

as an example the False Creek area in Vancouver, British Columbia. Along the way, Lange provides historical background to almost every subtopic, featuring important pioneers and game changers such as Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Friedrich Froebel, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

To her credit, Lange recognizes that design should not be something imposed on children to satisfy adult assumptions about what children need. She situates children at the center of her focus and features designs of all sorts that enable children to learn best when they follow their own interests. I especially appreciate how she weaves the concept of independence from her subtitle into the analysis, paying attention to how children learn from their own experimentation, including taking risks, by creating and using their own devices.

Lange realizes, of course, that many of the design benefits she describes, especially in housing and schools, are beyond the reach of low- and moderate-income families, and it is unlikely that private markets and urban governments will invest in the reformed spaces she most appreciates. But it still is inspiring to have in front of us the kind of thorough and imaginative thinking that Lange presents.

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—Howard Chudacoff, *Brown University, Providence, RI*

**Lifelong Kindergarten:  
Cultivating Creativity through  
Projects, Passion, Peers, and Play**  
*Mitchel Resnick*

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2017. Foreword, further readings and resources, acknowledgments, index. 208 pp. \$34.95 cloth. ISBN: 9780262037297

In this book Mitchel Resnick, LEGO Papert Professor at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), leads readers through his career in designing and studying learning experiences with youth. *Lifelong Kindergarten* is structured around the themes of projects, passion, peers, and play as they relate to the cultivation of creativity. He presents the creative learning kindergartners exude as a spiral that follows the acts of imagining, creating, playing, sharing, and reflecting. The ultimate message in *Lifelong Kindergarten* is that creative thinking can be carried into aspects of our lives as learners beyond that playful, joyful, but all-too-brief kindergarten school year.

Resnick parses out guidance in a digestible and relaxed manner. *Lifelong Kindergarten* is a smooth tome, and although he invokes scholars along the way, it is by no means a distant or excessively academic text. Instead, Resnick tells readers stories from his experience at MIT building Scratch, the Computer Clubhouse, and his work with LEGO Mindstorms. Each chapter ends with an interview by Resnick of a young scholar who continues to engage with the online Scratch community or the Computer Clubhouse in that scholar's working life. This balances firsthand accounts from Resnick and is in alignment with the idea that knowledge surrounding creative thinking and play is collaborative. He outlines specific calls to action for his audience in the form of ten tips for parents, teachers, and designers. This is a

pragmatic read for administrators, politicians, instructors, community members, and those concerned with the spirit of learning.

Resnick does not shy from sharing conflicting viewpoints concerning his work—for example, when he tells a story regarding the MIT Media Lab's Junior Summit in 1998. He explains how one esteemed faculty member called it the worst idea he had ever heard, because when kids are connected online they are at risk of sharing bad ideas and spreading misconceptions. This pushback is relevant today given twenty years of hindsight on digital interactions and modern echo chambers, and Resnick uses it to illustrate the importance of designing experiences that use experts to help when students need mentorship and encouragement. He suggests adults be catalysts, consultants, connectors, and collaborators when guiding youth. The concept of community is baked into every tale of tension Resnick shares. Placing skeptics along the path of *Lifelong Kindergarten* does not feel disrespectful to their stances but shows how critical community feedback can lead to improvement in practice.

Discord occurs again when Resnick's approach to lifelong learning meets high-stakes testing scenarios that have no time for the leisurely activity of playing with plastic or virtual blocks. He recounts a demonstration of creative thinking by a LEGO Mindstorms Robotics team from Singapore, where high Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores reign triumphant. Resnick was impressed by the young team's ability to reprogram bots creatively on the fly, but their instructor argued robotics must

remain completely extracurricular. There would be no time to play with LEGO Mindstorms in the classroom with exams on the line.

Some educational organizations claim to value innovation and creative thinking as twenty-first-century survival skills, yet power structures and budgets continue to lean on test scores as a measurement of success. The intangible aspects of creative play and the joy of learning in kindergarten are barely quantifiable, so how can the systems we have in place assess their worth? It often seems that creative thinking lives in service to performance in these paradigms. Do we have a shared understanding of how creative thinking should look as a twenty-first-century skill? Of course not, as Resnick is well aware. His story from Singapore serves as a lesson to administrators who might miss the point of creative thinking. I worry the concept might be interpreted to serve as a metric of success instead of an inherently playful part of learning.

Resnick shares his hope that youth are not following the rote assembly instructions for LEGO sets and placing models on display shelves only when completed to perfection. He uses Marina Bers' metaphor of playpens and playgrounds to describe the dissimilar ways children might play with LEGO bricks. The structured play of following written directions (playpen) does not foster the same creative thinking that occurs when kids are free to build their own inventions with the bricks (playground). One wonders what internal research the company has conducted about how children play with their sets, and if some kinds of play are more fiscally viable than others. I wanted to hear

from Resnick a deeper critique of the evolution of LEGO products and the choices behind development of the gendered LEGO Friends and abandonment of LEGO Creators. But ultimately this is a book about projects, passion, peers, and play, not the roots of corporate decision making. This was the one section that left me wanting more from *Lifelong Kindergarten*.

Although Resnick name-drops distinguished learning and play scholars like Henry Jenkins, Yasmin Kafai, Sherry Turkle, and Seymour Papert along the way, his text is approachable and makes an easy read for a wide variety of audiences. One does not need to be steeped in the literature to grasp the meaning he translates from the works of these authors. Some of his mentions involve crediting ideas (like Howard Wolf and Dennie Gardener's concept of children as patterners or dramatists in play) back to the source, but more often Resnick is telling personal stories here. His rich history of collaboration and interaction with luminaries in the field are presented as a friendly resource, and they are the kind of anecdotes that might never make it into a peer-reviewed journal article. Our work as researchers of creative play means little if it is not distributed to the practitioners that determine what play looks like for youth. It is a relief Resnick can afford the time to write this book and share it with a broader community of teachers, parents, educators, and learners. *Lifelong Kindergarten* accomplishes the mission of disseminating knowledge on creative thinking. How we as mentors decide to use it is another matter.

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—M. Kristana Textor, *University of Rochester, Rochester, NY*

### **Aggression in Play Therapy: A Neurobiological Approach for Integrating Intensity**

*Lisa Dion*

New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2018. Foreword, introduction, final thoughts, acknowledgments, references, and index. 218 pp., \$25.95, cloth. ISBN: 9780393713190

A small volume and easy to read, Lisa Dion's book is packed with clinical wisdom. Written primarily for play therapists, it is of interest to scholars of play, child-development and mental-health practitioners, and early-childhood educators. The author has built on the groundbreaking work of Bonnie Badenoch (who wrote the foreword to the book) to provide play therapists with a clear and highly understandable rationale for integrating interpersonal neurobiology into their work in the playroom. Theresa Kestly's *The Interpersonal Neurobiology of Play: Brain-Building Interventions for Emotional Well-Being* (2014) also deserves mention for its contributions on the literature about the interpersonal neurobiology of play.

The book places considerable emphasis on regulating the nervous system of the child as well as the therapist in the play session. If a parent is included in the session, the therapist takes responsibility for regulating the nervous system of all three. Dion offers specific suggestions for moderating the hyperarousal typically seen in youngsters who act out aggressively in play sessions, but she also offers ideas about how to handle the other end of the spectrum when children manifest hypoarousal. A strength of this book is the author's ability to drill down to the practical level to