

NEWSLETTER

The International Toy Research Association

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ITRA NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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NEWSLETTER
The International Toy Research Association
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Editor's prologue

Sometimes the ITRA secretariat gets personal information about member activities, such as paper presentations at conferences, briefs about ongoing or planned projects, or earlier or forthcoming book publications, and sometimes information just comes my way. One example of the latter is a book published in 1992, which I recently found in Gilles Brougere's study at the Universite Paris-Nord, and example of the former is a book published in 1993 and sent to me by Gillian Henry, Ergotherapist at the Centre d'Etudes Roland Houdon. Although not brand new, these two French books will be announced in this ITRA Newsletter as my belief is that they may be of great interest to the readers.

In the preparation of this Newsletter, requests were sent out to all members who could be reached by fax or e-mail, which resulted in some contributions which will be found in ITRA Member Activities, a new section recounting events that members have participated in over the last half-year period. The aim is to get an idea what themes are foci in the field of play and toy research, and to spread the activities that ITRA members are engaged in.

Yet another new section is News from Toy Land, based on clippings concerning the toy trade, most of them from the Swedish Toy Review. The list of fax numbers and E-mail addresses that first appeared in the ITRA Newsletter Fall 95 is re-edited and will be found on the last page of this Newsletter.

ITRA Member Activities

Brian Sutton-Smith sent the following letter about his activities:

*"Since retirement I have had so much leisure time that it has left me with little time for anything else, but I have finally (after five years) completed my Harvard Book, now entitled *The Ambiguity of Play*, which paradoxically replaces the prior and much more ambiguous title '*The Rhetorics of Adult and Child Play Theory*'. Hopefully it will arrive about the middle of next year. The book worked on with Andre Michelet of France for Unesco is pretty much in a terminal phase but now needs a publisher as UNESCO has run out of money, so it might be more terminal than temporal. Have about three other books and several other collaborators with whom other book ventures have commenced. It is nice to sit down occasionally between sets of tennis in the heat we have down here "*

In spite of his assertion, there doesn't seem to have been much leisure time for Brian since his retirement. Between writing and playing tennis he spent three weeks last November in Germany, helping with the creation of *Deutsches Spiele-museum E.V.* in Chemnitz. This is what Brian tells us about it:

"The director is Peter Lemke who visited TASP in Salzburg, June 1995, and contacted me with the information that he had based the categories in his new German Game Museum on the John M. Roberts triad of games of physical skill, strategy and chance. His museum at first opened Hamburg but then moved to East Germany where there was more government support. It is a brand new building and well equipped. Unlike every other such (toy or game) museum that I have ever seen, the exhibits all look spankingly new even though they are games of considerable age.

During my visit there I gave some lectures in the museum and at the University of Chemnitz on games and play. Peter has high ambitions for what play and games can do for mankind and is working towards a future where there may be world wide game festivals in which all countries share. One might think of them as Olympics of minor games and of cooperative play. His museum game titles now reach into the tens of thousands. "

Waltraut Hartmann, Vienna, Austria:

*"In the beginning of September 1995, I gave a lecture in Sorbonne, Paris, France, at the 5th Conference on the Quality of Early Childhood Education. My topic was *The Objectives of Kindergarten Education in Austria*. In the beginning of October I gave a lecture on my research on *The Prizewinning Books for Children of the Last 20 Years in Germany and in Austria*. The lecture was held in connection with the *Book-Fare in Frankfurt*. Last year this symposium was concerned with the history of children's books in Austria.*

*After that the Federal Government invited me to a meeting in Salzburg, Austria, to talk about the big Survey on Osterreichische Kindergarten. October 29, I gave a lecture on "**Gender Differences in the Assessment of the Creativity of Students. Results of the Longitudinal Study of the Viennese Play Program**", at the 5th Conference of Educational Psychology in Leipzig, Germany. Since then, I have been working on a book with the title *More Quality for Children. Quality Standards for the Kindergarten.*" (see *Forthcoming Publications*)*

Jeffrey Goldstein writes about his stay in China in November 1995:

"On November 16 and 17, 1995, American and Chinese scholars met in Beijing, People's Republic of China, to discuss intergenerational play. Dorothy Singer (Yale University, USA), Amy Goyer, (Aarp, Washington D. C.), Jeffrey Goldstein University of Utrecht, The Netherlands), Chen Guo-mei and Liu Yan (both of Beijing Normal University), plus Western and Chinese producers and students of mass media, discussed the value of intergenerational play and ways to disseminate this message to China's nearly 1,3 billion people. The seminar was sponsored by the China State Family Planning Commission, among whose interest is improving the quality of family life, Strategy XII, a strategic communications company, and the Toy Manufacturers of America.

