

**ITRA NEWSLETTER**  
**International Toy Research Association**  
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**ITRA NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

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## ITRA MEMBER FORUM

**Dorothy and Jeremy Singer** have written two new books this year. Both will be presented under the section Book Publications, and one of them is reviewed.

**Brian Sutton-Smith**, sent a mail telling that he has written the PLAY entry for the Oxford Dictionary of Psychology (8 volumes and costs \$1000.00) published by the American Psychological Association; and also finished the PLAY entry for the Encyclopedia Britannica. It may be added that not only has he been working on those entries but he has also received a number of good reviews on his book *The Ambiguity of Play*, published in 1997.

In one of the reviews Brian is called *The Godfather of Play*. We congratulate Brian Sutton-Smith to the well earned title.

**Cleo Gougoulis**, Athens, Greece, reports that the project on play in Greece over three generations, entitled *Documentation of children's games in space*, and funded by EEC, has reached the end of phase one. **Maria Argyriadis** and **Cleo Gougoulis** participated as representatives of the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation and the Benaki Museum respectively. The results will appear in a little booklet to be distributed to the schools that participated in the project.

## NEW ADDRESSES

**Gisela Wegener-Spöhring** sent a mail running:

*Dear colleagues, dear friends, here is my new address in Cologne*

Universitaet zu Koeln, Seminar fuer Paedagogik, Abt. fuer Allgemeine Didaktik und Schulpaedagogik  
Gronewaldstr. 2, 50931 Koeln,

Deutschland

Phone: 0221/ 470 4907

Fax: 0221/ 470 6739

Home: August-von-Willich-Str. 157, 50827 Köln

Mobilphone: 0177-3494806

From **Joop Hellendorn** in Holland came this message:

Dear ITRA colleagues

December 15, I am retiring from Leiden University, and I am moving with my husband to the north of the country. My address there is

Joop Hellendoorn

Utbuorren 33, 8493 MA TERHERNE,

The Netherlands

phone +31-566-688600

fax +31-566-688506

e-mail ELLEENDOORN@rulfsw.fsw.LeidenUniv.nl

We wish Gisela good luck in Koeln, or Köln ,as the German name is spelled. We hope that she will once again give us interesting reports about children's adventure play, and that Joop will enjoy her retirement. Perhaps we will hear from them both in a near future.

**Jeffrey Goldstein**, the University of Utrecht, is no longer at the Dept of Media and Communication at the University of Utrecht but is back to the Department of Social and Organizational Psychology, Heidelberglaan 1, 3508 TC Utrecht, The Netherlands.

## NEW MEMBERS

**Stevanne Auerbach**, Ph.D. in child development with a specialty in Psychology and Special Education. Dr Auerbach presents herself:

*I hold the trademark for Dr. Toy and have been called that since the board of the toy museum started calling me that in 1985. I had the first web site to evaluate products for parents and teachers and have been doing so for over ten years, emphasizing educational aspects of toys and playthings.*

Stevanne Auerbach has also created and directed a special toy museum in San Francisco, and has a literary production of three books on toys and many hundreds of articles. Her Website is: [www.drtoy.com](http://www.drtoy.com)

**Juliette Rouchier**, Centre for Policy Modelling, Manchester, England, wrote:

*I am very new in the field of toy research. Actually, I am mainly interested in computer games; trying to understand the type of skills that is developed by them, the pleasure that is taken. It leads to study the type of requirements that people want from computer games, the behavior in front of the game, the technology that is developed. Actually I am interested in the other face of the medal too: knowing how the specialization in play with computer games can lead to a decrease in socialization for some players. This is why I am mainly interested, from a sociological point of view, by male adults.*

If you would like to contact Juliette, her address is Juliette Rouchier, Centre for Policy Modelling, Manchester, Aytoun building, Aytoun street, M1 3GH, Manchester, England

**Laurent Tremel**, Sociologue at GES – INRP, 29, rue d'Ulm, 75005 – Paris, France, is a new member. but has been working together with Gilles Brougère for several years. He has quite an impressive production. Most of his texts are in French.

Those who were participating in the International Toy Seminar in Angoulême, Nov 9-14, 1997, might remember Lauren's paper session *Jouets et objets ludiques. Les champs de la recherche*. Actes du Colloque International sur le Jouet. If you read French, I recommend you to contact Laurent Tremel, E-mail: [tremel@inrp.fr](mailto:tremel@inrp.fr)

## PAST CONFERENCES

### The Association for the Study of Play (TASP)

The TASP Annual Meeting Conference took place February 21-25, 2001 in San Diego, California  
For TASP membership or questions about the conference, contact: Dr. L. **Diane Parham**, University of Southern California, 1540 Alcazar Street – CHP 133, Los Angeles, CA 90089. Phone: (323) 442-2879, Fax: (323) 442-1540, E-mail: [Lparham@hsc.usc.edu](mailto:Lparham@hsc.usc.edu)

A new web site were you will find TASP history, play links and other TASP information is:

<http://www.csuchico.edu/phed/tasp/>

ITRA President **Gilles Brougère** reports from

The Pokémon Conference in Hawaii, November 20-22, 2000

**Joe Tobin** from the University of Hawaii invited last year some researcher from Hong Kong, Australia, Israel, UK, France and USA to study the Pokémon phenomena. The people are specialists of cultural (Japanese) studies, media studies, and education or play studies. Hawaii is a good site for this because it's a bridge between western (American) culture and Japanese culture. The objective is to publish a book. For this Joe Tobin organized a conference to present and discuss the draft of the future chapters.

The humorist title of the conference was *Nintentionality* or *Pikachu's global adventure*.

