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Nota di contenuto	Introduction / J.R. Spencer -- 'Kicking and screaming' : the slow road to best evidence / Joyce Plotnikoff and Richard Woolfson -- Alternative routes : accusatorial jurisdictions on the slow road to best evidence / Emily Henderson -- Children's evidence in legal proceedings : the position in Western Australia / Hal Jackson -- Cross-examining the child complainant : rights, innovations and unfounded fears in the Australian context / Annie Cossins -- An idea whose time has come : the reform of criminal procedure for child witnesses in New Zealand / Emily Henderson -- Child witnesses in Austria / Verena Murschetz -- The position in Norway / Trond Myklebust -- Conclusions / J.R. Spencer -- The Pigot Report 1989 (reprinted)

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Sommario/riassunto

In 2009, Stephen Barker was convicted of rape on the evidence of a little girl who was four-and-a-half years old at the trial, and about three-and-a-half when first interviewed by the police. The high point of the proceedings was the child's appearance as a live witness in order for Barker's counsel to attempt a cross-examination. This case focused attention on the need, imposed by current English law, for even tiny children to come to court for a live cross-examination. In 1989, the Pigot Committee proposed a scheme under which the whole of a young child's evidence, including cross-examination, would be obtained out of court and in advance of trial. In 1999 a provision designed to give effect to this was included in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act, but it has not yet been brought into force. The full Pigot proposal was implemented, however, in Western Australia, and similar schemes operate in a number of European jurisdictions. This book of essays examines a number of these schemes, and argues the case for further reforms in the UK