LEARNING RE-ENABLED: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HELPING CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES, 2nd Edition, by Susan N. Schriber Orloff. Elsevier/Mosby: www.elsevierhealth.com, 2004, $24.95, Softcover, ISBN 0-323-02772-5.

Ms. Orloff, the author, is an occupational therapist and the executive director of a private practice in Atlanta, Georgia. She begins the book by sharing her philosophy as a parent and therapist who works and lives with children who have learning disabilities. Ms. Orloff not only provides intervention as an occupational therapist, but she also is a parent who has children with disabilities as well. The book is easy to read and very parent friendly in its language, definitions, descriptions and organization. She clearly describes the skills needed for learning and the signs that may be noticed at school and home indicating learning difficulty. Ms. Orloff generously includes space for jotting down notes while reading, and charts in the organization of the book’s contents.

This book is directed at preparing and guiding parents with children ages 3-21 years through the special education process within the context of the school system, from 3-21. Discussion of the legislation of IDEA and Section 504 designations related to the process of the individual education program (IEP) process is simple and easy to understand. Occupational therapy is the primary intervention discussed in this book. The author prompts parents regarding possible questions to ask of the IEP team members, programming options to consider, and collaboration with the occupational therapist. She discusses the differences between
school-based therapy and private therapy and how occupational therapy relates to the developing learning skills related to successful school performance. She even provides pictorial examples of intervention activities, and learning related samples of change for improved school performance, all in a clear and concise manner.

While Ms. Orloff does provide a lovely resource list for accessing intervention materials for home and school, this book could be enhanced by providing a bibliography of related articles from which Ms. Orloff so often shares great tidbits, such as Goleman’s book titled *Emotional Intelligence*. This listing of articles and books about sensory processing that reflect her statements about what “the research literature says” could be very helpful to parents who wish to become more knowledgeable and who need to educate some of their healthcare providers. The addition of directions about how to access one’s state or county department of education websites, as well as listing websites where parents can peruse easy to read legislative updates related to education and IDEA would be highly beneficial as well.

Ms. Orloff has done a wonderful job of demystifying the IEP process and compiling information about utilization of section 504 for school-based services. Overall, I believe this book is a great primer for parents of children with disabilities as their children transition from early intervention programs to school-based programs, or as children become eligible for services during their educational process. *Learning Re-enabled* would also be a beneficial book for neophyte occupational therapists entering the school system and neophyte teachers or teachers who are new to integrating regular education with special education processes for their students. The information and pictures within this book are well worth its price.

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As described in its title, this book was written as a guide for higher education administrators, instructional technology personnel, and higher education faculty members who wish to foster better use of technology in their teaching missions. This is a comprehensive, if cumbersome, resource for that narrow range of readership. There are 71 chapters, representing nine university programs, which address the issues of adopting and using technology in education. These issues range from philosophical viewpoints to assessment of programs, and include aspects of communication, staffing and support strategies, teaching environments, model programs, funding, and evaluation of the effect of technology on learning. Most of the chapters are practical to the point of common sense, but a few, such as the “Ethics of Teaching in an Online Environment” are quite thought-provoking. The editor’s belief is that faculty development cannot be externally mandated, but, with appropriate opportunities, it can be facilitated.

Individuals from the nine universities contributing to this volume collaborated on teaching and technology issues for six years. The sum of those collaborative efforts and the successes and caveats from their experiences prompted their efforts in producing this guidebook. The book is sectioned in a logical progression, though in the preface the reader is given leave to choose whatever order is individually pertinent, whether that be by topic or by school. A series of anecdotal descriptions regarding the major topic areas by technology experts, administrators, and faculty at the different universities are compiled. The primary focus is on describing ways to engage faculty to use technology appropriately in their teaching, and as such it succeeds in offering a variety of approaches, programs, and suggestions for colleges seeking to get started or even re-energized in such an endeavor. However, it is not a book specifically about teaching using distance learning technologies or the strategies and fundamentals of distance learning, including issues of funding and marketing. For those topics, texts by Porter (1997), Collison, Elbaum, Haavind, and Tinker (2000), or Moore and Kearsley, (1996) would be more utilitarian. A compilation text from the Journal of Distance Education specifically about the Health Sciences (Moore & Savrock, 2001) would also be a viable alternative for therapists wanting to know more about technology for academic or in-service purposes.
Despite the multiplicity of authorship (more than 75 authors), the writing style in the book is consistently journalistic, meaning brief and directly to the point. The descriptions are practical and specific, to facilitate replication of the ideas at each institution. The few black and white illustrations and figures included are appropriate to the needs of those chapters in which they are located. There is a useful index, though it is beneficial to already know the terms you want to look up. Most of the terms are specific to individual chapters, although there are a few, such as “faculty input,” that are addressed in multiple chapters. Each chapter title is descriptive and could almost supersede the index. There is no glossary.