It was very interesting with a lot of exchanges (the audience was limited to a few colleagues and students). We discovered from **Jeff Maret's** and **Hirofumi Katsuno's** paper, the change in the translation of the video show from the Japanese to the American version. For example, some aspect of the sexualization of the young girls disappear in the latter.

**David Buckingham** proposed an interesting analysis of the phenomenon in connection with the concepts of Structure, agency and pedagogy. See his last book: *After the death of childhood, Growing up in the age of electronic media*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000.

A group of researchers are studying the concept of 'cute' and 'cuteness' in Japan and his reception in Hawaii, Japan and Hong Kong. These concepts are very important in Japan (Japan is the country of cute, in Japanese: *Kawaii*). We had three sessions on this topic:

**Anthony Fung** (City university of Hong Kong) explained cuteness as imagination (about Hong Kong).

**Christine Yano** (University of Hawaii) discussed *Moving towards the global cute: The Pokémon phenomenon as a case study*, and **Anne Allison** (Duke University) dealt with cuteness as *Portable Intimacy as Japan's Millennial Product*

Two papers related to play were **Julian Sefton-Green's** study of a six-year-old English boy's use of Game-boy, how the boy learnt to play, and the different activities he involved in., and **Gilles Brougère's** presentation of the

context of the Pokémon phenomenon in France. The French data focus on the cards and their using, especially in the public space.

During the conference they presented the draft of their chapter for the book: *Gotta Get All the Cards: How Much is a Pokémon Worth?* New information will be given as soon as we know where and when the book will be published.

For more information, please contact Gilles Brougère on E-mail:

[brougere@lshs.univ-paris13.fr](mailto:brougere@lshs.univ-paris13.fr)

### **THE 1ST ASIAN CREATIVITY WORKSHOP,**

Took place January 2001, 14-31. The conference was organized and hosted by the National Institute of Design (NID), India. In collaboration with *Fördern durch Spielmittel*, Germany, a partner of the UNESCO German Commission and with the support of Indian institutions working with children with special needs and Industrial Design.

Main theme of the three-week workshop was *Toys for children's Rehabilitation* and the main features of this International workshop were as follows:

Multi-disciplinary participants including 1 or 2 participants from each country

- working in partnership with rehabilitation center
- design results from the workshop taken up for further development.

Participation from designers, therapists, child development specialists was specially wanted. Last date for applications was 7th Nov 2000. You are welcome to look up the National Institute of Design's web site

[www.nid.edu](http://www.nid.edu) under the title 'EVENTS'.

#### **Sudarshan Khanna**

Coordinator, Asian Creativity Workshop

"Toys for Children's Rehabilitation"

National Institute of Design,

Paldi, Ahmedabad-380007. India

Fax; +91-79-660 52 42

E-mail: [sudarshan\\_khanna@yahoo.com](mailto:sudarshan_khanna@yahoo.com)

**Play as Communication**, was the theme for a conference organized by *The Greek Union of Toy Libraries*, and held February 10-11, 2001.

**Cleo Gougoulis** was invited to deliver the Keynote address.

## **FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES**

### **Dimensions of play time, space and imagination in Children's Oral Culture**

An International Conference to be held at the University of Sheffield, 24-27 July 2001

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS**

Following on from the *'State of Play'* conference at the University of Sheffield in 1998, the National Centre for English Cultural Tradition, in association with the Japan Youth Friendship Association, is pleased to announce a second international conference on the play traditions and oral culture of school-aged children. The main focus of the conference will be on the many dimensions of children's play.

The following topics for papers included:

- children's use of space and place
- children's play through historical time
- across linguistic and cultural boundaries
- playtime and children's perceptions of it
- social, educational and aesthetic dimensions of play

- play and the imagination.

Presentations were invited on any of the above and on other aspects of school-aged children's oral culture, including children's belief and custom, language and narrative traditions. A variety of academic approaches were welcomed.

The deadline for submissions is 31 December 2000.

Although too late to participate, it may be a good idea to obtain information of the conference by joining the conference mailing list by contacting the

Conference Organisers: **Dr Julia Bishop** and **Dr Mavis Curtis**

National Centre for English Cultural Tradition

University of Sheffield

SHEFFIELD S10 2TN

United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 114 222 6296

E-mail: [J.C.Bishop@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:J.C.Bishop@sheffield.ac.uk)

**Linda Hughes**, Ph.D. TASP Coordinator,  
Alternative Routes to Certification,  
Delaware Center for Teacher Education, Willard  
Hall 213 University of Delaware, USA, forwards  
the following reminder from ICCP Secretary **Egon  
Schmuck**:

**Play and Toys Today**, 22. ICCP World Play  
Conference, will be held at the University Erfurt  
(Germany), June 6-8 2001. For more info contact:  
[boettcher@itb.ph-erfurt.de](mailto:boettcher@itb.ph-erfurt.de)

#### **European Humor Scholars:**

*The 13th International ISHS Humor Conference*  
will be held from July 6-9, 2001 in College Park,  
Maryland, and will be convened by Larry Mintz,  
the University of Maryland, USA.

*The 14th International ISHS Humor Conference*  
will be held from July 3-7, 2002 in Forli, Italy, and  
will be convened by Delia Chiaro, the University  
of Bologna in Forli, Italy.