Several trends in China led to an interest in intergenerational play:

- The Chinese are moving toward one-child families. This means that preschool children have parents and grandparents as playmates, rather than siblings.
- Increasingly, both parents work, affording more play opportunities for children and their grandparents.
- The Chinese work week is being reduced to 5 days from 6, resulting in greater leisure time.

Chen Guo-mei described trends in intergenerational relations in China, and how play can help establish good relations between grandparents and grandchildren.

Dorothy Singer described play activities 'that build bridges across generations'. She highlighted the relationship between imaginative play, creativity, and well-being in children and adults.

Liu Yan described the contributions of intergenerational play to social and cognitive development. Jeffrey Goldstein summarized theory and research on the benefits of play for adults.

A secondary theme of the conference was how to encourage intergenerational play. The role of television was considered. Examples of American and Chinese television programs intended for an intergenerational audience were described by Yu Pei-xia, director of children's programming at CCTV, and Alice Kahn, director of children's programming at Public Broadcasting System (Washington D.C.). Bu Wei, Re-search Fellow at the Journalism Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, summarized research on family interaction and media use in China. The relevant presentations will be published later this year in a special section on intergenerational play in International Play Journal."

For **Gisela Wegener-Spohring**, not only the last winter but the last two-three years have been busy. In 1994 she finished her postdoctoral thesis which rendered her the distinction of "Venia legendi" and the title Privatdozentin Doctor (PD Dr.), a title Gisela assumes *"nobody will understand apart from German Universities"*.

In 1995, Gisela achieved qualifications for a professorship, and since the Government decided to close down the department at the Karl-Georg-Universitat, Gottingen where she had been working for so many years, Gisela has moved to Universitat Wiirzburg, where she now has acquired a professorial chair. This is her account of 'the end of the story':

"Apart from the lack of opportunity for toy research I feel quite happy in the new university with my new tasks. Universitat Wiirzburg is one of the old and traditional

German Universities, which means teaching didactic for primary school teachers, but I shall be able to use my knowledge of play quite well later on. I think I shall include play in the classroom, and even toys, in my teaching and maybe also in my research".

Gisela's postdoctoral thesis, *Aggressivitat im kindlichen Spiel. Grundlegung in den Theorien des Spiels und Erforschung ihrer Erscheinungsformen* [Aggressiveness in Children's Play. Basis in the Theories of Play and Research of its Manifestations], was published 1995 by Deutscher Studien Verlag in Weinheim, Germany, and announced in the ITRA Newsletter, Fall 1995.

September 1995, **Krister Svensson**, University of Halmstad, gave a requested talk on *The potential of Toys*, at the Roehampton Institute within the Erasmus Early Years Programme, for which Krister is the tutor in Halmstad. Students from Roehampton in England and Halmstad in Sweden have done teaching practices in each others' countries for the past three years. Early Childhood Education Newsletter wrote:

"Illustrating his talk with a simple wooden spinning top, Krister Svensson from the Centre for Research on Toys and Educational Media, at the University of Halmstad, gave the second in our series "Views from Three Continents", lectures on 28 September. With his focus fixed clearly on children, but away from the classroom and the curriculum, he outlined some of the development of toys over the centuries, from the spinning top to the present time.

One startling piece of information from his own research was that, in the bedrooms of children in his study, researchers counted an average of around 760 objects per bedroom

which they classified as 'toys'. Krister has worked as a Kindergarten teacher in Sweden, and, along with colleague Staffan Selander, was responsible for founding the Centre for Research on Toys and Educational Media at Halmstad. The first of its kind in Scandinavia, it opened in September 1993, and is believed to be the only University centre specializing in toy research anywhere in the world. Krister is both administrative head of the centre, and Director of Studies at the Department of Social Science at Halmstad. "

At the Third International Symposium on *Toys for Children's Rehabilitation*, in Nassau, am Lahn, Germany, **Birgitta Almqvist**, University of Halmstad, presented an invited paper on *Toys for Handicapped Children*.

The Symposium was a contribution to UNESCO's World Decade Activity within Project No. 079 of the World Decade for Cultural Development 1988-1997, and organized by the association "Fordern durch Spielmittel - Spielzeug für behinderte Kinder E.V." Berlin under the supervision of Dr. Siegfried Zoels.

A summary of Birgitta's paper:

"In the past, the major concern was to adapt the handicapped child to daily life, e.g. training the child to eat properly, use the toilette, dress and undress, in short, learn to behave as 'normal' as possible. The thought that the handicapped child, just like a non-handicapped child, would need to play, was not very strong.

Today, when play is regarded as the most important activity in children's development, the attitude is positively different. All children, handicapped as well as nonhandicapped, should be given the

opportunity to play, and to do it in their own way and on their own conditions.

Most professionals working with handicapped children agree that play training is important to the handicapped child. Many play training programs have failed because investigators have compared the handicapped children's play with that of a group of non-handicapped children. Another reason for failure often is that the investigator focuses on what the child cannot do instead of what the child can do, and start from there. The goal of toy-play training programs are most often educational, and more seldom take into account the mere joy of playing with toys. It is easier to measure steps of learning than to measure joy and happiness. An efficient play training program for a handicapped child should include 1) observations of the specific child's behavior to find out what his or her abilities are, 2) interact with the child to find out what the child is interested in, and 3) choose toys which meet the child's present abilities and interests.

Within the program *Politiques, Pratiques et Acteurs de l'Education Prescolaire en Europe*, organized by L'Institut National de Recherche Pedagogique (INRP-Cresas), and Universite Paris-Nord, Departement des Sciences de l'Education, Groupe de Recherche sur les Ressources Educatives et Culturelles, six public seminars arranged by **Sylvie Rayna** (of INRP-Cresas), and **Gilles Brougere** (of Universite Paris-Nord) are being held at Institut National de Recherche Pedagogique in Paris during 1996.

The first seminar, *L'apport de l'education comparee a l'analyse des pratiques educatives precolaire* was held by **Gilles Brougere**, January 10.

February 28, **Tullia Musatti** (CNR), Rome, held a seminar on *Pratiques educatives dans les structures innovantes de la petite enfance en Italie*, and April 10, **Birgitta Almqvist**, University of Halmstad, Sweden, held one on *Materiel educatif et pratiques pedagogiques dans le prescolaire: l'exemple de la Suede*.

April 11, Birgitta Almqvist and Gilles Brougere gave a lecture to students at Universite Paris-Nord, demonstrating similarities as well as culturally based differences in the selections of play materials in French and Swedish preschools.

May 29, the fourth seminar in the program, *Le projet d'innovation "Education Experientielle": L'implication de l'enfant, un critere de la qualite* is given by **Ferre Laevers**, Universite Catholique de Louvain.

September 25, **Eric Plaisance** (Universite Paris V) will hold a seminar on *Education prescolaire en France et problematique de la qualite*, and November 13, **Sylvie Rayna** and **Gilles Brougere** will conclude the program for 1996 with a seminar on *Seance de synthese*.

At the conference "Play and Culture" in Tallinn, Estonia April 15-17, 1996, **Hein Retter**, University of Braunschweig, Germany, gave a talk on *The Future of Children's Play in a Changing Society and the Tasks of Educational Theory*, emphasizing that:

- (1) Play depends on certain general conditions (i.e. personnel, space and material) which have to be catered for by educational theory even in times of fundamental social change
- (2) Play as such is an ambivalent phenomenon: on the one hand, it contains elements which are pedagogically desirable,

on the other hand factors are involved which go beyond these pedagogical requirements, become difficult to control and are not always pedagogically acceptable (e.g. aggression, exercise of power, addiction to games)

(3) Children's play is universal, although its various forms differ widely in different societies and subcultures,

(4) Play is always characterized by contrasting elements which stand in a dialectic relationship, and an educational theory of play will emphasize those elements which help to meet present and future requirements: promotion of universal, intercultural solidarity, mixed-age forms of social contacts, and self-fulfillment, creativity and joy of living

(5) The future of children's play will depend on how much society is interested in encouraging it and keeping it alive. Play is a universal factor of culture and has its own potential of creativity. Educational theory has to preserve and develop this potential.

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Recent Conferences

May 1996, Ede, The Netherlands

Play: The Universal Language, is the theme of the International Play Therapy Conference, May 23-25, 1996 in Ede, The Netherlands. The conference is cosponsored by the Stichting Nederlands Instituut voor Postacademisch Onderwijs (PAOS) and the Association for Play Therapy (APT), and starts Thursday 23 with Pre-conference Workshops and Supervision Groups. Each workshop will have 20-50 participants emphasizing clinical application and technique. In each of the supervision sessions 5-10 participants will have the opportunity to present a case problem. For further information, please contact VU Conference Service, fax +31 20 4445825.

Forthcoming Conferences

June 1996, Halmstad, Sweden,

The International Toy Research Conference is held at the University of Halmstad, Sweden, June 17-22, 1996. The conference is organized by the Nordic Center for Research on Toys and Educational Media (NCFL) to the honor of Professor Emeritus Brian Sutton-Smith. More than 50 papers will be presented by participants from the Nordic countries, several European countries, and from USA, Canada, Korea, China, Philippines, India and Australia. For further information, please contact Krister Svensson, either on fax +46 35 157387, or E-mail Krister.Svensson@isb.hh.se

From the Conference Program:

Monday, June 17, 9.30 p.m., the Minister of Education, **Carl Tham**, opens the conference and after him **Birgitta Almqvist**, NCFL, presents the Guest of Honor, Professor Emeritus **Brian Sutton-Smith**, who concludes the morning program by giving the address on *The Festival of Toys*.

Same day after lunch, 14 parallel sessions are scheduled, and in the evening Halmstad University gives a dinner hosted by University **President Sven-Ove Johansson**.

Tuesday, June 18: Parallel sessions from 9 a.m. to 5.45 p.m. In the evening a reception with buffet is hosted by the Mayor of Halmstad, **Gunnel Karlsson**.

Wednesday, June 19: Parallel session from 9 a.m. till 12.00. After lunch the prize ceremony of the **1996 BRIO Scholarship** takes place. The prize is personally handed over by the former President of BRIO, **Lennart Ivarson**, to whose honor the Scholarship was founded in 1991. Three parallel session are held in the afternoon before **Krister Svensson**, Superintendent of

NCFL, closes the head program for the day with a speech entitled *Future Toy Research in an International Perspective*. Later same day, the conference participants are invited to **BRIO** in Osby where they will visit *Lekoseum*, BRIO's own toy museum.

Thursday, June 20, the conference is moved to **LEGO** in Denmark by a chartered airplane. Beside one session by **Jorn Martin Steenhold**, LEGO A/S, and one by toy collector **Peter Pluntky**, the day includes presentation of LEGO, and a visit to *Legoland* before the party returns to Halmstad in the evening.

Friday June 21, an **ITRA meeting** will be held. The agenda includes a discussion about further proceedings in ITRA, such as selecting a board, membership codes, economy, future meetings etc.

Friday June 21, is Midsummer Eve in Sweden, and the conference guests from all over the world are invited to a *Traditional Swedish Midsummer Feast*, which starts at 3 p.m. and, also due to tradition, may be going on until dawn.

Saturday, June 22, there is no formal program but participants can be free to enjoy the beaches of Halmstad, go shopping in the town, or leave Halmstad for the day and take a trip by train to the large cities of Malmo or Gothenburg, or go by boat to Copenhagen. A report from the conference will come in the next ITRA Newsletter.

September 1996, Lisbon, Portugal

The 6th European Conference on the Quality of Early Childhood Education will be in Lisbon, September 1-4, 1996, on the theme *Desenvolvendo Adultos, Desenvolvendo Criangas* [Developing Adults, Developing children. The conference is organized by

Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECRA) & Grupo de Estudos Desenvolvimento Educacao de Infanta (GEDEI). For further information please contact Escola Superior de Educacao, Av. Carolina Michaelis Vasconcelos, 1500 Lisboa, Portugal. Phone +351 (0)1 714 1920, Fax+351 (0)1 716 61 47.

