

# Setting out the patterns

*Musical Development and Learning: The International Perspective*

DAVID J. HARGREAVES & ADRIAN C. NORTH (EDS)

LONDON: CONTINUUM; 2001; Hb £60.00 (ISBN 0 826 451 13 6)

REVIEWED BY Alexandra Lamont

**T**HIS edited volume follows the trend towards a more grounded sociocultural approach in psychology by bringing together a range of cross-cultural perspectives on music education in its broadest sense (including classroom music at school and instrumental training). The

book covers 15 different nations or regions: Africa, Australia, China, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, North America, Poland, Portugal, post-USSR countries, Scandinavia, South America and the UK. The authors, themselves mostly active music educators, address the state of music education in these regions.

The book provides fascinating insights into the diverse ways that music education opportunities and entitlements are structured around the world. Each chapter addresses educational aims and objectives, curricula and teaching methods, and issues relating to students in different ways. However, the presentation of different cultural examples does not suffice for a truly sociocultural approach to understanding human behaviour. Many authors present the challenges of their particular forms of music education as unique, yet there are numerous similarities (such as the low-status nature of general music education). The final editors' chapter goes some way in drawing out both commonalities and differences, but the responsibility is placed on the reader to make connections and integrate the material.

Some authors include research relating to musical development or attitudes towards music in their regions (notably Korea, North America, Poland, and the UK), but the primary focus on music education systems means that this book does not fully address its aim of informing readers how children learn or learn about music. Psychological research now needs to explore these differences in school systems and curricula worldwide, to examine the effects these can have on children's musical development and learning. Nonetheless, this volume provides a valuable starting-point for such an endeavour by setting out the patterns of musical opportunity that exist around the world.

■ Alexandra Lamont is a lecturer in psychology of music at Keele University.

## How to sound knowledgeable about psychotherapy

*Theory and Practice of Counselling and Therapy* (3rd edition)

RICHARD NELSON-JONES

LONDON AND NEW YORK: CONTINUUM; 2001

Pb £19.99 (ISBN 0 826 45193 4)

REVIEWED BY Lynne Spencer

**P**SYCHOTHERAPY and counselling have many approaches and schools of thoughts – this is the book for you if (a) you would like to know more about these disparate methodologies, (b) you are a student about to do an essay on counselling, or (c) you are thinking of becoming qualified yourself.

*Theory and Practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy* is a very thorough introduction to the whole subject – a knowledge of which is useful if not essential in the health, occupational, family and personal development sectors, as well as in many other caring professions. Richard Nelson-Jones (presumably from his base in Thailand where he is a founder of one of the bodies of counselling covered in the book!) has produced a revised third edition, updating this standard text in all areas and providing more on Jung's analytical therapy; cultural, gender and evaluation issues; journals; and training contacts. It really is a necessary addition to the bookshelves of all those involved in any kind of counselling activity.

Although rather weighty, it is curiously readable and concise because of the structure. It uniformly describes each body of thinking, its theories, philosophies and methodologies in a self-contained chapter, thus making it digestible, interesting and objective.

Painstakingly researched and commended by the representatives of the various methodologies, the book is authoritative and clear, including useful aids to revision and further reading. There is an eclectic but thorough range of approaches covered. The new chapters are particularly (as one would expect) current and thought-provoking.

This may not be a summer poolside blockbuster but it should perhaps be remembered for all those new year resolutions (before we forget about them entirely) about broadening one's learning, reading more, or sounding more knowledgeable when confused with a psychotherapist at parties.

■ Lynne Spencer is an independent consultant and occupational psychologist.

# A useful addition

## *Violent Offenders: Appraising and Managing Risk*

VERNON L. QUINSEY, GRANT T. HARRIS, MARNIE E. RICE

& CATHERINE A. CORMIER

WASHINGTON, DC: AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION;  
1998; Hb £36.50 (ISBN 1 557 98495 6)

REVIEWED BY **David Crighton**

**T**HIS text represents a timely and useful addition to the growing literature on risk assessment and management. The authors focus on one topical area in which risk assessment is of particular social and political significance – violent criminal offending.

By addressing a narrowly defined area of risk assessment and management, the authors are able to give detailed coverage of recent research. Also included are reviews of arson and sexual offending, which are defined within the broad range of violent offending.

The authors are rightly critical of the current state of play in this area. Whilst risk assessment and management in disciplines such as engineering and some areas of medicine (for example radiology) have made impressive strides, applied psychologists have to date made disappointing progress.

Having reviewed some of the historical difficulties with assessing the risk of violent crime, the authors go on to advocate an approach that has been effective elsewhere. This involves the use of a logical framework and empirically validated measures of risk. The authors also cast a refreshingly critical eye over the role of 'experts' in assessing risk and providing 'treatments' to reduce the risk of future violence. They suggest that performance in

both respects has historically been poor and that the most promising psychological interventions are at least as effective when delivered by non-psychologists.

More critically, the text does have a very strong North American bias, with research from the rest of the world being given scant coverage. The stress on the use of particular psychometric tests also seemed at times rather overstated in view of the paucity of good-quality research studies. The authors do set out some selected arguments against purely actuarial approaches to risk assessment and quickly proceed to knock these down these straw arguments. Disappointingly, recent research demonstrating that 'experts' can attain high levels of accuracy by using structured approaches to risk assessment is not covered. In taking a rather partisan approach the authors run the risk of over-egging the pudding in their advocacy of purely actuarial approaches.

Overall though, this book provides an interesting and thought-provoking read. It will make a useful addition to the bookshelves of psychologists, lawyers and criminologists with an interest in the area of criminal violence.

■ *Dr David Crighton is with the Area Forensic Psychology Service (Kent, Surrey & Sussex).*

## Surviving torture

### *At the Side of Torture Survivors: Treating a Terrible Assault on Human Dignity*

SEPP GRAESSNER, NORBERT GURRIS & CHRISTIAN PROSS (Eds)

BALTIMORE, MD: THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS; 2001; Hb £31.50 (ISBN 0 801 86627 8)

REVIEWED BY **Jane L. Ireland**

**W**RITTEN by specialists at the Berlin Center for the Treatment of Torture Victims, this book outlines the experiences, both positive and negative, of those directly involved in the treatment of survivors.

A strength of the book lies in the range of areas that the editors have chosen to include, and the sensitive way in which the authors approach what must be a difficult area to discuss. There are some harrowing case studies of torture victims presented, but these are described with sensitivity, resulting in a book that is both informative, touching and undoubtedly useful to those involved in such work.

■ *Dr Jane L. Ireland is with Psychological Services, Ashworth Hospital, and the Department of Psychology, University of Central Lancashire, Preston.*

## Searching for validity

### *Single-Case and Small-n Experimental Designs: A Practical Guide to Randomization Tests*

JOHN B. TODMAN & PAT DUGARD

MAHWAH, NJ: LAWRENCE ERLBAUM; 2001;  
Hb £47.95 (ISBN: 0 8058 3554 7)

REVIEWED BY **Chris Dracup**

**T**HIS text is aimed at those who are interested in the valid conduct and analysis of single-case and small-*n* research. It introduces the most common designs and provides software for the analysis of these on Minitab, Excel and SPSS. I think that practitioners will find the text approachable and informative. I particularly enjoyed the authors' criticism of visual data analysis. I was less happy with their claim that a significant result allows us to infer that 'the difference was probably caused by the independent variable', particularly in the light of doubts about the power of the methods. Well worth reading!

■ *Dr Chris Dracup is with the Division of Psychology, University of Northumbria.*