FDR’s Splendid Deception
*Dodd, Mead & Company, 79 Madison Avenue, New York, NY.*
250 pp., $16.95.

Although there are many biographies on Franklin Delano Roosevelt, this one may be read for more than just its historical perspective on this man. The book focuses on Roosevelt’s paralysis and his management of it. It describes the elaborate measures that were taken to minimize Roosevelt’s disability in the public eye. Indeed, during his presidency, many people in the United States were not aware of his disability, and most people did not realize its severity.

As part of the coverage of FDR, the author traces the development of concepts of rehabilitation that Roosevelt in a sense introduced to the medical community. His rehabilitation efforts at Warm Springs made hydrotherapy an acceptable practice for strengthening weakened muscles. Muscle testing charts were developed for the center by FDR himself. Most important, the center at Warm Springs approached rehabilitation in a totally different way than was the custom at the time—it surrounded the patient with a pleasant setting and allowed him the dignity of self-determination. Rehabilitation up until that time (and sadly still in some settings) fostered the dependence of the patient on doctors, nurses, and therapists, and society kept people with disabilities well hidden.

This is an excellent book for providing a perspective on rehabilitation and the societal changes that have occurred since FDR’s time.

Linda M. Martin

Principles of Neural Science
979 pp., $47.50.

This 979-page book is a resource of the neural sciences, including physiology, anatomy, physics, biology, and chemistry. The text is divided into 11 sections with three appendices, and there is an outline at the beginning of each chapter. Good illustrations accentuate the readings and references, and additional readings are included at the end of the chapters. Most of the information is up-to-date.

The first section covers brain and nerve cell function and anatomy. Sections 2 and 3 discuss the cell and molecular biology, physiology, and biochemistry of the neuron. Information on myasthenia gravis and disease and injury of the motor neuron, peripheral nerves, and muscles is provided and may be of interest to occupational therapists.

Sections 4 and 5 discuss the functional anatomy of the central nervous system and the sensory system of the brain, including sensory psychophysical studies correlating behavior with the physiology of neurons. Section 5 also includes basic and in-depth information on the neurophysiology of the auditory, visual, visual-motor, olfactory, and tactile systems.

The integration of sensory and motor systems is discussed in section 7. These chapters and references may be useful to occupational therapists interested in sensory integration.

Sections 8, 9, and 10 could be of particular interest to occupational therapists. The clinical and electroencephalogram features of seizures are presented. Section 9 also includes a chapter on the diagnosis of schizophrenia and on drug treatment for people with schizophrenia. Possible etiologies of affective diseases are explored. Section 10 discusses neonatal development and aging of the brain and proposes a hypothesis for molecular mechanisms of aging. Dementia and Alzheimer’s disease are mentioned with possible neurological and chemical causes of the disease.

Part 11 explores the genetic determinants of behavior and learning. These chapters discuss the neurological pathways used for learning. Memory and classical and operant conditioning are also included in this section.

There are three appendices entitled “Brain Fluids and Their Disorders,” “Neurophthalmology,” and “The Flow of Ionic and Capacitive Current in Nerve Cells.” The first appendix includes a section entitled “Stroke: Diagnostic, Anatomical, and Physiological Considerations,” which may interest occupational therapists. The other appendices provide in-depth discussions.

This text presents a comprehensive view of neuroscience and is an excellent reference book for an occupational therapist interested in this topic. The book was designed for the medical student, but other medical professionals could benefit from reading it. Occupational therapists working in psychiatry, developmental disabilities, and physical disabilities will find the book to be interesting; however, they may not need such a comprehensive text.

Cindy Ezdon