If you would like to receive information on these  
Conferences, please contact

**Don L. F. Nilsen**, Executive Secretary,  
International Society for Humor Studies, English  
Linguistics, Arizona State Univ. Tempe, AZ  
85287-0302, USA

E-mail: [don.nilsen@asu.edu](mailto:don.nilsen@asu.edu)

Phone: 480/965-7592

FAX: 480/965-3451

## **PROJECTS**

The project *Play in Greece over Three Generations*  
in which **Maria Argyriadis** and **Cleo Gougoulis**  
have carried out under the title "Documentation of  
children's games in space, was initiated by a group  
of school teachers, teaching Environmental  
Education at a secondary school of Athens. The  
research team was coordinated with the help of the  
social psychologist **M. Polemi-Todoulou**. The idea  
was to get the kids to collect their own and previous

generations' games, under the guidance of a local  
teacher - who operated as a link with the central  
research team.

#### **Method reported by Cleo:**

A set of two questionnaires was prepared - one for  
adult and one for child recipients - in winter 1999  
and was distributed to 13 schools in 10 prefectures  
of Greece. 1800 filled-in questionnaires were  
returned to the team by the end of spring 2000. I  
will come back to this later but for now, what I  
found interesting, was that local teachers  
reported a relative increase of "traditional" game  
play at school during and immediately after the  
project, also mentioned by similar surveys in other  
countries.

## **Letters to the editor**

**Waltraut Hartmann**, Austria, sent a mail,  
informing two new empirical toy investigations in  
her department at the University of Vienna, in the  
year 2000:

**Wildeis Nina** (2000). *Spielzeugkultur und  
Spielzeugpräferenzen in Wiener Kindergärten* (Toy  
Culture and Toy Preferences in the Viennese  
Kindergarten), Unpublished Thesis, University of  
Vienna.

**Trebo Alrun** (2000). *Spielausstattung,  
Spielzeugverwendung und Spielzeugpräferenzen in  
den deutschsprachigen Kindergärten Südtirols*.  
(Play Equipment, the Use of Toys and Toy  
Preferences in the German Speaking Kindergarten  
in the South Tyrol). Unpublished Thesis, University  
of Vienna

**Tomas Lejeune-Wegener**, Moirans en Montagne,  
France, sent reminder and an announcement,

Dear Birgitta,

"You remember during the Moirans' Congress we  
discussed about the creation of *A Federation of Toy  
and Childhood Museum*. Thanks to the European  
project I'm managing now. The International

Federation for Toys and Childhood, IFTAC, was created in July, Its settlement is in were finished at

**Moirans.” Peter Laub**, the curator of the Toy Department of the *Carolino Augustem Museum* in Salzburg is the president, the museum partners of the [www.ToyMuse.net](http://www.ToyMuse.net) project are 6 vice-presidents and **B. Giry**, the director of Moirans' Toy Museum is the treasurer, and I'm the secretary. If you are interested in this federation, I can send you soon a press release presenting the IFTAC and

## BOOKS: ANNOUNCEMENTS COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

**Auerbach, S.** (1998). *Dr Toy's Smart Play. How to Raise a Child with a High PQ*  
NY: St Martin's Griffin. ISBN 0-312-18089-6. 272 pp.

**Content:**

Foreword by **Edgar Klugman**

- 1 The Importance of Play and Toys
- 2 Baby
- 3 Toddler
- 4 Preschooler
- 5 Primary Schooler
- 6 Older Child
- 7 Special Needs
- 8 Play Everywhere
- 9 Play Power

**Comment on Auerbach's book**

Quite a number of handbooks have been published over the years to give parents, teachers and other child caregivers advice on how to choose appropriate toys and to support children's development and learning by means of playing. To my knowledge Auerbach is the first to introduce a numeric measure for play skill, *Play Quotient* (PQ) which on the one hand seems to me more vital than the traditional measure of Intelligence (IQ). On the other hand, PQ seems to be a twin to IQ, which makes it hard data. Obviously, many children, however high their IQ, do not know how to play. Thus, a high IQ is no guarantee for a high PQ, but it seems that children who are playing a lot develop a richer fantasy which in turn is an important factor related to cognitive abilities, and may raise their IQ. I believe that to be Auerbach's message here.

What might be questioned is the similarity – although somewhat witty – between PQ and IQ. Both offer a quantification of a purely qualitative competence. To me, play measured on a scale from, let us say zero to 10 feels strange. “Come on Tom! You can play better than that. Look at Jim, he is a

*ToyMuse.net*.

The discussion Thomas is referring to was taking place in beautiful Angoulême during the International toy conference in 1997. ITRA secretariat recommends you to look up the toy museum's web site! Well done Thomas. The saying you can do whatever you want just you set your heart at it is so appropriate here.

real play master.” Anyway, this book may come in handy for adults wanting an elementary handbook in the art of playing with children and choosing the “right” toy. Sometimes I get the question “Is this a good toy?” My permanent answer is that I don't know because I don't know the child it is intended for. I like to quote a toy retailer whom once and for all declared that “a good toy is one that the child needs here and now”.

In chapters 2 – 4, the reader is being recommended toys for a Baby, a Toddler, a Preschooler, a Primary Schooler, and finally an Older Child. This might lure the untrained reader into thinking in age instead of personality and learning history of the child. There may well be more discrepancy between two children in one and the same age span than between two children from different age groups. It is well known by play and toy researchers that each child is unique and what is fine for one may not be the best for another child. It needs an experienced reader not to fall into the potholes on the rocky path you walk when raising a child and contribute to his/her development.

**Redleaf, Rhoda, & Audrey Robertson**, 1999.

*Learn and Play the Recycled Way. Homemade toys that teach.*

MN, St Paul: Redleaf Press. ISBN: 1-884834-40-X. 208 pp. folio size pp.

