



Eye Power: A Cutting Edge Report on Vision Therapy

Ann M. Hoopes, Stanley A. Appelbaum, OD, FCOVD. BookSurge Publishing, 2009, \$18.99, 180 pages), ISBN 978-1-4392-2179-2

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The original edition of *Eye Power* was published in 1979 by Alfred A. Knopf, and authored by Ann and Townsend Hoopes. The Foreword was written by three optometrists, Stanley Appelbaum, Albert Shankman and John Streff. One of them, Dr Appelbaum, has teamed up with Ann Hoopes to write a timely new edition of this fine work.

The method of publication of this book is somewhat unconventional, as it is available only through the internet at www.amazon.com, or a dedicated website, www.EyePowerBook.com. The dedicated website is a nice portal that links to good information sources, including a link to the COVD website.

The style and format of the updated version of *Eye Power* is considerably different from the original volume. There is so much to like about this cutting edge report that I'll put forth my only criticism of the book up front. The 1979 edition contained an entire chapter on diet and exercise. These lifestyle factors have become increasingly important in the ensuing years, yet the expanded volume makes scant mention of these topics.

It is almost worth that tradeoff to see their upbeat approach to other important topics that have taken center stage in developmental vision. In contrast with the comparatively dry, journalistic format of the 1979 edition, the 2009 version of *Eye Power* brings excitement and enthusiasm to its varied topics which include ADHD, Autism, Head Injury and Sports Vision.

When addressing general points about vision therapy, the authors use principles that are easy to grasp yet credible. For example, they advise readers to think of vision therapy as "*physical or occupational*

therapy for the eyes and brain". When addressing specific points such as the application of lenses and prisms to children on the autistic spectrum, the authors liberally refer readers to recent works such as the books by Dr. Melvin Kaplan and Patricia Lemer on the subject. ADHD is updated by implications from the CITT studies, and ABI is covered through application of post-trauma syndrome factors. The recent story of Stereo Sue as an adult VT patient transitions seamlessly into the experiences that Ann relates as a vision therapy patient, found in the original volume.

Each chapter follows a similar stylistic format, with short paragraphs punctuated by "The Doctor Says" callout boxes. These visual sound bites encapsulate important features for the lay reader, and make it easy to skim the material as needed. The points made in each chapter are nicely illustrated by clinical vignettes from Dr. Appelbaum's practice.

An end chapter whets the reader's appetite with sample procedures that can be done at home. One of the challenges in writing a book aimed toward the public is to avoid oversimplifying the complexity of vision therapy. The authors address this head on with the following disclaimer in chapter 10:

"Remember, that not much happens if you do vision therapy without a doctor's guidance. Vision therapy is not just eye exercise ... the doctor and therapist will help you learn to monitor your own visual process."

Ms. Hoopes and Dr. Appelbaum close the book on a hopeful note. While vision therapy is not yet available widely enough to serve all those who need it, they anticipate that public demand will increase. Who can argue with their logic? Following time-tested rules of health care economics, increased demand for vision therapy services should drive the supply of providers. The authors express earnest hope that their book will play a constructive part in bringing awareness of vision therapy and its benefits to the public. I believe that it already has, and the authors are to be congratulated for it.

