

## **Book Review of February 26, 2003**

*The Pilates Body* by Brooke Siler, Broadway Books, New York, 2000

This book is the best I have seen on Pilates. It begins by describing briefly but clearly the physical and mental principles that Pilates felt to underlie his method. (Although Pilates misunderstood some aspects of human physiology, and was not aware of certain aspects of learning theory that had not yet been developed, he nevertheless intuitively developed the optimal method for conditioning the body.) The book then thoroughly describes and illustrates each of the exercises that constitute the mat work, and leads the reader through the mat routine. Although Pilates also developed exercise sequences to be done on various pieces of equipment that he designed, routines that can be learned only with an instructor, mat work alone can be very useful. The author carefully points out what not to do, in order to avoid injury; and provides visual images to assist in properly positioning the body. This is a book for initial Speedreading, so that your Inner Guide can determine whether Pilates would be useful for you. If it is, you can then use it at normal reading speed as a guide to performing the exercises.

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