Contents (Chapter titles only)

- I. Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers
- II. Older Toddlers and Preschoolers
- III. Toddlers, Preschoolers, and Schoolagers
- IV. Preschoolers
- V. Preschoolers and Schoolagers
- VI. All Ages

Compared to books recommending industrially made toys' this is reverse in that it is about homemade toys only. The similarity to other 'toy books' is that the authors presume that toys can really teach. I do not agree totally as my reasoning is

that it is the child who may learn from handling and investigating the toy if it is interesting enough. Although this book differs from the one by Auerbach in that it mainly deals with play, the authors organize the material by age group. Another classification is on developmental stages, which is traditional in textbooks in child development psychology. The main message is no doubt that making toys can be as enjoyable as playing with them.

A highly important issue is toy safety, something that this book takes up if only in a few points, under "Safety considerations in making and using toys" (p.xv). There are warnings against dirty toys, sharp ends, toxic materials, but one missing point is length of strings on pull-toys, and maximum sound level, and filling materials in soft-toys. Industrially made toys must follow more safety rules than the ones mentioned above. A warning for small loose parts are commonly found on instructions on the toy package. However safe you think your home made (or industrially made toy for that matter) is, do keep in mind that a toy is never safer than the child handling it. Therefore I am pleased to read that "Although the instructions have been written with "kid-proofed" tests in mind, *no one can guarantee the absolute safety of these toys or procedures* (p. xvi). I believe that Redleaf's and Robertson's book could very well be used in workshops for groups of parents.

**Retter, H.** (2000). *Handbook in Pedagogic Communication [Studienbuch. Pädagogische Kommunikation]*.

Contents

1. Einleitung /Introduction/
2. Soziologische Theorien der Kommunikation [Sociological Communication Theories]
3. Sprachphilosophie und Argumentationstheorie [Linguistic Philosophy and Argumentation theory]
4. Kommunikation und Systemtheorie [Communication and Theory of System]
5. Psychologisch orientierte Theorien [Psychologically Oriented Theories]
6. Aspekte Nonverbaler Kommunikation [Aspects on Non-Verbal Communication]
7. Kommunikation und Beratung [Communication and Consulting]
8. Kommunikation und Konflikt [Communication and Conflict]

Retter's new book is a comprehensive exposition of the issue of communication from various perspectives, and sprung from different theories. The title might not be considered the cup of tea for a play-and toy researcher, but in fact there are several grains of gold to transmit to the issue of play communication. To me, particularly the three last chapters offer an opportunity to see that play is

indeed a communication process. Chapter 6 highlights the fact that more than 70% of communicative interacting are non-verbal. Children's play is very often non-verbal of a bodily character, and that kind of communication is worthy of more sociologic and linguistic concern than hitherto appears to have been the case.

Children's literacy development is one of the most intriguing issues today. One reason to this may be the rapidly changing society in which intellectual skills are necessary for an individual in order to proceed in school and, later, on the labor market. Obtaining gender equality is another issue of great significance today. How to support girls and boys alike to be seen and heard is one rather big issue in many schools of today. There are studies indicating that girls all from preschool to high-school grades are regarded as "2<sup>nd</sup> range persons". True or not, learning how to communicate in conflicts (Chapter 8), or in making your point in a discussion (Chapter 7) are essential for both sexes and for different class backgrounds. Last but not least, communication theories presented by Retter underscore the communication between child and toy.

**Singer, D., & Singer J.** 2000.(Eds.) *Handbook of Children and the Media*. CA: Sage Publikations 783 pp. ISBN: 0-7619-19544.

**Publisher's Presentation:**

From Internet censorship to television V-chips, the enormous influence that mass media has on children and how best to deal with it are among the most hotly-debated topics in public and private life today. However, debates surrounding important policy decisions in the area are largely uninformed by empirical evidence. *The Handbook of Children and the Media* is the first and only all-inclusive, comprehensive analysis of the field for students, scholars, and policy makers. It brings together an interdisciplinary group of the best-known scholars from around the world to summarize the current scope of research on children and the media, suggest directions for future research, and underscore policy and practical implications. In addition to the "traditional" media of television, film, advertising, and so on, "new media" such as the Internet and video games are also included.

The handbook is primarily a reference work for researchers, teachers, and students in communication, psychology, family studies, education, sociology, public policy and other related fields, but will also serve as a valuable resource for policy makers, media professionals and activists. Any and all scholars and citizens concerned about the media's impact on children will want to own this volume.

**Singer, D., & Singer J.** (2000). *Make-Believe:*

*Games and Activities for Imaginative Play.*  
Magination Press, American Psychological  
Association, Washington, DC,  
Contents

Chapter 1: What Make-Believe can do for Children  
Chapter 2: What Make-Believe can do for  
Grown-ups  
Chapter 3: Movement and Make-Believe  
Chapter 4: Living and Playing Through our Senses  
Chapter 5: Magical Changes: Learning about  
Ourselves, Others, and Our World  
Chapter 6: Poems, Songs, and Stories: Paving the  
Way to Creative Expression  
Chapter 7: Roles to Play By: The Butcher, the  
Baker, the Candlestick Maker  
Chapter 8: Make-Believe Places: Environments for  
Pretend Play  
Chapter 9: Special Games for Special Times  
Chapter 10: Using Television for Imaginative  
Growth

Review by Birgitta Almqvist

Over the last decade, intergenerational play has been recognized by a handful of play-and toy researchers. If sprung from the fact that quite a few of us are today grandparents having more time and patience to participate in the third generation's play is hard to know. It seems that we all agree that learning from today's kids play is valuable both from professional and personal aspects. This book is by no means the first to give advice and suggestions *to parents, teachers, and the young children in their lives* as the subtitle runs on the front page. Not having met (or even been aware of) the gathered publications in this area, I do remember Shirley and Brian Sutton-Smith's book *How to play with your children (and when not to)*, published by Hawthorn, NY, 1974. Almost 30 years have past between the two books, which offers an interesting insight in the changes in play from the 1970s to the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Current books on play and toys are reflecting the attitudes on childhood in contemporary society, be it in east or west or north and south of the world. It would be of interest, therefore, to undertake deep reading of the Sutton-Smith book with recommendations in the 70s and the Singer & Singer book in birth of the new millennium.