September 1996, Diiren, Germany

September 22-23, the association "*Fordern durch Spielmittel - Spielzeug fur behinderte Kinder*", Berlin, in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO and the Town of Diiren, Rhineland, will hold The Fourth UNESCO Symposium on *Toys for Children's Rehabilitation - Spielzeug fur behinderte Kinder '96*.

Problem areas will be described and international experience will be brought together from the perspectives of education and design. Moreover, these theoretical and practical impulses are thought to encourage new design solutions. We invite experts to take part in the international exchange of experience.

The Symposium will be followed by a 12-day Design Workshop during which a limited number of participants from all over the world will develop new, creative toys.

The Workshop results will be shown to the public in an exhibition in the Town Hall of Diiren from 5 to 20 October, 1996.

For further information address to:

"Fordern durch Spielmittel
Spielzeug fur behinderte Kinder e. V."
Att. Ziegfried Zoels
Immanuelkirchstrasse 24
D-10405 Berlin
Tel/Fax +49 (0)30 4 42 92 93

BOOKS

Forthcoming Publications

Waltraut Hartmann, *More Quality for Children. Quality Standards for the Kindergarten*, to be published by Osterreichischer Bundesverlag, Fall, 1996.

Brian Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity of Play*, to be published by Harvard University Press, 1997.

Brian Sutton-Smith (of TASP) and **Andre Michelet** (of ICCP), *Children's Play: Progress and Problems* (no publisher as yet, see Brian's letter on page 4).

Other Publications

Gilles Brougere (Ed.) *Le Jouet* [The Toy], is an anthology with subtitle *Valeurs et paradoxes d'un petit objet secret*, published by Editions Autrement, Paris, 1992 (207 pp. ISBN 2-86260-390-2).

Contents (main chapters):

1. *Prologue: Le jouet entre Industrie et culture*
2. *Des modes et des usages*
3. *L'Education ludique*
4. *La memoire des jouets*
5. *Le grand jeu de l'Industrie*

Co-authors: Laurence Anno, Marie-Renee Aufavre, Gilles Brougere, Pierre Bruno, Monica Burckhardt, Guillaume de Chazournes, Genevieve Debeaux, Christine Dupuy, Agnes Durand, Armelle Le Bigot-Macaux, Michel Manson, Philippe Moati, Odile Perino, Jean Perrot, Georges Redde, Chantal Barthelemy-Ruiz, Lucette Savier, Marie-Laure Susini, and Nicole Villaret.

Gillian Henry and **Marie Renee Aufavre-Bouilly**. *Aide au Jeu*, Delachaux & Niestle, 1993. ISBN 2-603-00922-2). This book is an integral part of the collection "Focales", under the direction of **Andre Michelet**.

The preface by **Jaques Treffel**, Inspecteur General de l'Education Nationale, is something of a tribute to the toy and begins: *Le jouet est un objet merveilleux, indispensable au developpement moteur, psychologique et intellectuel de tous les enfants, aussi bien de ceux qui ont des capacites d'integration reelle dans la societe, que de ceux qui connaissent des difficultes.*

[The toy is a marvelous object, indispensable in the physical, psychological and intellectual development, both for those who have the capacity to integrate in the society and for those with difficulties].

Accordingly, the first part of the book is about play and toys for children in general, while the second part focuses on play and toys for children with one or more handicaps, and both give directions for choosing toys. General directions for choosing toys are based on four criteria outlined by the International Council for Children's Play (ICCP): the functional, experimental, relational and structural values of the toy.

An overview is given of individual children's play behavior, e.g. the child who'd rather play alone than with peers, the child who cannot play unless an adult is present, the child who doesn't want to participate in the play but rather watches others playing, the child who cannot stay in one play situation more than a few minutes before changing to another, the 'poor' player vs. the child who does nothing but play all the time. Although having the same need to play as normally developed children, handicapped play is

limited by one or both of two kinds of difficulties, namely instrumental (sensorial or physical), and/or mental deficiencies (retarded or autistic children). Generously illustrated advise on how handicapped children can be stimulated to play in spite of their sensorial, physical and mental obstacles is given.

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Articles

Gilles Brougere, (1995). *Mon Long Chemin Historique Vers le Jeu de Formation d'Adultes. Simulation & Gaming*, Vol.26, No. 4, December 1995, pp. 414-419.

The author describes his work in the field of toys and play, particularly the relationship to education. He recounts how he moved from a preoccupation with the toy as object, through a deep interest in play as a contextualized activity, to a growing concern with simulation/games for adult training. This has brought a renewed breadth and depth to the first two areas, and his future interest will include an exploration of the relationship between play and simulation/games.

In a section entitled *Le jouet, Objet Temoin d'une Culture*, Gilles Brougere claims: "Au debut etait le jouet" [In the beginning was the toy]. Gilles explains that he no doubt had toys in his own beginning too, i.e. when he was a little boy, only he cannot remember any of them and, therefore, doesn't believe they had much of an influence on him. On the other hand "*all those who remember the toy by the side of their mothers' bosom still do not necessarily write books on the subject*".

In another section, *Le Jouet Entre a l'Universite*, Gilles Brougere gives an account of how he, on returning from his sojourn in Africa, created a center for research on play and toys at the Universite Paris-Nord, or Paris 13 as it also called as it

is the 13th of the Universities in Paris, located in Villeateneuse, a suburb north of the city of Paris.

Focus of the research at the center is to estimate the social dimension of play activities and the role it bestows on the toy. Since 1981, the center of which Gilles is the Director, dispenses DESS, a postgraduate diploma uniting academic research and practical dimension, to students hoping to get a post in the domains of play and toys. The diploma is unique in France, and probably the whole world, as there is very little teaching given on play and toys in special education.

In the final section of the article, *Jeu et Education*, Gilles Brougere makes the following reflection about attitudes to play:

Il me semble essentiel de comprendre pourquoi il peut etre interessant dans certaines situations educatives de faire appel a une activite ludique, et comment dans d'autres situations le contenu importe plus. [To me it seems important to understand why in some educational situations it is referred to as a playful activity, while in other situations it is regarded as useless.]

Wendy Varney, *The Briar Around the Strawberry Patch: Toys, Women and Food. Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1996.

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NCFL NEWS

Three externally financed research projects are being carried out at the Center for Research on Toys and Educational Media.

The World of Play, in which nine episodes of children's play and choice of toys in natural environments are being videotaped. As most

of the earlier research on play has been carried out with experimental methods, this project is taking a step away from the laboratory setting and out into the open. For further information please contact Bjorn Sterner, University of Halmstad.

Toys as Tools in the Learning Process, is inspired by the work of Waltraut Hartmann in Vienna and carried out in collaboration with five comprehensive schools in a Swedish west-coast community.

The purpose is to develop methods to use toys as alternative learning tools, and to adapt the method to an informal teaching process. For further information contact Lars-Peder Alingfeldt, NCFL, University of Halmstad.

Toddlers' Play and Toy Environment carried out in cooperation with five nurseries for 1-3-year olds in Halmstad. The purpose of the project is to increase the quality of the youngest children's toy play by making the preschool teachers more aware of the role of play materials in very young children's play and development. Leader of the project is Inger Hellstrom, also accountable for the Nordic network of Universities and researchers who either focus on or are otherwise interested in toy research.

An internally financed project at NCFL is *Toys in Children's Homes*, finding out the average amount of toys a sample of eightyear-olds in Halmstad have access to at home, their specific types of toys have been categorized and analyzed.

Apart from the above mentioned projects - and others outlined or planned - Krister and his staff at NCFL are preparing *the International Toy Research Conference*, June 17-22.



NEWS FROM TOY LAND

This section relates brief news from the toy trade from a worm's-eye view, i.e. from my little corner on earth. Most are clippings from the trade journal Swedish Toy Review (Svensk Leksaksrevy), member of the International Toy Magazine Association (ITMA) and - in spite of its name - issuing toy production news from all over the world.

One well known fact in Sweden is that we spend nearly 3 billion SEK per year on toys and hobby materials. Recently, a market research company has also found out where we go to buy them.

