

The Lacs – A materia medica and Repertory

Patricia Hatherly

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Reviewer: Therese Boyle

I have been using this beautifully presented book for the last eighteen months and have found it to be a wonderful resource.

Patricia Hatherly is an Australian homeopath and lactation consultant.

When considering a 'Lac' remedy for a client, having the proving information of twenty 'Lacs' in one volume has obvious advantages, one being time! I have, over the years, spent many hours hunting down some of these provings through the internet, old journals and the like. The information in this volume is very thorough and includes proving symptoms ranging from the late 1880s through to recent times.

Including a detailed repertory of the 'Lacs' makes it very convenient when differentiating between milk remedies! Patricia has, with permission, used Roger van Zandvoort's reportorial framework, as found in his Complete Repertory.

Being someone who tends to dip in and out of my materia medica books, it was interesting preparing this review as it meant I made the time to read this book... and that was a worthwhile experience!!

I enjoyed reading the first section of the book titled 'Milk Matters', where Patricia shares her extensive knowledge and understanding of the role 'milk' plays in providing nourishment for us mammals. She also discusses the health challenges presented when milk substitutes are used. This is interesting background for us as therapists, as it is not unusual to be faced with supporting a client having breastfeeding challenges and their process of deciding whether or not to complement feed or wean.

Each proving is laid out stating who has proven the remedy, followed by the keynote essence. Personally, I find it really helpful to have a discussion of the essence, accompanied by some relevant rubrics and themes that showed through the proving.

Patricia follows this with a discussion about the relevant miasm, followed by the main modalities before heading into the bread and butter proving information. The dreams are also broken down into

themes, which is very helpful when scanning through to get a 'feel for the remedy'.

At the end of each proving, she provides other remedies to consider for differentiation purposes as well as additional reading resources – a fabulous time saver for a busy homeopath!

Throughout the text Patricia has sprinkled grey boxes with highlighted text, where she is adding or expanding on the proving with further information or observations. Some examples from the Lac Delphinum proving include:

1. Dreams, circles merry-go-round; travelling clockwise
'*Lac Maternum* may dream of a ferris wheel, *Lac Humanum* may dream of a merry-go-round and *Lac Suillinum* of a roller coaster.'

2. Sleep symptoms of "restless...in small broken blocks...turning a lot; like a rotisserie all night."

"Dolphins love to swim round and round and do so especially during sleeping when only one half of their brain shuts down. They stay in a tight-knit group with one eye open and spiral up and down in gently succession taking an occasional breath."

3. Percipience – clairvoyant; prophetic; research on a substance to transmit thoughts.

"Dolphins have remarkable percipience due to their sonar capacities. Not only can they 'look into' the bodies of other marine animals (thereby being able to assess the stomach contents of an approaching shark); it is believed that they can use their sonic capacity to assess the emotional state of other dolphins."

While many of the 'Lacs' are ones we are familiar with, Lac Caninum, Lac Humanum, Lac Equinum, Lac Leoninum, for example, there are some others that are less familiar, I will look at a few briefly to whet your appetite.

Lac Cameli Dromedarii, the milk of the Dromedary Camel has the keynote essence of 'finding my place in the Sun' and includes themes around teenage years; body image, relationship issues, tantrums, hiding, defiance, and disregard for authority.

Lac Phoca Vitulina – the milk of the Harbour Seal has the essence of 'If I struggle, I will survive', very psoric.

Lac Macropi Gigantei – milk of the Eastern Grey Kangaroo; proven by Patricia Hatherly and Sandra Venables. Miscommunication is a central theme – "Sorry; I hear you but do not understand you."

Interestingly also are themes of 'possession and dispossession', and 'patriarchy and matriarchy'. This got me thinking about the ongoing challenges faced by Australian and Aboriginal people to find ways to cohabit in their large continent, whilst honoring and integrating their very different ways of approaching life.

Another valuable pieces of information gleaned from Patricia's newsletters that I would like to share, is potentising a mother's own breast milk for her child. I have used this successfully with clients, when Lac Maternum or Lac Humanum has not helped, even though well indicated.

In summary, I thoroughly recommend this as a valuable addition to homeopaths' materia medica libraries.