In **Chapter 1** gives the chief message of the book: *The ability to make-believe is basic to a well-rounded fulfilled human being*, and **Chapter 4** offers a number of play material that foster our senses. The chapter is a gold mine for those adults in their work with children who are blind or deaf, and who we know and differ between materials due to their surface structure (soft) hard (rough), the smell and taste (sweet sour, bitter), and sound of a variety of ways. Also a deaf child can learn to

experience rhythms by means of vibrations.

I particularly fancy **Chapter 2**. "*What Make-Believe can do for grown-ups*". Intergenerational play has over the last decade come to be subject to much positive attention by play researchers. Being myself a granny to two boys I often used to practice it being their playmate when they were little. I have been given roles all from a seal mother, worried sick over her seal baby, to a terrible monster chasing little children to eat them for supper. The little "victims" have demonstrated their pretended their horror by laughter and high shrills of happy excitement: *Look out, she's coming!*" And when the "monster" plunges herself in a chair, panting with exhaustion the horrified group of monster-supper-to-be simply laugh and beg you to continue: *Once more! Please! Only one more time!* 'One more time' actually means ten more times, at least. Intergenerational play gives both adults and children to learn to know each others personality, way of thinking and feeling.

Benefits of role-playing are highlighted in **Chapter 7**. Role-playing is the child's method of coming to understand some of the mysterious adult world. Relating to Bateson's communication theory, we know that the child playing teacher, doctor, police, baker, bank clerk and other characters in all kinds of societal organizations and occupations. It obviously takes a good deal of preparation. One thing a preschool teacher should pay attention to is the specific child's experiences; In an toy inventory by Brougère it appeared that some preschoolers did not know how to play post office, since they had never sat foot in one. In that way, a community post office may in fact be more far away than the space ship. This chapter also indicates that literacy can indeed be trained by pretending to be a police (writing parking notes). The authors strongly maintains the assumption that fantasy and creativity are related to a number of other cognitive skills, such as for example competence to handle new situations without necessarily losing their head.

**Chapter eight**, environments for pretend play sends a string of memories to my mind; when I worked as a teacher in pedagogic for preschool teachers to be, I visited hundreds of child care centers (in Sweden). One thing, among others, that hit me, was the large play space in the activity room, where there were seldom a gazebo to creep into. All play was supposed to be performed in the open. The truth, however, is that they also love to hide in hollows, under tables and in small space rooms. One favorite place for my grandson in my home is the tiny bathroom closet for laundry (!). Small and cosy, perfect when playing

hide-and-seek. Seek-and-hide is an advanced version of take-and-give, the first play to let the baby begin to understand “the me and the you”, a playful two-way social training game played with happy laughter, and exiting sudden disappearing-and popping-up-face of the adult play mate.

**Chapter ten** may for some readers be provocative but feels to me to be refreshing, seen against the background of the past years of debates. New technological inventions, particularly television and video, have been given the guilt for children’s bad behavior and violence acceptance. The authors do not say that everything with television and video is a rose-garden, but rather point out that with guidance by parents and teachers, children can learn a lot of good things from these media. Television programs offer inspiration to role playing, and many children do improve their verbal skills and let them experience afar cultures with other kind of nature, fauna and flora than the one in the near home environment. The authors are not uncritical but send out a warning that it is important to guide the children in front of the screen and avoid stories or scenes with bad messages you want to protect the child against. This chapter closes the circle by pointing back to chapter 2 in which the adult is given quite a big role in children’s make-believe world.

The book gives numerous inspiring examples and ideas for a wide play universe in your own home. There are no limits except your own imaginative skill that will be nourished and develop while you learn from the children you engage in. Apart from scientifically grounded statements from the two authors, there are for each chapter or play type a list of things you can need to perform the game.

In one way it reminds of the Redleaf, & Robertson book about home made toys in that all material that Singer and Singer suggest are indeed such that you most probably can find it in the home of every family. To summon up this book by Dorothy and Jerome Singer, I will borrow a quotation from a study I read about in 1978.

An eleven-year-old boy explained the profit of make-believe: *You could think it in your head and do the same realities and everything but still be a different person.* A conclusion is that the earth may spin around, but we who live on it are much the same decade after decade. The new Singer & Singer book is created in an atmosphere of the fundamental principle “all children are our children”, and the necessity to reach out a hand from one adult child caregiver to another.

**Sylvie Rayna & Gilles Brougère (Eds.) Dec.**

2000. *Traditions et innovations dans l'éducation préscolaire. Perspectives internationales.* Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique (INRP) ISBN: 2-7342-0639-0. 511 pp.

Contents:

Préface – **Éric Plaisance**

Avant-propos [Foreword] – **Sylvie Rayna** Cresas (INRP) et **Gilles Brougère** (Groupe de recherche sur les ressources éducative et culturelles - GREC)

Introduction:

Culture et métiers de la petite enfance – **Gilles Brougère** GREC –Université Paris-Nord] [Culture and qualification in child care personnel].

**PREMIÈRE PARTIE – PART ONE: *Le poids de la culture et de l'histoire [The importance of culture and history]***

*Scolarisation, socialisation et jeu dans l'éducation enfantine* brésilienne [Schooling, socialization and play in the education of young Brazilian children] by **Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto** (Université de Sao Paulo)

*Modes de garde et éducation des enfants de moins de trois ans au Japon* [Methods and childcare in the education of children younger than three years of age] by **Miwako Hoshi-Watanabe**  
*Rénover le préscolaire coranique au Maroc* [Reforming the Koranic preschool in Morocco] by **Khadija Bouzoubaâ**

*L'éducation préscolaire au Danemark et dans les pays nordiques, tradition et démocratie* [Preschool education in Denmark and in the Nordic countries, tradition and democracy] by **Stig Broström** (Royal Danish School of Educational Studies).

**DEUXIÈME PARTIE – PART TWO: *La diversité des systemes. [Divergent Systems]***

*L'accueil des jeunes enfants aux États-Unie* [The childcare in the United States of America The admittance of young children in the United States of America] by **LaRue Allen** (Université de New York)

*L'éducation préscolaire des enfants de trois à six ans au Japon* [Preschool education for three- to six-year olds in Japan] by **Yoshinobu Kato** (Universit' d'Aichi Shukutoki)

*L'éducation préscolaire au Venezuela: programmes formels et programmes non conventionnal* [Preschool education in Venezuela: formal and non formal programs] by **Zorelys Leon** (Université de Caracas), & **Manuela Ball** (Université de Méridas)

*Éducation et droits de l'enfant* [Education and child rights] by **Bernard Combes** UNESCO, Paris)

### TROISIÈME PARTIE – PART THREE **Les voies de l'innovation [Roads of innovation]**

*L'école maternelle en Italie: le partenariat avec l'université et les services territoriaux* [Preschool in Italy: partnership with university and local authorities] by **Laura Bonica** (Université de Turin)

*L'éducation expérientielle : l'implication de l'enfant, un critère de qualité* [Experiential education: implication of the child : a qualitative criteria] by **Ferre Laevers** (Université catholique de Louvain)

*L'éducation des jeunes enfants (4-8 ans) aux Pays-Bas et son évolution* [Education of the 4-8-year-olds in the Netherlands and its evolution] by **Bert van Oers** (Université libre d'Amsterdam)

*Modes d'accueils de la petite enfance dans les années 90: transformation des structures, transformation des pratiques* [Procedures in the childcare of the youngest in the 90s: transformation of structures, transformation of practices] by Olga Baudelot (CRESAS-INRP, Paris)

### QUATRIÈME PARTIE. **De la qualité: Questions et recherches [Qualitative aspects : Questions and research**

*Pour plus de qualité dans les jardins d'enfants en Autriche* [Obtaining utmost quality in the Austrian childcare nurseries] by **Waltraut Hartmann** (Institute Charlotte Bühler, Vienne)

*La petite enfance en Italie vie quotidienne et institutions éducatives* [Young children in Italy: Everyday life and educational institutions] by **Tullia Musatti** (Cnr, Rome)

*Études expérimentales sur l'éducation préscolaire: la recherche de Sheffield* [Experimental studies of preschool education: Research in Sheffield], by **Peter K. Smith** (Goldsmith's College, Londres).

*Matériel ludique et cultures pédagogiques dans le préscolaire: les exemples de la Suède et de la France* [Play materials and educational preschool cultures: exemples from Sweden and from France] by **Birgitta Almquist** (Université d'Halmstad), and **Gilles Brougère** (GREC-Université Paris-Nord).

*Conclusion: Création culturelle et innovation dans le préscolaire* [Cultural and innovative intentions in the preschool] by **Sylvie Rayna** (CRESAS-INRP, Paris)

This anthology is a product of cross-cultural aims to

obtain an international perspective and knowledge about the preschool situation. It encompasses research in 13 countries. The content is the result of seminars organized by CRESAS-INRP and the GREC of the University Paris 13 organized and administered by **Sylvie Rayna** and **Gilles Brougère** took place from 1996 over 1998. The authors you meet in this anthology have all successively been invited to present and discuss their particular works within the theme politics, practices and representatives of the preschool education in a perspective of comparisons regarding the maintenance of culture and innovation in preschool education. The anthology exposes a multi faceted illustration of similarities as well as diversities between the different countries. Although each study originates from a national view, taken together the individual reports form a map of international childcare cultures.

### **Publication Announcements only**

**Don L. F. Nilsen**, Executive Secretary at the International Society for Humor Studies, English Linguistics, Arizona State University of Tempe, AZ 85287-0302 has produced an Encyclopedia of 20<sup>th</sup> century of American Humor. You may contact him on E-mail [don.nilsen@asu.edu](mailto:don.nilsen@asu.edu)

**Nilsen, D. L. F.** (2000). *Humor in the Twentieth-Century British Literature: A Reference Guide*. 562 pp. ISBN: 0-313-29424-0. Price: \$585  
Web site.  
<http://info.greenwood.com/bookd/0313294/0313294249>

### **Articles on toys or relevant issues in periodicals**

#### **Spaces of Childhood – A special issue**

This special issue edited by **Hugh Mathews** and **Fiona Smith** was published in *Childhood* (vol 7.3), August 2000 by Sage Contributions come mainly from scholars working in British Higher Education Geography Departments. Among other interesting topics is an article entitled *Kid customer? Commercialization of play space and the commodification of childhood*, written by **John.H. McKendrick, Michael.G. Bradford, and Anna V. Felder** (pp. 295-314).

