

and the positive impact risk has on the physical and emotional well-being of children. The ability to provide environments in which children are able to select their own levels of risk proves an essential skill for playworkers. Chapter 7 expands on this idea with a discussion of children's emotional relationship to space and the kinds of spaces they create within their immediate environment when left on their own—and the implications of these for playworkers. The book concludes with a discussion about the internal conflict experienced by many individuals from other professions when playwork practices do not coincide with their personal beliefs concerning the role of adults in children's play.

*Reflective Playwork* has numerous strengths, most notably the authors' own reflections, which bring to life the many challenges playworkers face. These stories are the glue that binds everything together. For readers unfamiliar with playwork, chapter 5 is an excellent introduction to the actual practice of playwork. However, as Newstead and colleagues wrote in their 2015 essay "The Past, Present, and Future of Playwork Training," contemporary playwork literature tends to focus more on what play is and on the importance of play rather than on "the nature and purpose of playwork and the importance of playwork on its own terms," and this book, too, devotes far more pages to the importance of play and theories of play from other disciplines. It pays less attention to the nature of playwork practice derived from playwork theory and empirical evidence from actual playworkers. Chapter 8, fortunately, does offer areas for research into the practice of playwork to strengthen the professional knowledge base within the playwork field.

*Reflective Playwork* is a wonderful resource for anyone who works with children in play-based settings (or settings that should incorporate play), especially those not formally trained in playwork. The concepts are readily accessible and applicable. Furthermore, playwork instructors can mine the book for content and the reflective gems seeded by the authors to initiate discussions that focus directly on playwork practice.

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### **Play-Based Interventions for Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

*Loretta Gallo-Lopez and Lawrence C. Rubin eds.*

New York: 2017 Foreword, preface, acknowledgements, about the editors, about the contributors, and index. 369 pp. \$58.95, paper. ISBN: 9781138110885

This anthology's seventeen chapters provides an introduction to the various interventions for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), interventions which are either play based or involve creative expression. The various authors, all experts in their areas of intervention, include professionals from a wide range of disciplines such as marriage and family therapy, school and mental health counseling, pediatric psychology, social work, and expressive arts. The book is organized into four sections—"Foundations," "Individualized Play-Based Interventions," "Programmatic Play-Based Intervention," and

“Expressive/Creative Interventions.” Section 1 includes two chapters that explore the neurology of play and the specific issues for individuals with ASD and play. Section 2 includes nine chapters that cover a diverse group of intervention methods including therplay, canine-assisted play therapy, LEGO-based play therapy, developmental play therapy, and filial therapy. The programs discussed in three chapters of the third section are DIR Floortime, the PLAY project and the ACT project. The final section of artistic and expressive therapies consists of chapters about art, music, and dance therapy.

Each chapter, although written to stand alone, contains common themes. First, there is an important emphasis throughout the book on the strengths-based approach to ASD and the philosophy of accepting children with autism as they are. Second, many of the interventions have a developmental focus and are implemented by children. Third, all the authors attempt to provide the evidence—where evidence exists—behind each approach. However, because of its 2012 hardcover publication, much of the evidence reported is now dated.

The editors state their intent to create a resource “with useful integration of theory and practice” (p. xv). The individual authors accomplish this exceedingly well through the consistent use of excellent case examples. These cases, though stylistically different from the chapters, allow the reader to consider the similarities and differences in the application of the interventions with clients.

At the time of its publication, the book was the only text of its type and original in its scope and purpose. Even

now many years later, there exist very few books that focus on play-based interventions for children with ASD. Given the increasing interest in play in this population, as documented in recent research on the topic, this book arguably still makes an important and useful contribution.

One strength (but in some ways also a weakness) of the text is its comprehensiveness. Broad and lengthy coverage of a topic can lead to difficult editorial decisions regarding both content and organization. It is unclear what criteria the editors used for inclusion and exclusion of specific interventions. One could question whether all readers would categorize clearly all the interventions included as “play based.” Some interventions are used widely while others seem more obscure. Throughout the book the sensory processing issues of children with ASD are mentioned, yet no chapter discusses the play-based approach of Ayres’ Sensory Integration, a commonly used intervention with this population. Although the individual chapters are well written and clear, the classification of chapters assigned to the four sections seems loose. (For example, there are chapters both in section 2 and 4 that address drama therapy.) These issues of organization do not necessarily hinder the reader who may select only certain chapters to read. Some of the introductory portions of many chapters are redundant since different authors discuss ASD prevalence or symptomatology at the outset of each. An additional introductory chapter might have addressed this issue.

This text is appropriate for students and practitioners in a variety of mental health disciplines who wish to explore potential interventions for those with

ASD. The chapters are merely introductory, however, because of the breadth of content included and the advanced training required to implement many of the approaches. It is important for the potential reader to note that this is not a book about how to improve play for children with ASD. It is a book that describes interventions that are playful or play based and used primarily to improve other areas of functioning such as social interaction, relationships, communication, attachment and bonding. However, for its purpose as an overview of the many current play-based approaches for individuals with ASD, the book provides a sufficient summary of each, an indication of the type of evidence available for each strategy, and excellent case examples that help the reader understand the similarities and differences among the methods.

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### **Locally Played: Real-World Games for Stronger Places and Communities**

*Benjamin Stokes*

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020.

Foreword, acknowledgments, notes, bibliography, and index. 269 pp. \$45.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780262043489

*Locally Played: Real-World Games for Stronger Places and Communities* by Benjamin Stokes introduces local community games as a distinct game type that involves real-world involvement and helps strengthen communities. As the author

writes, “This book is about reclaiming the local roots of play and aligning them with the digital practices and channels that are increasingly central to modern life” (p. 5). He aims to use this distinction to separate local games from other kinds of games and also to bridge the gap between practitioners and scholars. Using several case studies and a multidisciplinary lens, Stokes creates a holistic and socially minded method to design, analyze, optimize, and implement local games. He also offers a framework to define local games and differentiate them from other games happening in local spaces.

In the first chapter, “Introduction: A New Opportunity,” Stokes introduces his definition of a local game, discusses the necessity of multidisciplinary design considerations, and outlines the framework of chapters to come. Following the introduction, the book is segmented into two parts: part 1 (chapters 2 and 3), which focuses on a local game case study and an introduction to Stokes’s framework for local games and fit; and part 2 (chapters 4 through 8), which explores further case studies and offers several major design and social impact considerations when crafting local games. Chapter 2, “Social Exchange: *Macon Money*,” introduces readers to the game *Macon Money* (2010), a local game that took place in Macon, Georgia. Stokes uses this chapter to explain *Macon Money*’s structural design and illustrates how and why it was built around existing communities. The game was designed with the hope of bridging the socioeconomic divide in Macon, and Stokes discusses how the game and its mechanics reinforced this goal. In chapter 3, “Local Fit: A Framework for Stronger Communities,” Stokes