



Bibliography – Parenting annotated

This annotated bibliography is for parents and psychologists (21st September 2012)

Allport, Susan (1997) A Natural History of Parenting New York, Harmony Books.
210 pages

Well researched by a journalist to offer very interesting descriptions of parenting across many species. She makes some tenuous connections that make intuitive and logical sense but, I suspect, I have no scientific evidence behind them.

Bentovin, A., Cox, A., Miller, L. & Pizzey, S. (2009) Safeguarding Children Living with Trauma and Family Violence London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
324 pages

Not exactly parenting in the usual sense of the word, but is a well-researched and presented book that examines reasonably new theoretical models of dysfunctional or pathological parenting. Book is relevant to psychologists working in welfare and family court. Whether or not the definition of pathological parenting accurately implies an outline of healthy parenting is debatable i.e. healthy and unhealthy parenting may not be on the same continuum but may crossover from a healthy humanist dimension to a forensic dimension.

I'll be interesting to see the outcome of more research in this nascent field.

Berk, Laura, E. (2007) Child Development New York, HarcourtBrace. 400 pages

Text for many Uni courses i.e. early child hood education, psychology etc. Not a text on parenting *per se*, but has many topics that are parent topics i.e. milestones, moral development, cognitive development, perception and so on.

Excellent text, but too tough for most parents to wade through. Good as a reference book for psychologist working with families. Fortunately they bring out a new edition every few years and so the market is flooded with reasonably priced second hand editions at reasonable prices.

Brown, Stuart. (2010) Play New York, Penguin. 207 pages

Written by Brown (doctor and psychiatrist) with ghost writer Christopher Vaughan.

Not specifically a parenting text but celebrates, and claims scientific evidence for, both the enrichment and therapeutic benefits of play. His argument is intuitively persuasive (if only that it aligns with Bowlby's attachment theory), but there is no scientific evidence within the book. The back cover reads "a fascinating blend of cutting edge science and inspiring personal histories, this book proves why play just might be the most important work we ever do." Maybe, but nonetheless a very good read and generally relevant if you are consulting parents and the children. I would be interested in him writing a follow-up text more in line with the rigour of Kazdin's *Parent Management Training* or Christopherson's *Parenting That Works*.

Brown gives the reader some very lyrical writing about play. Below he is describing his dog's love of play and the dog's response when he stops his car at a friend's ranch.



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“I open the door for Jake and he freezes, every sense a quiver. He instantly takes in the whole scene: a bright August day, four acres of pasture, a dozen horses, my cousin Al, his for kids, and two dogs. A light breeze rustles leaves, wafting scents of hay and horses across the Utah ranch. Doggy heaven. In ½ second Jake is flying out the door, a blonde blur the zipping towards the pasture.”

You can imagine your self there with him. Lots of great stories about the benefits of play for us all, but children especially.

Cheetham, John, S. (2008) Grow up! Melbourne, Wilkns Farago. 145 pages

Is a very practical book written by an Australian psychologist. Seems to bridge the gap between practical, down to earth advice from a fellow parent, and the scientific basis for topics included in his book. Science nor psychology are not overtly discussed, but the psychologist reader can see principles of operant and classical conditioning and social learning theory that underpin his advice.

Takes the interesting approach that parents should stop seeing themselves as parents and be an adult, but only pursues this intermittently throughout the course of the book.

Nonetheless, a good read and good value for money.

Chou, Amy (2011) Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother New York, Penguin Press.

You may have heard the much divided opinion on this book. Amy Chou is first generation Chinese American, a high achiever (well, very high achiever) and she will accept no less for her children. There is no doubt that she has achieved remarkable results with her two daughters, both academically and in their music (her teenage daughters have played with symphony orchestras at New York's Carnegie Hall, and they are straight 'A' students). No-one could say her daughter (or she, or her husband) have poor self-discipline.

However, the tactics she uses would probably draw the attention of the authorities in Australia. She got remarkable results pestering (or even bullying?) her daughters, but does the end justify the means? The 'end' is very impressive: some of the stories in her book she tells are of enormous conflict for her to get her way and generate excellent academic and arts outcomes, yet she has shown great dedication to her children.

Given the current debate in Australia about our public education system (spend billions more dollars in recent years but student outcomes are going backwards by international standards, especially in comparison with Asian students in Asian countries) she book is, at least, food for thought. If she could harness a process to get those outcomes i.e. instil that self-discipline and goal orientation, without the very conflicted relationships and outright aggression she would be seen in a better light and may have a lot more to offer other parents, or schools.

Christophersen, Edward, G. & Mortweet, Susan, L. (2003) Parenting That Works. Washington, American Psychological Association. 323 pages

Very impressive text in four parts:



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1. Building effective parenting skills;
2. Special parenting topics;
3. Building your child's skills;
4. Special child topics.

Written by scientists for parents. Interestingly, they do not refer to Bowlby's attachment theory. Excellent index and bibliographies. Can be dry in parts and many parents would struggle to read through the more technical aspects. For psych's, very impressive information and a good resource.

Cloud, H. & Townsend, J (1998) Boundaries with Kids Michigan, Zondervan.
215 pages

Sensible, down to earth book, aimed at parents, that delivers the basic concept that our beliefs about what is right and wrong create boundaries between what is acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour.

Presents beliefs, boundaries and consequences from a religious perspective (Christianity) and so the book would be most useful to religious families. However, for secular parents it still contains some valuable resources and ideas.

