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Gadzikowski's "Creating a Beautiful Mess" (Book Review)

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The book explores the hallmarks of good conversation, cultural conversational differences, and partnering in conversation. The book provides forms and ideas to improve in these areas, along with transcripts of sample conversations from actual studies.

Subsequent chapters cover “encouraging instructional peer conversations;” “planning instructional peer conversations;” and “monitoring the progress of instructional peer conversations.” The book also contains an appendix with six reproducible tools.

Curenton’s writing is clear and the sections and subsections have labels that help one parse the information for ease of understanding. Key ideas are presented in the margins to help reader’s quickly review information.

This book advocates getting the students involved in conversations to improve communication and reasoning abilities. Curenton advocates guiding conversations along “academic reasoning paths” through visualizing aspects of conversation (p. 53). The questions and ideas promote attaining learning objectives from this new look at an ancient paradigm. Helpful, this book is recommended for those that work with ESOL and early childhood education. Our chair of the teacher education program gave it a “thumbs up.”

Creating a Beautiful Mess,

by Ann Gadzikowski. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2015.

156 pp. \$15.95. ISBN 9781605543864

*Reviewed by Addison M. Lucchi, Library Assistant,
MidAmerica Nazarene University, Olathe, KS*

Ann Gadzikowski has over twenty-five years of experience working as an early childhood educator – and her knowledge on the topic is evident in this well written and fascinating book, which provides excellent information on the value of play in a child’s life. This book demonstrates how raising a child is not solely about parents giving them right or wrong answers – but also about cultivating joy in their child.

In *Creating a Beautiful Mess*, the author invites readers into a fond reminiscence of their own childhoods, in order to evoke memories of their own joyful play experiences. While some aspects of play may have changed from when we were children, Gadzikowski remarks that “the essential play experiences are timeless” (p. 2). The main substance of the book consists of detailed chapters on each of ten

essential play experiences that will promote a joyful childhood. Each section is filled with numerous examples of possibilities and helpful tips for parents to aid them in incorporating each unique play experience into the lives of their children.

While this book is primarily targeted at parents, it is also a fascinating read for anyone interested in early childhood education or curious about the benefits of play. A thorough list of references is also provided as an appendix.

Creating Leaders: An Examination of Academic and Research Library Leadership Institutes,

edited by Irene M.H. Herold. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2015. 358 pp. \$78.00. ISBN 9780838987636

*Reviewed by Rory Patterson, Associate Dean, Planning, Administration, and Operations,
Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA*

There are multitudes of books on leadership, even leadership in libraries. Herold focuses this work on leadership institutes for academic and research librarians, and in doing so provides a scholarly text both reviewing leadership institutes and sharing leadership methods. Herold's introduction provides the structure of each chapter; the author or authors provide the contents of the curriculum for the institute they participated in, a review of the literature on that institute, and a personal assessment of what it meant for them and what could be improved. This structure offers both the traditional library case study and an evidence-based review based on personal experience and literature.

One can read this book several ways, but it is laid out for three paths. One can read it straight through and relish its excellent review of the covered leadership institutes and methods. Herold's findings and conclusions (chapters 19 and 20) make purchasing this book worthwhile by providing excellent summaries of the content provided and evidences that the institutes succeed in creating leaders. This also allows one to find the four chapters (Herold's three and one other) that include CC-BY 4.0 licenses, a rarity in books.

One can also read it by where one is in one's career, using Table 1 on pages six and seven. Finally, one can read it by the section of the book for the type of library one works in (specific types of libraries, ARL and large research libraries, multi-type libraries, and not just libraries). This final method would allow Christian academic librarians to focus on such programs as American Theological Library Association's Creating the Leaders of Tomorrow Program. This book is recommended for purchase.