

African American population. Folklorists and ethnologists will read with interest, and probably a yearning for more detail, descriptions of the “clear-cut difference the style of play and delivery” between whites and blacks despite their sharing similar texts (p. 161). In the collection by Soileau there is less differentiation into developmental stages and the sociopsychological analysis that usually accompanies such life-course approaches.

*What the Children Said* is a good reminder that folklore is a contemporary form of play that performs various important social and expressive functions for children. One might assume that it has been displaced by technology, but she shows that at least in various oral and social genres, folklore is active in children’s lives, even if kept secret. It deserves attention and the material in this book—although its presentational format and functional interpretation appear dated, or even lacking—can best serve to raise questions for deeper dives into the complex, diverse societies of the early stages of human development and the situations in which children express themselves.

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**Growing Sideways in Twenty-First Century British Culture: Challenging Boundaries between Childhood and Adulthood**

*Anne Malewski*

Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2021. List of figures, list of abbreviations, acknowledgments,

introduction, references, index.  
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*Growing Sideways in Twenty-first Century British Culture* is a comprehensive, thoroughly researched monograph into identifying, contextualizing, and investigating alternative ideas of growth. The author investigates flux in the boundaries between human childhood and adulthood, in a contemporary society that perpetuates the idea of human growth as a grand narrative that privileges adulthood. It is not only a grand narrative that devalues youth and misses other ways of being, it also devalues and misses other ways of growing. The author concludes that the grand narrative of growth privileges adulthood by picturing contemporary society that embraces the ideal of childhood as a state that can (and must) be discarded in order to attain the state of adulthood. The very wide range of sources used to support the discussions about growing sideways are well considered and explored meticulously, offering engaging critical analysis of the ideas that pluralize constructions of childhood and adulthood. The author states that her study is interested in a particular, contemporary socio-cultural moment and in a variety of cultural forms. The book then goes on to delve deeply and intelligently into these ideas by examining practices around appearance, play, and space that provide alternatives to conventional ideas of growing up and by establishing that growing sideways is an emerging alternative structure of feeling.

At the heart of this monograph lies the discourse of adulthood intruding on childhood that emerges alongside a discourse of

childhood intruding on adulthood. Discussions include instances of blurring age boundaries, provide examples of growing sideways as an alternative way of growing and being, and disassociates the idea from rigid age categories—all suggesting that growing sideways is as valid as growing up. The monograph explores whether power structures around gender affect possibilities of both upwards and sideways growth. Focusing on children's literature, television series, films, and participatory events, the author provides new models for understanding and navigating growth, exploring how strategies for sideways growth might operate. Sideways growth, she suggests, is a broad cultural phenomenon, traced through alternative cultural practices, altering affective and other meanings of bodies, clothes, behaviors, attitudes, and spaces.

Sideways growth is a broad cultural phenomenon, and this research contributes to linking other research on age and children, while endeavoring to expand age studies to concerns other than gerontology. By deconstructing the idea of a grand narrative of the dichotomy between childhood and adulthood, growing sideways, then, evokes improvised, rather than rule-governed growth. Through an exploration of power structures around age and gender, the alternative of growing sideways as a distinct alternative discourse about human growth provides a fresh perspective for supporting young people mostly unfamiliar with the idea. This monograph effectively destabilizes the boundaries between childhood and adulthood by examining a range of social and political phenomena and a variety of cultural forms. The author maintains that this monograph could be considered

“a toolkit for identifying, contextualizing and investigating alternative ideas of growth” (p. 196). With a strong theoretical approach and a thoroughness of investigation, the book clearly meets, if not exceeds, its intent. Anyone researching sideways growth or who supports children and youth comfortably negotiating the process of growing up will find this monograph informative and useful.

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### **The Infinite Playground: A Player's Guide to the Imagination**

*Bernard De Koven with  
Holly Gramazio; Celia Pearce and Eric  
Zimmerman, eds.*

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2020.  
Foreword, introduction, what-if-ing,  
a lack of conclusion, further reading,  
contributors. 186 pp. \$29.95 paperback.  
ISBN: 9780262044073

*The Infinite Playground* proposes that playful thinking and collective imagining can have a transformative impact on the world. Bernard De Koven taught, designed, and preserved play for over fifty years. His seminal work, *The Well-Played Game* (1978, 2013) continues to inspire students and designers with its focus on designing for the play community. *The Infinite Playground* continues his interest in play and community by examining how collective play and imagination can transform the world into a space of possibility.

The volume aims to aid “people in the fields of game design, film, multimedia,