

far in helping us “fall in love with teaching again” (p. ix).

—Patricia M. (“Patsy”) Cooper, *Queens College, CUNY, New York, NY*

**Essential Play Therapy
Techniques: Time-Tested
Approaches**

Charles E. Schaefer and Donna Cangelosi
New York, NY: The Guilford Press. 2016.
Acknowledgments, references, and
index. 280 pp. \$35.00 paper.
ISBN: 9781462524495

Play therapists understand that children communicate best through play and, in effect, use toys as their words to express their confusion and pain as well as their joy. Play therapists not only use this form of communication with children to help them heal, but they also teach other important people in a child’s life to communicate with the child in this special way. In this spirit, Schaefer and Cangelosi provide readers with a user friendly guide of fifty-eight different techniques with countless variations that can be applied while playing with children. The book is very well organized with interventions coming from seven broad categories that include techniques involving specific toys, metaphors, role playing, creative arts, fantasy, and games.

Although some of the techniques in this impressive collection could be employed by nontherapeutic adults in a child’s life, most would work better with the help of a play therapist. For instance, it is easy to instruct a child in the Draw a

Family technique simply by following suggestions in the book. However, the authors also explain that one can find meaning in the distance between family members, their relative size, and the order in which they are drawn. Adults not trained in play therapy might misinterpret this meaning and respond defensively, which can harm the relationship and communication between adult and child.

At the same time, Schaefer and Cangelosi suggest techniques to enlist the aid of others, such as parents. Externalization Play describes the advantages of “putting something outside its original borders, especially to put a human function outside the human body” (p. 72). When a child perceives the problem as an inherent part of the self, it is much more difficult to make changes. Yet by using the narrative technique of externalization, a child can perceive the problem as separate from his or herself and even join forces with parents and other supportive adults to overcome behavioral problems. In one variation, the authors discuss forming a piece of clay into a monster figure to represent the scary element of a child’s nightmare, which makes a child’s fears concrete and more manageable. Play therapists can use their own creativity to design additional variations such as having a child create his or her own anger out of clay. A child could then engage in play with the clay figure, taking care of it, and perhaps allowing the representation of anger to help tell the child, parents, and therapist what it needs to feel calmer.

A variety of play therapists will appreciate that the authors interweave many popular theoretical orientations through the techniques, including cogni-

tive behavior, Theraplay, psychoanalyses, humanism, solution focus, and more. For instance, in a section focusing on Toy Telephone Play, prompts such as “pretend to call your stomach (or other body part) and ask why it is hurting” ring strongly of gestalt, although those like “pretend to call the wise person inside of you for advice” can be processed using multiple theoretical orientations (p. 26).

An authority in the field of play therapy, Schaefer is the cofounder and director emeritus of the Association for Play Therapy. He and Cangelosi are both prolific authors and have private practices through which they provide psychotherapy services to children and families. Practitioners will benefit greatly from the authors’ personal expertise gained through decades of play therapy practice. They introduce each technique with a rationale that highlights specific benefits for the child. The descriptions include not just instructions but information about age appropriateness and the materials required. The authors lay out several variations of techniques that often include both individual and group applications. Some chapters feature a case illustration that helps therapists better conceptualize a technique. The authors also recommend client populations that might especially benefit from a technique and, when appropriate, suggest which kinds of clients may not benefit. Finally, for a profession that values evidence-based treatment approaches, each section includes supporting research.

The authors highlight simple, cost-effective, and time-tested techniques. Although some of those they offer are hundreds of years old, Schaefer and Cangelosi’s streamlined organization, clarity

of writing, attention to a variety of client populations, and creativity offers a fresh new look and makes this a must-buy resource for play therapy students and practitioners alike.

—Page L. Thanasiu, *Stetson University, DeLand, FL*

Koji Kondo’s “Super Mario Bros.” Soundtrack

Andrew Schartmann

New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015. Foreword, preface, acknowledgments, introduction, and notes. 208 pp. \$10.75 paper. ISBN: 978162898532

Sound Play: Video Games and the Musical Imagination

William Cheng

New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. Acknowledgments, foreword, notes, and index. 262 pp. \$26.95 paper. ISBN: 9780199969968

Game audio has always been an integral part of game play, first attracting players to place their quarters into the coin slots of early arcade games and later not only providing important game play feedback but also creating immersive environments for gaming at home. We have, however, begun the serious academic study of game audio only during the last decade or so. Andrew Schartmann’s and William Cheng’s new books make varied and welcome entries into this burgeoning field.

Andrew Schartmann, currently finishing a doctorate in music theory at Yale