instance, Karen Nelson D'Agostino provides useful information about security in computer labs, a widespread problem when computers are becoming smaller and more portable; and Gordon Thomas provides suggestions about ventilation (with a room full of computers spewing hot air and students sweating out their essays, computer classrooms can easily become quite stuffy); and Carolyn Handa provides helpful information such as thoughts on software choice (discovering how the faculty at American River College decided on which software to select for their computer classrooms should provide insights for readers beginning to wrestle with the same decisions). So even essays that appear on the surface to deal with information that is too site-specific to be useful, even essays that appear to concentrate on classroom layout too much, can provide help for those educators who need some practical tips.

One last note. One of the aspects addressed peripherally by several authors is the ideal classroom (Trent Batson, Gail Hawisher and Michael Pemberton, and Lisa Gerrard). The majority opinion seems to be for a classroom of smaller computers that are not so intrusive as the usual models that can isolate students from their peers by sheer bulk. The most arresting idea, to me, was to have a classroom of terminal connections for notebook computers, which students would carry with them—a requirement for all students, just as textbooks are now.

Several problems exist with this collection of essays. But, in the long run, the benefits far outweigh the detriments. Although much of the book can be repetitious and at points even tedious, there are both whole essays and nuggets within essays that will prove valuable for those readers who want practical help establishing computer classrooms or labs at their own schools.

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Visual Processes in Reading and Reading Disabilities is an edited volume that brings together in one comprehensive resource the most recent research related to the role of visual processing in normal reading and in reading disabilities. Chapters explore aspects of visual processing deficits that affect reading and writing abilities, the history of visual processing research in the field of reading, the ways that normal readers
acquire reading skills, and future directions for research. Although the subject is specific and complex, Visual Processes is a logical complement to journals and texts that discuss broader topics related to receptive and expressive language development.

As disconcerting as it will be to some readers that the chapters vary in quality of research as well as style of writing, the reader will be rewarded by the breadth of topics covered by the book. Subjects are as varied as text processing on monitors, artists who have dyslexia, the relation of reversal errors to reading disabilities, and optometric factors that affect the visual processing of information. The final chapter of the book, "Directions for Research and Theory," may be the first chapter that a researcher or practitioner should read since it presents a brief overview of the preceding chapters as well as posing questions related to future research.

Visual Processes is not a comforting book; it asks many more questions than it answers. However, the book's lengthy bibliographies will lead the inquiring instructor to related readings and to more cogent questions. Which is precisely why it is a "must-read" not only for specialists but also for practitioners in all teaching fields. The persons who have the most contact with students should be posing questions for clinicians to explore. Instructors in all fields must generate the right questions related to the acquisition of reading and writing skills in order that more productive research will evolve.

Instructors in every field now have a greater need to understand the roles of specific learning processes in the acquisition and expression of knowledge. Schools and colleges are attempting to develop more literate graduates by incorporating strategies for ensuring that students read and write more frequently across all curriculum areas. Reading and writing experiences have become more integrated in recent years under the umbrella of Whole Language instruction, and one critical component of Whole Language is the processing of visual information in reading and writing. Visual Processes assists the reader in understanding the complex neurophysiological mechanisms related to reading and enlightens the reader as to the latest information concerning such diverse facets as visual discomforts and ergonomic aspects of reading.

Since the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act, classrooms at all levels of education, including postsecondary, are becoming more inclusive. Inclusive classrooms provide unique opportunities for instructors to observe able readers and students with print disabilities working side-by-side. As instructors recognize the diverse reading and writing abilities of students, information presented in Visual Processes in Reading and Reading Disabilities will enhance collaborative learning efforts.
of instructors and students as well as providing insight into those issues that should be explored in future research.

For specialists in fields such as reading, linguistics, psychology, special education, and communication disorders, the questions posed in this book are not new; however, the comprehensive reviews of research provide new frameworks for understanding complex concepts related to the visual processing of able readers and of those who struggle with print disabilities. Latest research efforts are included in some chapters while others summarize the historical progress of the field. Even the works of the most venerable researchers are open to investigation, and no expert is so distinguished as to escape being scrutinized. The editors of Visual Processes are not striving to be politically correct in approaching the research and theory related to the field; instead, they have chosen to include authors who confidently approach a controversial subject. This book makes a significant contribution to the literature by reporting the extensive research of psychologists, educators and optometrists during the past twenty-five years.

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As an enthusiastic reader of John Irving’s novels, I approached Edward C. Reilly’s commentary Understanding John Irving not only with eagerness but also with a certain degree of suspicion. I determined that my unpredicted reserve was, indeed, a reaction to two of the most basic aspects of the book, its length and its title. Aware of Irving’s commitment to the writing of long novels—an assertion attributed to the influence of nineteenth-century British novelists—I was skeptical that Reilly, in a mere 157 pages, could adequately discuss all seven of Irving’s novels. Underlying my skepticism was my increasing discomfort with the title of the study, a title that seemed to suggest that, perhaps, I was one of many readers who had already “misunderstood” Irving. My defenses went up.

But my suspicions proved unfounded. The brevity of Reilly’s commentary and the conspicuously simple title are justified in the Editor’s Preface as Matthew J. Bruccoli names Understanding John Irving as part of the introductory series titled Understanding Contemporary American Literature. The books included in this series are designed to encourage the reading of contemporary literature, to acknowledge the changes occurring