If a reader is at a college or university that is about to acquire, or needs to improve their use of teaching/learning technology, then this would be a useful book at a reasonable price. A variety of programs are described for introducing faculty to the possible tools that may be used in, or as adjuncts to, the classroom experience. These tools include Blackboard and WebCT, course software packages and some specific elements within those packages, such as asynchronous discussion boards, or outside those packages, such as a listserv. The structure of the book lends itself to busy schedules—the short chapter structure allows for quick and/or sporadic readings.

This book would not be of appreciable use to a practicing clinician unless he or she was considering transferring into academia. While there is some mention of specific learning strategies, a clinician desiring to launch or upgrade an online continuing education course would be better served with a text specifically tailored to online teaching strategies (see references).

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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY WITHOUT BORDERS: LEARNING FROM THE SPIRIT OF SURVIVORS, edited by Frank Kronenberg, Salvador Simo Algado, and Nick Pollard. Elsevier Churchill Livingstone (www.elsevierhealth.com), 2005, 461 pp., $39.95, Softcover, ISBN: 0443074402.

As Hurricane Katrina has recently shown the world, health and healthcare are fast becoming luxuries only the rich can afford. The poor are often left behind, figuratively and sometimes literally. In the American healthcare system, healthcare is tied to employment, workers bear an increasing burden of the costs, and those without jobs or means are offered minimal and often sub-adequate care. In developing nations the poor, the sick, the old, and persons of color suffer disproportionately from poor health and disabling conditions that limit their ability to lead a normal productive life.

In *Occupational Therapy Without Borders*, editors Frank Kronenberg, Salvador Simo Algado, and Nick Pollard propose a new international model of occupational therapy, one that serves the disenfranchised—“survivors of war, prisoners, immigrants, prostitutes, people living with HIV/AIDS.” They assert, “There is a dissonance between our (OTs) proclaimed philosophical roots, values, and beliefs and what we do, our practice in the real world.” Occupational therapists need to consider the social, political, and economic conditions of individuals and communities who are dealing with disability and limited occupational opportunities. Current beliefs, principles, and behaviors must change so they are more consistent with redistributive social justice models, creating a more inclusive society for all. The authors label the injustices seen around the world as “Occupational apartheid—the separation between those who have meaningful, useful occupations, and those who are deprived, isolated, or constrained.”

The audience for *Occupational Therapy Without Borders* is intended to be “anyone in the helping professions . . . occupational therapists and other health professionals working or tempted to work in disadvantaged communities,” according to *Doctors Without Borders* founder David Werner, who wrote the foreword. This book would be an excellent text for a course on community development or international occupational therapy. Like another excellent book on community occupational therapy, *Occupational Therapy in Community-Based Practice Settings*, by Scaffa, this book first articulates basic principles and issues of occupational therapy, then cites specific examples of practice. However, the Pollard et al. book presents an international focus and a social justice
perspective that make it unique in this reader’s experience of occupational therapy literature. For this reason, it represents a radical and necessary new perspective in the field. Werner calls it “a gold mine of methods, practical alternatives, and thought-provoking discussion for anyone working in the fields of health care . . . social justice, or sustainable development.”

The book is divided into five sections, with different authors for each chapter, including several written by the editors. Other authors include noted occupational therapy scholars Elizabeth Towensend, Michael Iwama, Wendy Wood, Barb Hooper, and Gary Keilhofner. Each chapter begins with an overview and then proceeds through key points, using subheadings to help organize the material for the reader. The first section offers poignant and compelling “voices of survivors”–first person accounts of living with disability and occupational deprivation in third world nations. A Brazilian street child, now an aid worker, a blind woman who teaches mobility skills to blind children in Tibet, a woman living under siege in Bethlehem, and others all write about the struggles of living with disability and transformational power of their experiences.

