

of access visits to have been given more than three lines.

Petropulos seems to presume at times, that parents reading her book have a strong predisposition to critical, pejorative and condemnatory behavior toward their child. She unfortunately falls into the position of telling parents what is right and wrong on a number of issues. She tends to state her opinions very strongly in certain areas and does not necessarily attempt to remain impartial. She is very evangelical about breast-feeding, and fails to give sufficient acknowledgement to mothers who may feel more comfortable bottle-feeding and who, on this basis, may be best able to provide a satisfying experience for themselves and their baby. In presenting her bias so strongly, Petropulos offers little assistance and reassurance to mothers who may fail in their attempts to breast-feed.

Frequent references are made throughout the book to various drugs used to treat medical conditions, with generally little or no attempt to explain the workings of these drugs in either lay or medical language. Petropulos would do better to provide a more comprehensive description of problems with recommendations and encouragement to parents to explore treatment options with their General Practitioner, rather than include very incomplete and explained suggestions regarding treatment with medication.

The lay-out of this book leaves a lot to be desired. The frequent variation in print type is confusing for the reader, and the organisation of subject matter under relevant headings is poor and lacking in appropriate sequence.

This book was originally published in Australia in 1983 and again in 1987. However, Petropulos appears to have made little or no attempt to update her original information. She fails to mention car safety capsules for young infants which have been in production for at least a couple of years. The use of aspirin for infants and children has been strongly recommended against in recent years, due to a serious possible side effect. The use of a contraceptive injection (Depo-Provera) has also been recommended against in recent years. Ample press coverage has been given regarding this information, yet Petropulos has failed to update information in this area. There has been a failure also to update certain parts of the organisations and addresses section, for example, Children's Protection Society, Victoria, was dissolved well before 1987. In the information and referral guide, no mention is made of reputable private organisations and professional bodies specialising in certain aspects and difficulties of childhood and parenthood.

My general impression of this book is that although it contains some useful practical

suggestions to parents, it has too many gaps to be regarded as a sufficiently comprehensive guide for parents. The author appears to lack sufficient depth of knowledge of child and parent development to enable her to present a book with at least as much, if not more to offer than existing well known books written for contemporary parents.

*Reviewed by:*

*Jacqueline Alder, B.A., Dip.Soc.Studs.*

*Social Worker, Child and Adult  
Psychotherapist in private practice.*

*Windsor, Victoria 3181.*

#### **Bibliography**

Leach, P., *Baby and Child – From Birth to Age Five*, New Edition, Penguin, England, 1981.

Jolly, H., *Book of Child Care – the complete guide for today's parents*, Revised Edition, Sphere Books, England, 1977.

#### **TOYS TO MAKE – OVER 60 SIMPLE, EDUCATIONAL TOYS FOR BABIES AND PRE-SCHOOLERS**

**Susan Esdaile and Angela Sanderson**  
**Viking O'Neil Penguin Books, Australia,**  
**1987.**

**135pp. PB: \$12.95**

"Toys to Make" was produced by two women whose combined personal and professional experiences in parenting and child and family services give this book a very solid grounding.

The stated aim of the book is "to enhance child development and the enjoyment of parenting and child care through participation in the creative process of toy making". The authors begin with the notion that keeping pace with a child's development can be an expensive process. It does in fact appear that the emphasis in the media on the importance of educational toys designed to stimulate children's learning has sent many parents racing to the toy store for the latest Fischer-Price gear, only to be let down in later days by both the bankcard statement and their child's apparent disinterest in the toy. What has been lacking is a concurrent emphasis on the reasons for which specific toys can be educational and the ways in which parents can and should become actively involved in the play process with their children.

"Toys to Make" goes some way to redressing this imbalance. Many parents will be comforted by this book's philosophy that "when making toys for your child you don't need to make an "educational" toy. Try to be just as concerned with *why* a child likes a particular toy . . . it will only stimulate learning if the child likes it and finds it fun to play with".

The book is divided into seven chapters on different types of toys to make: Babies playthings, toys from recycled materials, dolls, soft toys, puppets, sound and percussion toys. Each toy making activity is set out with a brief description of the possible uses, the material needed and illustrated step by step instructions. The book concludes with a section on play, covering developmental stages from birth to five, ideas for active play, ideas for outside play, ideas for play around the house and ideas for quiet play. There are also some useful comments on organising Toy Making workshops.

While many of the toys are indeed simple and inexpensive to make, many people have commented that there are an equal number which are in fact quite difficult, requiring much motivation, skill and in some instances, expensive equipment to achieve the desired outcome. Our chief concern with this book was that, while offering a great source of knowledge for people living or working with young children, its presentation and style are such that it will probably only reach and interest those who already know a great deal about children. We would love to see the authors extend their work to cater for families who may be experiencing difficulties in raising their children, who may be unskilled or unmotivated and who are in great need of encouragement and education about the importance of play. The emphasis needs to be on very simple, very inexpensive toys and ways to enjoy them together with their children. It is crucial that material such as this be geared toward these families and ideally used in small workshop settings. While this is beyond the mandate of this particular book, it is a challenging area which deserves the benefit of the knowledge and experience which have gone into "Toys to Make".

*Jenni McIntosh, Patricia Gratton,  
Alys Keys Family Care,  
Melbourne.*

#### **FAMILIES IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA**

**Edited by:**

**Patricia Grimshaw, Chris McConville  
and Ellen McEwen.**

**George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985,**  
**227pp. PB: \$12.95**

Although the study of variations in the structure and experience of families has long been central to sociology, only in the last two decades have historians paid serious attention to these issues. The growth of the 'new social history' in Europe, Britain and North America was triggered in part by the explosion of quantitative demographic analysis made possible by computers, but also by radical historians' interest in those neglected by traditional historiography, the poor, ethnic minorities and women. *Families in Colonial*