Reviewer's report

Title: Childhood autism in a 13 year old boy with oculocutaneous albinism: a case report

Version: 6 Date: 13 November 2007

Reviewer: Karen Harman

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: New associations or variations in disease processes

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: Yes

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: No

Comments to authors:

General

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Revisions necessary for publication

The detail of the patient's ethnicity, as well as the photographs, helped to establish the diagnosis of oculocutaneous albinism.

The acknowledgment that the assessment of vision and hearing is a functional assessment is also useful in the case description. Although it is not unexpected that the prenatal and early postnatal history is not known, one would hope that his medical history during the time living in the destitute home would be known to the care providers. If at all possible, a comment about general medical wellness during this time would reassure the reader that there were not significant medical problems that could result in developmental impairments.

It is agreed that the diagnosis of autism is made using the classification of ICD-10 or DSM-IV. However, in the developmental field the question always remains in a very low functioning child as to whether their limited communication
and social interaction skills are related to autism or commiserate with their overall profound cognitive impairment. Since some of the communication and social communication skills that are evaluated in the assessment of autism, are not developed up until the age of 1 year, demonstrating overall cognitive skills at least greater than this is usually demonstrated before making an additional diagnosis of autism in a severe to profound mentally retarded child. Given that the authors are confident that the child's overall mental age was estimated at 3-4 years of age, then the diagnosis of autism would be appropriate.

**What next?:** Accept after minor revisions

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable