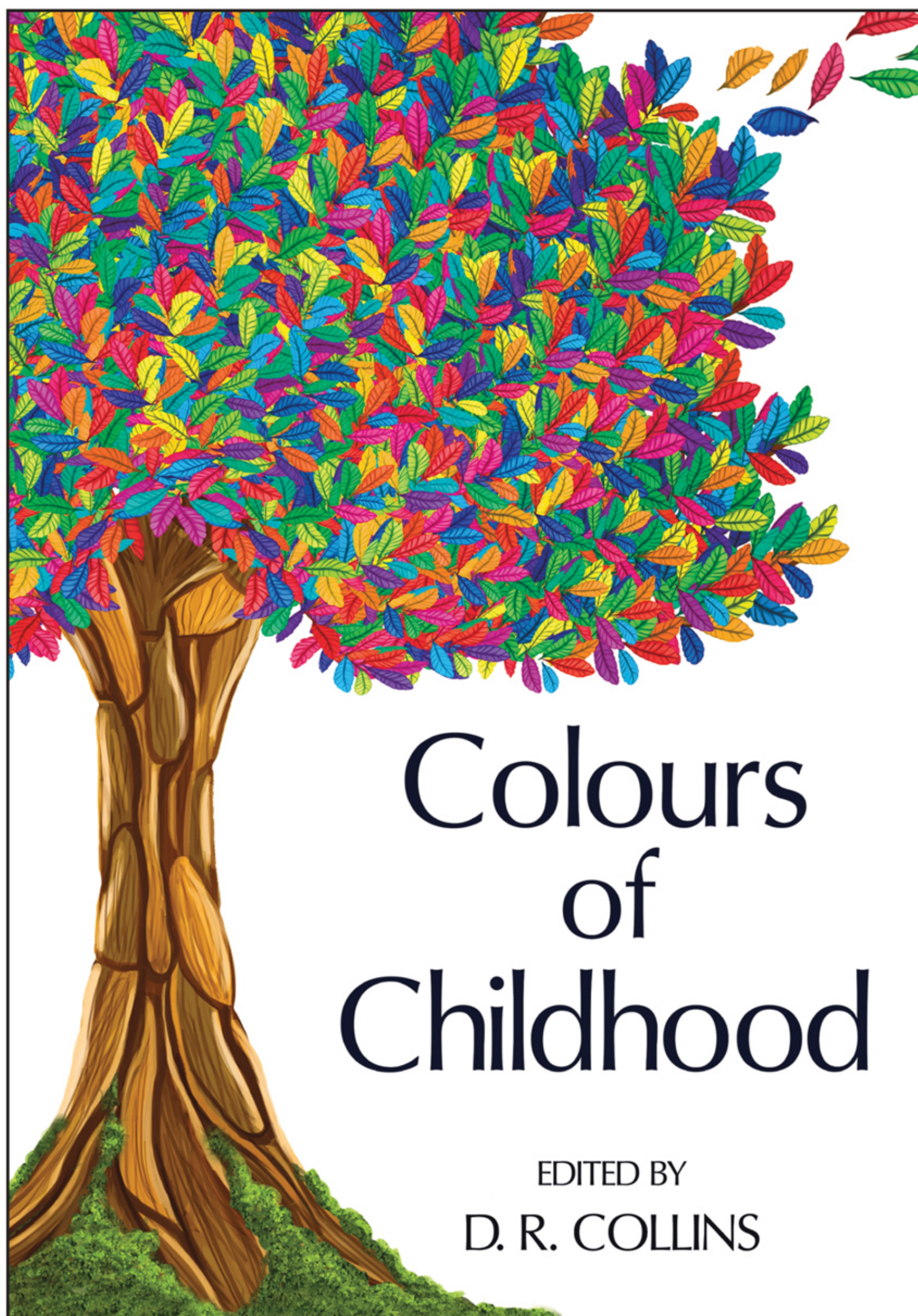
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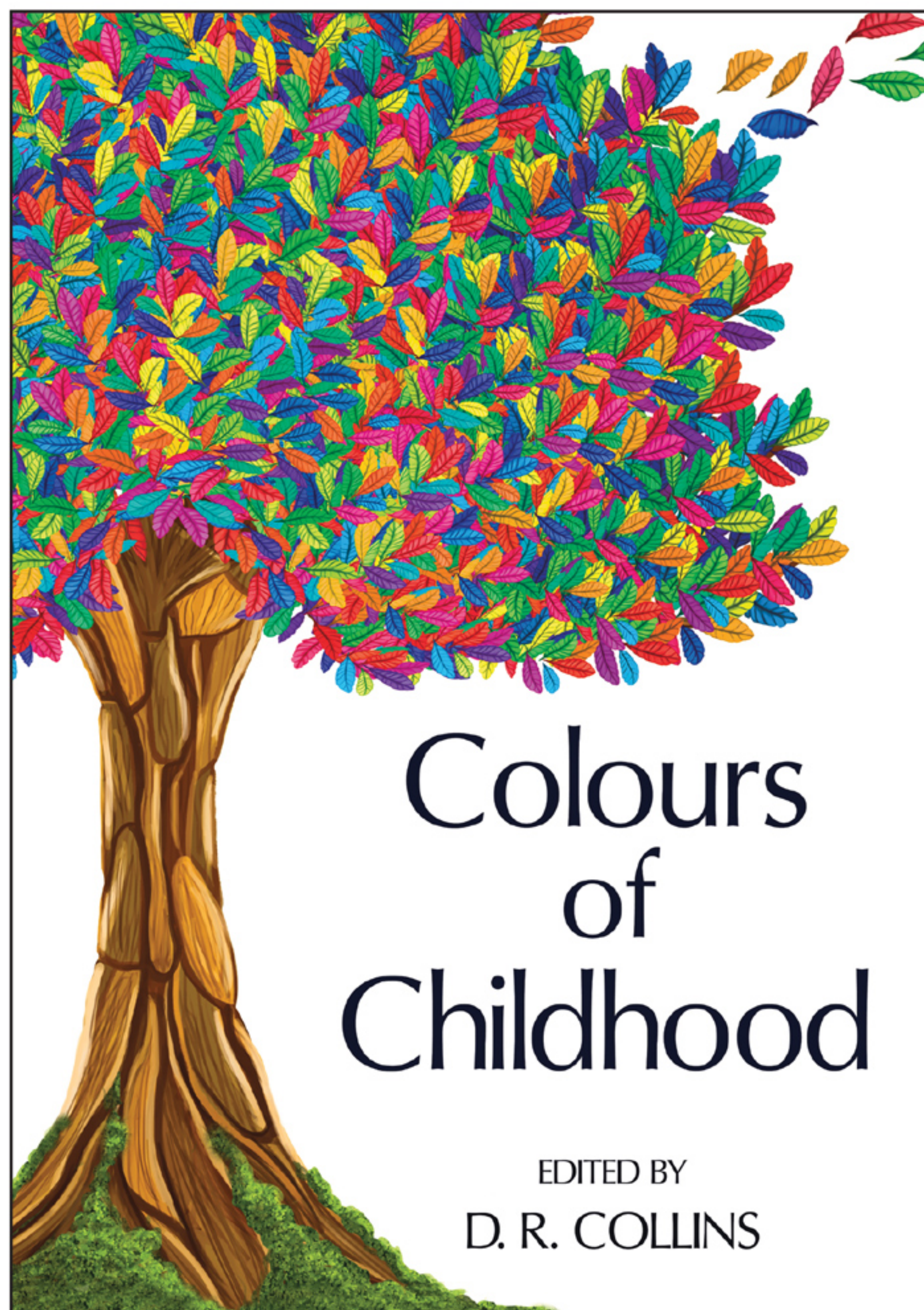
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David Dimbleby

'It is the individual stories that matter - each child helped is a triumph in a world beset by poverty and illness for so many.'



Pope Benedict XVI



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Michael Parkinson

We all have hopes and dreams, many of these in childhood. But life's twists and turns can make or break a future. **Colours of Childhood** is a tribute to childhood and its many colours. It includes contributions from over one hundred people from all walks of life; they include religious leaders, royalty, sporting personalities, actors, politicians and musicians, just to name a few. Over a hundred poems accompany the contributors' messages, with each poem giving a distinctive insight into childhood and much more. The full-page colour illustrations throughout the book provide a thought-provoking background to the poems. Childhood should be a time to be carefree and happy – but not all of us are so lucky. This unique anthology depicts also human determination and courage, as well as the urge to love and help others. It gives us hope for a better, more united world. What were your childhood hopes and dreams? Wherever life leads you, **Colours of Childhood** is sure to inspire you and brighten your way.

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