The issue includes an annotated bibliography (pp. 359-387) by **John H. McKendrick** on *The geography of children*. The bibliography covers works mostly published in Britain over the last 20 years on topics such as *Playgrounds and Play environments* (pp.370-371), *Landscapes of consumption* (375), *Cyberspace*(pp.375-76), *Designing environments for children* (pp.376-77),

*Local politics* (384), and *Children's geographical knowledge* (pp.385-87).

### **Shades of Diversity: Issues and Strategies – A new series**

Issues facing professionals of color in the areas of health education, physical education, sport, recreation, and dance are addressed in a new series titled: *Shades of Diversity: Issues and Strategies*. It is the first time ever that series is published by the Ethnic Minorities Council of the American Association for Active Lifestyles and Fitness (AAALF).

AAALF is an association of the American Alliance for HPERD, whose mission is to promote active lifestyles and fitness for all individuals. Written by experts in the field, the monographs explore and highlight experiences, observations, and recommendations regarding various ethnic and cultural issues pertinent in their field.

The intent of the series is to address issues affecting professionals of color from a broad-based approach, including education and sports in both the school and community settings. It is designed to appeal to a cross-section of people from educators to the general public. A further purpose is to provide background reading for professional preparation in courses related to current issues in health, physical education, coaching, sociology of sport, pedagogy, diversity training in schools, staff development, and multicultural courses in education.

The articles presented in this series reflect current issues of concern to the authors, and by inference to the diverse ethnic populations of America. Volume titles include:

- I. The African American Coaching Experience
- II. Racial Attitudes in Sport: A survey of Race-Sport Competence Beliefs
- III. Health Education: Developing a Personal Purpose to Teaching
- IV. Minority Advocacy at The Ohio State University: Emphasis on Recruitment and Mentorship
- V. Motivation of Chinese Americans Participating in Organized Sport within the Chinese Community
- VI. Living in a Rainbow: Education for the Twenty-First Century
- VII. Cultural Bias in Sport and Play
- VIII. Bridges: Recruiting, Mentoring, and Retaining Minorities
- IX. Promoting Lifetime Fitness Skill Among African American Females
- X. Betting Against the Odds: Professional Sports Aspiration Among African American Males
- XI. Recruitment and Retention of Ethnic Minorities in Physical Education

The monographs are an invaluable source of information whether you work in a school, university, organization and/or community-based setting. Order your copy today and share with co-workers, staff, and other professionals in your field. Prices range from \$10.00 to \$14.00 and can be ordered by calling AAHPERD Publications: (800) 321-0789 and/or you can order on line by visiting our website [www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org). Go to publications and click on-line store catalog ordering. Visit the AAALF section to find a description of the monographs.

All major credit cards are accepted. California State University, Chico Dept. of Physical Education and Exercise Science Office: 530-898-6617

Fax: 530-898-4932

E-mail: [dlytle@csuchico.edu](mailto:dlytle@csuchico.edu)

For Release: Immediate Contact: Dr. Janet A. Seaman, Executive Director

(800) 213-7193 X431, Fax: (703) 476-9527

E: [jseaman@aahperd.org](mailto:jseaman@aahperd.org)

**Cleo Gougoulis** (1999) *The "Rules" of Mockery: Folk Humour and Symbolic Inversion in Greek Children's Pretend Play*. Acta Ethnografica Hungarica 44 (1-2): 199-208, published in the Summer edition 2000 by the Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest.

### **Official Reports from the ITRA Secretariat**

#### **ITRA Member Register 2000**

was requested by and accordingly sent to *The Official 2001 BTHA Handbook and Toy Fair Guide*, British Toy and Hobby Association, London, England. Please note that the addresses are the ones that you have sent in to the ITRA Secretariat. The register is organized both by names and by countries.

#### **Progress of ITRA**

When ITRA was formed at the University of Utrecht, September 1993, we were 16 members from 12 countries. Now ITRA has 65 members from 21 countries. The network is steadily growing. In the seven years ITRA has existed, the group has increased with 47 members, or nearly seven newcomers per year.

November 12, 2000, the ITRA Secretariat received a request from the Editors of *Yearbook of International Organizations*. The last information about ITRA was from 1998.

Editorial Department  
Yearbook of International Organizations

Union of International Associations, Rue  
Washington 40, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel: (32 2) 640 18 08  
Fax: (32 2) 643 61 99  
E-mail: [ybe@uia.be](mailto:ybe@uia.be)  
WWW: <http://www.uia.org/>

The secretariat sent in the following information

**Name of Organization:**

In English: *International Toy Research Association (ITRA)* In French: *Association internationale pour la recherche sur le jouet* Secretary, Treasurer and ITRA Newsletter editor: Birgitta Almquist, Ph.D.  
Fax (+46 60 157720) E-mail:  
[birgitta.almqvist@friiba.se](mailto:birgitta.almqvist@friiba.se)

Electronic Services: Former Website address <http://www.hh.se/dep/ncflweb> is no longer used and will be replaced. Information will be sent out as soon as a new website is decided on by ITRA President Gilles Brougère, Paris, France, and ITRA Secretary Birgitta Almquist, Sundsvall, Sweden, in collaboration with Prof. Dr. Jeffrey H. Goldstein, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

**Former Information:**

ITRA was founded 10 Sep 1993, in Utrecht (Netherlands). Registered in accordance with French law, 1998, Angoulême (France).  
Aims: To stimulate further research on the role of toys, in the everyday life of human beings, particularly for children in their [home environment] as well as in [preschool] and compulsory [school] to meet their demands of good, secure and fun toys for joy and learning.