The second section develops the philosophical and theoretical arguments for developing a “new, radical political stance on occupation.” Chapters on overcoming occupational apartheid, participatory occupational justice, and community-based approaches to practice are included, as well as a section applying the model of human occupation to occupational apartheid. Key concepts are defined and explained. Minimal figures, charts and tables help further clarify key concepts, such as occupational justice (Table 9.3), and linking theory to practice (Box 14.1).

Section 3 gives examples and case studies of occupational therapy practice without borders–programs in Lebanon and Kosovo with child survivors of war, in Brazil with street children, in Vietnam with disabled children, and in Great Britain with learning disabled adults. Each section is vividly written using a narrative structure to bring the reader into the experience of the persons served, and the challenges of providing culturally relevant and useful OT interventions in settings widely divergent from the typical American hospital or clinic.

The final section is a summary of research and education initiatives that have focused on themes of occupational apartheid and redistributive justice. Case studies and reflections by the authors further personalize the chapters, which vary widely in writing style, due to the different authors. References are provided at the end of each chapter, along with a helpful index at the end of the book.
Some of the sections of this book are overly theoretical and repetitive. At over 400 pages, it is a long read, and could have used some editing. More diagrams, charts, tables, and graphs could have helped the reader better understand some of the new ideas and concepts. More photographs would have enhanced the overall message of the book. However, even with its shortcomings, this is a well-written and powerful book with an important message. The authors speak from their hearts and are clearly dedicated to this new approach to OT. They call us as persons and professionals, as Americans, and as world citizens, to respond to the over 600 million disabled people in developing countries who have limited opportunities to participate meaningfully in life. This book will be a critical addition to the libraries of all occupational therapists who wish to expand their vision of the possibilities of our profession, especially through international practice or service. At $39.95, it is reasonably priced and represents a good investment in your professional library.

When Hurricane Katrina hit, I watched in horror on television with the rest of the nation. I saw people in wheelchairs in the Superdome, babies crying, and old people dead by the side of the road. I live in San Francisco, and I wondered if my father, a nursing home resident, would be safely evacuated in case of an earthquake. I worry and wonder about the priorities of this country when the poor, old, sick, and disabled are left to fend for themselves in times of crisis. We can do better. We must do better. As Gandhi said, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” This book can help us all be agents for change, if we so choose.

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**DEVELOPING OCULAR MOTOR AND VISUAL PERCEPTUAL SKILLS: AN ACTIVITY WORKBOOK,** by Kenneth A. Lane. *SLACK Incorporated,* 2005, 320 pp., $39.95, Softcover, ISBN: 1-55642-595-3.

The text is written, as the title implies, primarily as an activity workbook. The book serves as a clinical text, providing possible clinical intervention ideas particularly for the inexperienced or entry level clinician. While not specifically for occupational therapists, it was written for health care providers whose clients have one or more deficits in
either visual perceptual or ocular motor skills, or both. For individuals who have little background in these two areas, the text can serve as a springboard toward developing interventions, or what the text refers to as “lesson plans.” As a workbook and resource for ideas, this text would meet the need of the occupational therapy students to foster their ideas and possible approaches with clients. It would also assist the beginning clinician in developing intervention sessions with ocular motor or visual perception needs.

If you are looking for an in-depth presentation on visual perception and ocular motor skills, this text will leave you disappointed. However, if you are in need of suggested activities and possible ways of developing interventions, this text can serve as a starting point. If you are looking to add to your collection of interventions and existing practice, you probably have similar activities already planned and prepared. The text might be more relevant for an occupational therapist who is providing consultative practice in a school setting where the teacher or teacher aid needs guidance in preparing activities. As a consultant, the occupational therapist would help non-professionals use the text to add to their limited background in visual perceptual and ocular motor needs. Most occupational therapy practitioners would already have a grasp on the interventions or “lesson plans” provided. This text also might serve parents of children with these problems as a guide in developing home plans for their children. There are relatively few books on the market that actually address visual perception training approaches, so if you have nothing available to you, this book might fill that void. You will find most of the activities are similar to those tucked away in file drawers of clinics that are commonly put together for those clients who need this type of intervention.

