

Play to Progress: Lead Your Child to Success Using the Power of Sensory Play

Allie Ticktin

New York, NY: 2021. Introduction, a final word, appendix: Allie's favorite things, acknowledgments, notes, index, and about the author. 243 pp. \$17.00, paperback. ISBN: 9780593538487

In *Play to Progress*, Allie Ticktin, an occupational therapist, invites parents into an exploration of the sensory aspects of play activities and how sensory play can be used to help a child's development. Ticktin focuses on personal and clinical anecdotes. Her choice of accessible and nontechnical language makes the content approachable, ensuring that the book serves its primary audience effectively.

One of the book's notable strengths lies in its ability to offer practical advice to parents navigating play choices for their children. It highlights different sensory modalities in separate chapters and integrates actionable tips and play activities that parents can use in their interactions with their children. Its strength further manifests in its highly readable nature, which ensures an ease of comprehension. Another distinctive feature is its reliance on numerous anecdotes—both personal and clinical. These anecdotes add a relatable dimension to the content and read as though Ticktin is speaking directly to the reader as a parent.

While *Play to Progress* exhibits commendable strengths, there are areas that could be refined to optimize its overall impact. Its exclusive focus on sensory play may inadvertently overlook the broader nature of play. Expanding the discus-

sion to encompass various facets of play would provide readers with a more holistic understanding of child development and would enrich the presentation of how sensory play fits into a broader context. Furthermore, the intentional use of non-technical language helps make the subject accessible to an audience of parents, but it may leave some readers yearning for a more intricate exploration, one including more references and research to substantiate its recommendations. Although the inclusion of anecdotes enhances the book's relatability, a more comprehensive representation of sociodemographic backgrounds would widen its inclusivity, rendering the book applicable to a broader range of parent and family experiences.

In the landscape of literature addressing the sensory elements related to child development, *Play to Progress* aligns closely with other prominent works. Like its counterparts, the book excels at delivering practical strategies and parent-family language—and in offering real-life examples. However, *Play to Progress* also shares the genre's common limitations of reducing the perspective to sensory aspects to the exclusion of a more comprehensive or integrated analysis of the subject. Furthermore, like its peers, the book could benefit from a more robust integration of research to underpin its recommendations. In essence, *Play to Progress* finds its place within the broader spectrum of play literature, where its strengths resonate with established patterns and its limitations align with the common challenges faced by books in this genre.

In short, *Play to Progress* by Allie Ticktin stands as a valuable resource for parents seeking insights into the sensory

dimensions of play and its impact on child development. Ticktin's adept use of accessible language and reliance on relatable anecdotes contribute to the book's effectiveness in reaching its intended audience. The emphasis on practical advice and sensory modalities offers significant value, yet its exclusive focus on sensory play represents a potential limitation. To optimize its impact, the book could benefit from a more comprehensive exploration, deeper research, and better sociodemographics. *Play to Progress* succeeds as an engaging guide that fosters a connection with parents while offering practical strategies, thus affirming its relevance within the evolving landscape of literature addressing sensory elements in child development.

—Christopher J. Alterio, *Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY*

An American Icon in Puerto Rico: Barbie, Girlhood, and Colonialism at Play

Emily R. Aguiló-Pérez

New York: Berghahn, 2022. Preface, acknowledgements, introduction, conclusion, references, index. 181 pp. \$24.95, paper. ISBN: 9781805391111

An American Icon in Puerto Rico: Barbie, Girlhood, and Colonialism at Play is published as volume 4 in a series about Transnational Girlhoods, which includes monographs on topics of relevance for an international readership, with particular interest in interdisciplinary perspectives. The book is written by Emily Aguiló-Pérez, who is Assistant Professor

of English at West Chester University of Pennsylvania and who has previously published work about children's literature. For this volume, she draws on various approaches to research, including interviews with women and girls who played with Barbie dolls as children and a review of archival materials. The author adds an autoethnographic element by considering her own childhood play as a Puerto Rican who grew up with a connection to both the continental United States and the island.

Over the course of five chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion, the book presents a nuanced and well-informed discussion of Barbie as a transnational object, a toy that is designed according to specific guidelines and marketed to a global customer base of mostly girls. Each chapter of the book discusses a specific aspect pertaining to Barbie: chapter 1 centers on the connection between "Girlhood, Dolls, and Barbie;" chapter 2 considers "The Politics of Barbie in Puerto Rico;" chapter 3, titled "Fashioning a Self," traces the doll's connections to embodiment and feminine identities; chapter 4, titled "Accessing Barbie," engages with issues of class, wealth, and race; and finally, chapter 5 is titled "All in the Family" and inquires into Barbie's place in family dynamics.

The early sections of the book offer a conceptual foundation, presenting a review of current literature about children's play and the social and historical construction of girlhood. The book considers Black and Brown girlhoods in particular, discussing the way that they have been discursively juxtaposed to notions of idealized white femininity. This discussion draws on the work of foundational feminist writers such as Simone de Beau-