Structure Board (9). President, Secretary/Treasurer, and 7 delegates.

Finances: Members' dues: US\$ 50.

Activities: Initiate cross-national studies.

Events, Meetings: Angoulême (France) 1997, Halmstad (Sweden) 1999.

Publications: ITRA Newsletter, 2-4 a year.

January 1, 2001 ITRA has 65 members from 21 countries Af: Morocco.

Am: Brazil, Canada, and U.S.A.

As: India, Israel, Korea.

Au: Australia.

Eu: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, UK.

ITRA Secretariat official post address is: ITRA c/o Dr Birgitta Almquist, Nybrogatan 39, S-Sundsvall, Sweden.

Finally three questions were to be replied:

Q: Official and/or working languages:

R: English

Q: How many staff members are there (please specify full part-time, paid or voluntary)?

R: ITRA has no employees.

Q: If your organization has been granted consultative status by an intergovernmental body, we shall insert a mention when we receive the official list.

R: ITRA has not been granted consultative status by an intergovernmental body Q: Please indicate any intergovernmental bodies with which your organization has formal contacts.

Reply: The Association of the Study of Play (TASP)

January 2, 2001

Birgitta Almquist, Ph.D.

ITRA Secretary/Treasurer, Editor of ITRA Newsletter.

## LAST MINUTE NEWS!

THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ITRA CONFERENCE ON TOYS, GAMES AND MEDIA WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, LONDON, ENGLAND, 19-22 AUGUST 2002.

Confirmation and call for papers will soon be sent out. For more information, please contact ITRA President Gilles Brougère on E-mail:

[brougere@lshs.univ-paris13.fr](mailto:brougere@lshs.univ-paris13.fr)

## NEWS FROM TOYLAND

### LEGO company closed own in South America

Swedish Toy Review January/February 2001 reports that LEGO has closed down its business activities in Argentina, Brazil and Chile after severe losses. Already in 1998 the LEGO closed its factory in Brazil and began delivering directly from Denmark, an enterprizw that which became too expensive because of the devaluation in Brazil the following year.

### Game Boy, a popular guy still going strong

Swedish Toy Revue reports that Game Boy can celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> year on the Nordic Market, being more popular than ever. All from 1990, the portable little computerized game player have become smaller in size, more light weighted, and less energy consumptive. In spite of repeated pessimistic opinions from a joined expertise saying that the product would not last long, sales have been more and more increasing over the years. Totally 100 millions of Game Boys have been sold all over the world and is the most sold game system ever. In the Nordic countries alone as many as 1, 076, 729 Game Boys had been sold when year 2000 became year .2001.

The reason Nintendo's little "boy" is so popular is believed partly to be its unique capacity to create

entertaining games, and – lately – by incorporating Pokémon in the family. Pokémon, which has conquered a whole world, actually emanates from Game Boy game units. Swedish Toy Revue also reports a totally new portable game unit, Game Boy Advance – is being released in Japan. Parents, you'd better hold on to your wallets! From Japan this novelty will most probably and very soon blow with like a storm towards the west world.

### **BRIO Friends**

The Swedish toy producer BRIO is famous all over the world, primarily for its high quality wooden toys.

January 18<sup>th</sup> was a debut for an entirely new product line, BRIO Friends. Soon after the “coming out” day, maybe at this very moment, product which is intended for one to three -year-olds, is meeting the gathered trade at toy fairs in Paris, Toronto, London, Nüremberg, and New York. The toy trade people will meet Billy Blue, Freddy Clown and other little characters in the family

If you have ever seen a BRIO toy you will recognize the new toy family as part of the unique BRIO toy family. You will find that the colors and the forms are still there, and you will meet the classic BRIO clown, the wooden train and railway.

It does take a lot of trade skill to develop a new toy. One aspect is how children in different age spans are handling the object, and what help a child can need to get the best out of it. One novelty is the mixing of materials such as wood, plastic, and textile, because texture is important to little ones. Another novelty in the new product is a special magnet, assumed to be of help for tiny little fingers, and the vision is that by using the new toy family, the young player will develop fine motor training.

### **Children's little corner**

Dear God, my dad says that being a child is the best thing in the world. Please tell him that it's no fun at all when you're not allowed to stay up late and watch something.

Television is a mystery for little children even in our modern time. Little Peter was surprised to hear that granny, though living miles away, could watch the same TV-programs as Peter. Granny explained that everyone who is watching the same program on one and the same TV-channel at one and the same time did in fact see the same people on their TV-screen. Peter's face lit up as he took in the explanation: Now I think I've got it, but I can you me too on your screen when you watch the same program as I do.

## **EDITOR'S EPILOGUE**

### **AN ECONOMIC MATTER**

To help financing the future of ITRA secretariat it is of importance that we all pay an annual fee, A board decision is that \$50 can cover the costs for office equipment and administration of ITRA Newsletter, plus E-mail correspondence between the secretariat and the members all over the world.

Apart from welcoming your money contribution, the Editor welcomes written materials from you, no matter whether it is small or big as long as it is relevant to our joined interest in play and toys. If you have changed work address, and/or E-mail address, please let the ITRA Secretariat know. ITRA address register is continually being updated.

**A Bank account has been opened for member fees:**  
**Please transfer your annual fee for 2001, 50\$, to account number 3036 22 05 167:**  
**Swift address NBBKSESS, Nordbanken, 851 92, Sundsvall, Sweden**

**ITRA MEMBERSHIP  
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Please mail your application to  
[birgitta.almqvist@friba.se](mailto:birgitta.almqvist@friba.se)