There is little theory presented in the text, but there are background reviews of motor and sensory systems that do aid one in understanding where one might have possible impact on our motor and perceptual systems. The basic presumption taken in most of the chapters is that if you can impact the system, then you should provide it with the stimulations that can add to this impact and thus you will produce change in skills. The text and chapters are not sequentially organized; chapters lack enough detail to stand on their own. An example of this is the chapter on gross motor activities. The possible impact and relationship to ocular motor skills is drawn, but falls short in helping the reader understand how gross motor activities will enhance ocular motor or visual perception skills. The chapter ends by focusing on tips for a successful gross motor activity program by encouraging the use of mental imagery.
which appears out of context with the topic. The author presents his chapters as if he was providing a lecture and often refers back to how he approaches specific topics.

The illustrations are rather basic black and white line drawings and formatted text; many of the exercises can be easily replicated on a computer and provide examples of what might be put together for specific clients. It was disappointing to find that, given the number of areas that occupational therapists evaluate in visual perception, only visual memory, and reversals are areas presented in the text. Specifics on visual discrimination, form constancy, figure ground, spatial relations, and visual closure were not addressed. In addition, the difference between two-dimensional visual perception and three-dimensional visual perception skills is not addressed. There is more information provided on the ocular motor areas than visual perception, but even so there is no theoretical base provided for developing one’s approach or treatment plans in these areas. The author’s approach to developing treatment plans might be summed up in his own words: “In order to have a successful therapy program, you need to provide the child with a flood of sensory motor experiences.” The text lacks information on how to identify over-stimulation or misdirected treatment, rather focuses on the misguided premise of providing a full barrage of stimulation in all areas will make a change for the better. The material does not have the scope and depth to serve as a theoretical resource. The purported number of activities falls short of the expectations that would make it a useful workbook. The author does provide a short glossary of terms at the end of the text, but it is little more than a page in length and wasn’t that helpful. The index is accurate and can help locate specific points if needed. Unless you have no other references on ocular motor and visual perception, the $39.95 might not be worth the investment.

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The ability to understand and implement an activity analysis is a cornerstone of our professional education. Through activity analyses, occupational therapists are able to determine the strengths and limitations of an individual's occupational performance which forms the scaffold for future intervention. As a result, it is imperative that students and occupational therapists have a solid understanding of how to construct and implement an activity analysis.

In this book, the authors have expanded upon their previous work in this area to create a text that is detailed yet easy to follow in its approach. Most importantly, to link their book to current practice, the authors have implemented concepts and definitions from the recently published Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2002). As far as I am aware, this is a unique approach not found in other books on this topic.

After a brief review of the history of the profession up to and including the current paradigm of occupation, the authors discuss what is meant by the terms occupation, activity and function. Students tend to have trouble understanding these concepts and teachers will most likely need to expand beyond what is in the text but the discussion is a good starting point. The authors also include an account of the evolution from Uniform Terminology III to the Practice Framework. Accompanying figures in the text describe several aspects of the Framework including the various (and often confusing) categories of occupational performance with relevant descriptions. The figures are easy to follow and serve as a useful way to conceptualize the overall scope of the Framework.

The authors describe five aspects comprising the activity analysis: Activity awareness, Action identification, Activity analysis for expected performance, Activity analysis for therapeutic intervention, and Client intervention plan. Detailed forms containing language drawn from the Practice Framework serve as templates for the analysis. These templates are very detailed and are extremely helpful in structuring the analysis. The forms are also available through a companion web site where they can be downloaded with a password.

The chapters are easy to follow and well-organized. The authors use information from two common activities (making a phone call and making cookies from a recipe) to illustrate specifically how their templates
could be used. After each chapter, there are several pages for notes. The epilogue contains related references from the literature dating from prior to 1996 to 2003. The appendices include position papers from AOTA as well as the first edition of Uniform Terminology. This information is useful for those wanting an understanding of the factors that have played a role leading to the use of the current Practice Framework.

Because the book is clearly written and specifically spells out the components of an activity analysis, I believe it to be a very useful addition to the occupational therapy literature and well worth the listed price. The fact that the authors have chosen to link the language of their templates to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework enhances its usefulness for current practice.

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