

BOOK REVIEW

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Title: Manual Mobilization of the Joints, Vol. III. Traction-Manipulation of the Extremities and Spine: Basic Thrust Techniques

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Focus of Book / Intentions: The stated purpose of this text is to present a safe and effective alternative to rotational manipulative techniques deemed high-risk by the authors.

Intended Audience: Although primarily intended for entry-level physical therapy students, the book targets as its audience any student of joint manipulation.

Description (chapter / format): The book is divided into five chapters and an appendix. After a 1-page review of terminology relevant to traction-manipulation techniques, chapter 1 discusses further relevant terminology, the role of the “audible pop” with manipulation, and the four goals of evaluation. Chapter 2 discusses details related to the clinical application of traction-manipulation techniques including endfeel, actual resting position, line of drive, quickness, amplitude, grade, timing, force, treatment progression, and post-manipulative care. Chapter 3 provides traction-manipulation techniques for all peripheral joints, whereas chapter 4 and the 2-page chapter 5 discuss spinal and temporomandibular techniques. The appendix provides an historical perspective on the use of manipulation within medicine and physical therapy.

Strengths: The book is concise yet comprehensive and provides superbly illustrated and described techniques for virtually every joint in the body. The historical description is strengthened by the fact that the main author played a major role in said history giving the reader, as it were, a front-row seat. The appendix also provides insights in the early history of physical therapy as of 1813 that is not common knowledge in English-language countries. Based on his vast clinical and teaching experience, the main author provides in an unassuming but eloquent way a description of the qualitative aspects of diagnosis and management within orthopaedic manual therapy that in my opinion is unparalleled in the literature and reflects what we as orthopaedic manual therapists feel but may have not been able to put into words.

Limitations: This is not a research-based text. References are limited to historical references and the techniques are not presented with supporting outcome research. The author did not include techniques for the sacroiliac joint, as he deems these techniques beyond the entry-level. Some of the techniques were new to me and may present a challenge for the entry-level student. No evidence is presented to support the authors’

claim that the techniques presented are indeed safer than the rotator techniques. In all fairness, this text was not intended as an evidence-based text but rather as an experience-based presentation of techniques and concepts.

Summary: This book could easily serve as the main text for a manipulation course in the entry-level physical therapy curriculum but the insights shared in this book by the author who is arguably the “father of orthopaedic manual physical therapy” will be of interest to entry-level and experienced clinicians alike.