This book was so popular he has subsequently wrote over 25 other books about boundaries e.g. Boundaries in Marriage, Boundaries in Dating both hard copy, audio and Workbook.

Kazdin, Alan, E. (2005) Parent Management Training Oxford University Press, Oxford.
372 pages

Book is subtitled 'treatment for oppositional, aggressive, and antisocial behaviour in children and adolescents.'

Well laid out, written by a scientist for parents in language that is easily understood by most parents. However, the parent not trained in psychology would have trouble getting to the end of the 300+ pages and then make good use of the contents of the book.

Specifically refers to underlying principles and concepts and outlines the transition from principles to techniques – very impressive.

Excellent Index, Bibliography and References. He breaks some parts of the book into the format of a series of consultation sessions i.e. first session, and second session. Pace is probably unrealistic for most parents.

Probably the best evidence based text for managing antisocial and aggressive behaviour.

One deficit is that the text does not address non pathological family functioning and behaviour i.e. 'normal' family functioning.

Dinkmeyer, D., McKay, G, & Dinkmeyer, D. (1997) The Parent' Handbook STEP
130 pages



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Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) have their own publishing house, the location of which is just referred to as 'America', rather than a city. Hence, their books cannot be referenced accurately according to the Harvard Referencing system, but that didn't stop four million American parents buying this book (according to the background information about STEP and the book).

Well worth the read. They have some interesting explanations as to the purpose of power struggles and consequences. They refer to structure and routine, consequences, ownership of problems, exploring alternatives choices, some parent's skills such as listening and encouragement, plus other topics.

They make reference to irrational beliefs, but are largely non-scientific, but nonetheless impressive information, tools and tips for the parent reader.

Salmon, Catherine A. & Shackelford, Toff K. (2007) Family Relationships: An Evolutionary Perspective. New York, OUP 350 pages

Very interesting discussion of the provocative *parental investment* hypothesis, or natural selection applied to how parents allocate finite resources to children. Easy to see how evolution applies to parenting in the harsh animal world, but has disturbing implications when applied to human parenting. Fascinating, but unsettling.

Pearce, C. (2009) A Short Introduction to Attachment and Attachment Disorder. London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 100 pages

Excellent overview of Attachment Theory and practice, but very expensive for the 100 pages.

Sluckin, Wladyslaw & Herbert, Martin (Eds.) (1986) Parental Behaviour New York, Basil Blackwell. 360 pages

Published in 1986 and much has occurred in the study of the families and parents since then, but still an interesting read. Offers interesting and easy to read overview of parenting behaviours in birds, carnivores, non-human primates as well as role of father in human family, maternal pathology and approaches to the study of parenting.

Phelan, Thomas, W. (2003) 1-2-3 Magic Parent Magic, Glen Ellyn 200 pages

Subtitled 'Effective discipline and four children aged 2 to 12'.

Phelan is a clinical psychologist (USA), and has defined and described a simple method known to most grandparents: the caregiver counts to three and, if the child is still demonstrating unwanted behaviour by three, they are penalised.

The cover indicates he has sold $\frac{3}{4}$ million copies of the book. Very simple idea conveyed extremely well and is effective: I have informed many parents about this method and have an information sheet with my adaptations on his method. Misbehaving children dislike 1-2-3-intensely.



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McGowan, Dale (Editor) (2007) Parenting Beyond Belief. New York, AMACOM. 280 pages

Very interesting book about how our personal beliefs and parenting practices used to be based on the tenets of our religion (when many more people were religious and went to church every week). He poses the question ‘How do we parent when we do not have religious or spiritual beliefs to rely on [and guide us]?’ . Although he does not say it, it also implies ‘how has parenting changed since many modern parents do not rely on the teaching of their religions to guide their parenting?’

He walks the reader through some very interesting topics i.e. moral development (also covered very well in Berk, 2007), such as the difference between religious commandments (such as Christianity’s ten commandments) and parents’ principles, plus secular virtues and building a secular community (quite a challenge). Historically, until mass transportation such as car and train travel was available, many communities were built around the village church or the town’s different churches. Transport and atheism have brought about major changes which impact on parents and parenting, and so on children.

An easy read and quite thought provoking without being sensational or anti religion which is found in the writings of some atheists i.e. Prof Dawkins. McGowan’s writers give broad suggestions and numerous discussions rather than specific practical advice in the way many other authors do i.e. Dinkmeyer. Many parents are looking for more practical advice.

Pentley, Janet, P. (2006) Mother Styles. Cambridge, Da Capo Press. 245 pages

Janet Pentley is a mother who conducts parenting workshops in Texas (USA). She has collaborated with a professional writer to produce Mother Styles. She links the Myers Briggs Type Indicator’s sixteen personality ‘types’ to mother styles. The MBTI is a non-clinical psychometric test and so is useful in human resources, personal development and enrichment. Interesting attempt but lacks rigour.

There is no scientific explanation as to how, or why, certain MBTI types are the mothering styles she indicates. It seems her method to categorise parenting styles is intuitive. For example the extroverted, Intuitive, thinking and Judging (ENTJ) is described as the Executive Mother.

I have found that many people almost have a need to categorise, probably because it gives them certainly or ‘an answer’. Hence, some people will gravitate quickly to simple labels that have implicit diagnostic implications, which is a bit of a worry.

Probably useful as a method to start parents thinking about their parenting style and may be a useful tool for community groups led by a responsible group leader who can see the limits of MBTI and such intuitive classifications of parenting styles.

There is a brief chapter on fathers. There is no Index in the back of the book.

End.