
The authors state in the preface that their intent is to produce a book that will explore the medical aspects of handicapping conditions in depth and in such manner as to make this a useful text for both parents and professionals. The main body of the book contains chapters on a variety of topics ranging from genetics to epilepsy. Case studies are included in several chapters and there is also a section on cardiopulmonary resuscitation and one on ethical considerations in the treatment of handicapped children. The book is very well organized and is easy to read. It contains within the appendices such amenities as a glossary, a list of syndromes, a directory of resources for handicapped children, immunization schedules, and even a metric conversion chart. However, there are many more topics than the average parent of a child with a specific handicap would care to explore, and the topics are not covered in sufficient depth to be useful to the clinician. This book might serve its most useful purpose as a text or resource for nonmedical personnel (special education teachers, social workers) dealing with handicapped children.

Jaclyn Low, M.A., OTR

Environmental Accessibility and Independent Living Outcomes: Directions for Disability Policy and Research, Gerben DeJong, Ph.D., University Center for International Rehabilitation, College of Education, 513 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, 198 pp (1981), $8.00.

Many disabled persons desire a more independent lifestyle. They are joined by special interest groups in voicing this need more strongly each year. Independence, however, can be costly to the disabled and to the society at large. There is a growing debate focused on "How much for the handicapped?"—as phrased by a national television network. Author Gerben DeJong makes this question the target of his research by first determining where the problems exist on the road to independent living.

To determine the factors that predict a disabled person's ability to live independently, a study of 111 individuals with spinal cord injuries was conducted. A multiple regression analysis was used. Four areas were studied: Socio-demographic data (age, sex, and education), disability-related variables (severity and duration of the disability), environmental factors (attendant care needs, transportation, and economic disincentives), and what DeJong calls "interface" variables (devices that bridge the gap between the disabled person and his or her environment, i.e., orthotic and adaptive equipment).

The author has a comprehensive view of factors that influence independent living. He proposes some ideas that will be of particular interest to occupational therapists. One of his central themes is that hospital patients are forced to assume, by the very nature of hospitalization, a passive, dependent role, and "the longer a person's hospitalization, the more likely is he/she subjected to the patient role and the more likely to be at risk of acquiring dependency behaviors." He advocates directing the patient into the mainstream of society as quickly as possible, even at the risk of forsaking relatively minor aspects of independence. He carries the subject beyond statistics and looks at independent living as a state of mind.

However, if readers are looking for practical considerations, such as details on ramp construction or the desired height of work surfaces, they may be disappointed in this book. It is less a practical guide book than it is a sociological study.

Numerous charts and diagrams illustrate the text, and a thorough bibliography cites related literature. Extensive footnotes provide background information regarding previous studies and Congressional legislation. These aids, in conjunction with the thematic significance of the book, make it an interesting and informative text for therapists in the field of physical rehabilitation.

Mary Beth Hoffman, OTR