



Jacob Lawrence (African American, 1917–2000). *The Long Stretch*. 1949. Egg tempera on hardboard. © 2009 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation, Seattle / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo Credit: The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation / Art Resource, NY.

In the glare of sun or the unreal light of the stadium at night, a baseball player legs out a ground ball, stretching to beat the throw to first base. Runner, infielder, and umpire are straining almost beyond the limits of their physical being. Lawrence painted this work in the same year that Jackie Robinson—who ended nearly 60 years of segregation in professional baseball—won a Most Valuable Player award. In the striving of muscle and tendon, Lawrence is celebrating Robinson's success but also may be noting the Civil Rights struggle still to come.

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Editorial

- 626 PT 2009 Notes, PTJ Welcomes and Thanks

Research Reports

- 632 **Manual Therapy, Exercise, and Traction for Patients With Cervical Radiculopathy: A Randomized Clinical Trial** / Ian A. Young, Lori A. Michener, Joshua A. Cleland, Arnold J. Aguilera, Alison R. Snyder
- 643 **Short-term Effects of High-Intensity Laser Therapy Versus Ultrasound Therapy in the Treatment of People With Subacromial Impingement Syndrome: A Randomized Clinical Trial** / Andrea Santamato, Vincenzo Solfrizzi, Francesco Panza, Giovanna Tondi, Vincenza Frisardi, Brian G. Leggin, Maurizio Ranieri, Pietro Fiore
- 653 **Measurement of Paretic–Lower-Extremity Loading and Weight Transfer After Stroke** / Vicki Stemmons Mercer, Janet Kues Freburger, Shuo-Hsiu Chang, Jama L. Purser
- 665 **Elastic, Viscous, and Mass Load Effects on Poststroke Muscle Recruitment and Co-contraction During Reaching: A Pilot Study** / Tina M. Stoeckmann, Katherine J. Sullivan, Robert A. Scheidt
- 679 **Treadmill Testing of Children Who Have Spina Bifida and Are Ambulatory: Does Peak Oxygen Uptake Reflect Maximum Oxygen Uptake?** / Janke Frederike de Groot, Tim Takken, Sanna de Graaff, Rob H.J.M. Gooskens, Paul J.M. Helders, Luc Vanhees

Case Report

- 688 **Quantitative Measurement of Poststroke Spasticity and Response to Treatment With Botulinum Toxin: A 2-Patient Case Report** / Elizabeth Cousins, Anthony B. Ward, Christine Roffe, Lesley D. Rilmington, Anand D. Pandyan



Perspectives

- 698 **A Guide to Interpretation of Studies Investigating Subgroups of Responders to Physical Therapy Interventions** / Mark Hancock, Robert D. Herbert, Christopher G. Maher
- 705 **Assessment of Physical Functioning: A Conceptual Model Encompassing Environmental Factors and Individual Compensation Strategies** / Kristin M. Tomey, MaryFran R. Sowers



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The following articles have been published ahead of print at PTJ Online:

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- Screening for Fear of Work and Physical Activities** / Dennis L. Hart, et al
- Medical and Psychosocial Factors Associated With Low Back Pain and Musculoskeletal Pain** / Martin Friedrich, et al
- Comparison of Maximum-Tolerated Muscle Torques Produced by 2 Pulse Durations** / Wayne B. Scott, et al
- Cost Analysis in Physical Therapy** / Laura E. Peterson, et al
- Assessment of Upper-Extremity Function After Stroke** / Jau-Hong Lin, et al
- Physical Therapists' Attitudes, Knowledge, and Practice Approaches Regarding Obesity** / Suzanne Sack, et al

Departments

- 628 **The Bottom Line**
- 715 **Scholarships, Fellowships, and Grants**
News from the Foundation for Physical Therapy
- 719 **Product News**
- 720 **Ad Index**

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