The results of a questionnaire concerning classical toys, i.e. all but computer- and video- games, music tapes and books, purchased by a consumer panel of 2,300 Swedish households, indicate that 52% of all toys are bought in toy stores, 20,9% in shopping malls, and 5.5% in food stores. Another 3,4% are purchased from mailorder businesses, and the rest, 17,4% are purchased in book stores, gasoline stations and bargain-marts.

LEGO of Sweden has found a new way to reach its customers; a truck is going on a two-month tour around the country this summer, making stops at some of the most well-visited shopping malls to meet presumptive customers. The truck is a special designed Volvo-lorry in which the walls can be turned down and give room for a 50m² exhibition where the visitors can wander about and look at the "worlds of Lego models".

Sailor Moon is a new 'teen-ager' doll, made by Japanese Bandai and distributed in Sweden by **BRIO TOY**. As was the case with Ninja Turtles, *Sailor Moon* first appeared in a black-and-white TV-cartoon (in Japan called 'mangas') created by cartoonist Naoko Takeuchi.

This newcomer in the world of little doll ladies has beaten the sales records in Japan for Turtles and Power Rangers. TV-cartoons have made *Sailor Moon* and friends well known also in USA, Germany, Spain, Italy and France, and will soon also be known by children in Sweden, where TV4 has bought 88 half-hour programs. It will be interesting to see if the cartoons - being connected to a toy - will be banned here as there are powers in the Government working for a prohibition of televised toy commercials in Sweden.

Other 'giants' in the toy world are **Disney** and **Mattel**, business partners since 1988 when Disney asked Mattel to produce toys with Disney characters for toddlers. From now Mattel has obtained the sole rights for future production of toys connected with Disney movies and TVcartoons, which according to the President of Mattel, Jill Barad, was the only piece of the puzzle that earlier was missing to be an integrated part of all Disney products.

According to *Swedish marketing principles*, it is not allowed to distribute special offers to children under the age of 16. The Swedish Institute for Consumer Information therefore criticizes Cartoon Publisher **Egmont** for sending out special offers to 11-12-year-old children. Egmont claims that they send it only to children who have a subscription for one of their magazines and, therefore, "it cannot come as a surprise to their parents."

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Toy Production From a Modern Child's View

When I go to school I want to learn Chinese ", said the little boy who had just learnt how to read. Asked why he wanted to learn Chinese he answered: "*Because it's in China all the fun i. Look at my toys - on all of them it says Made in China!*

PLAYING OR WORKING?

I have a new toy vacuum cleaner with a motor that sounds real. Do you want to play with it? said little Anna to little Bill. *No, I dont'*, said little Bill. *Why not?* asked little Anna.

Because it's so real I wouldn't know if I were playing or working.

Editor's Postscript

The content of ITRA Newsletter highly depends on written materials from members of the group. I want to thank all those who contributed to this Newsletter and welcome those who can contribute to the next. Welcome with all kinds of written material that you consider to be of interest to ITRA Newsletter readers. It could be anything from a tiny note about toys to conference papers, published articles or books, and outlines of planned or ongoing research projects.

For the section ITRA Member Activities, the secretariat is ready to either edit or reproduce material from you, e.g. papers you have presented, talks you have given or other events connected to toy research that you would like to see included in the next Newsletter, scheduled for October-November 1996.

To be able to give our readers current information of published books and articles literature and to update the old bibliography published in 1989 Children and toys (which also may include Adults and Toys, please inform the secretariat if you know of a newly published book or article so that it can be included in the database at NCFL, University of Halmstad. If you have reviewed or want to review a book, please contact the ITRA secretariat.

The secretariat would also want a C.V. from each of the ITRA members. The purpose of gathering C.V.'s is to get an overview of the topics of works of all members, and to find out what paths and corners ITRA covers in the field of toy research. Your C.V. would also come in handy when the press is asking for information about the group, and would be a good source when recommending lecturers to Nordic Universities and Departments wanting to learn more about research on toys but for which this field is more or less virgin soil.

If you are recently on fax or E-mail or have had your fax number and/or E-mail address changed, please send the information to the ITRA secretariat..

The ITRA secretariat wishes all of you a pleasant Summer!

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