

ITRA E-NEWSLETTER



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EDITORIAL. Helena Kling, Editor.

That we are excited about the approaching birth of our **website** is shown by the flurry of e-mails it has engendered. **Stuart Nolan** of Huddersfield University is organising its setting up. In **Jeffrey's** words *the website will serve three functions: a source of information about toy research; a means for individuals with common interests to find one another and as a brochure for ITRA World Congresses*. The domain name is under discussion at present and of the many wordings put forward **Tizuko** advises *toyresearchITRA*. **Cleo** not only suggested that past newsletters will be available on the site but is also preparing them in PDF form. It follows that whatever shall appear in a newsletter will be available on the website so our next newsletter will be in PDF format. **Malena**, on behalf of her team, has offered the use of the design, source code and database of the web page that was set up for the conference in Alicante. The good quality logo their graphic designer made has already been sent to Stuart. The curricula vitae that Board Members sent to the Secretary will appear on the website. It is asked that articles for inclusion in the website be sent to the Secretary of ITRA itrnewsletter@gmail.com.

The **Fourth ITRA Congress TOYS AND INNOVATION** was held in Alicante 6th, 7th and 8th July 2005. It was run at a very high standard. Gisela, our then President, thanked our hosts, AIJU on our behalf. Many participants commented that they had never been to such a well catered conference. As the format of a newsletter is inadequate to deal with a Congress the website shall, of course, encompass it so please send items and your best pictures to the Secretary for inclusion in our website. The AIJU pre-Conference website remains at <http://www.ajju.info/ivthitracongress/>. After the Conference **Professor Jeffrey Goldstein** wrote to us all that "The Alicante meeting was first-rate, very enjoyable, with many papers of top quality. I think ITRA comes away from the meeting rejuvenated, not only because of the addition of younger scholars to the Executive Board, but also because of the lively nature of the meeting itself. My impression is that, after three days of meetings, people left, not exhausted but enthusiastic about the Congress and looking forward to the next one." The **Fifth ITRA Congress** will be July 2008 in Naflion, Greece. **Dr. Cleo Goulgulis** began work on the arrangements on her return to Greece after the Congress.

Helena Kling is the present Secretary of I.T.R.A.

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Helena is the Head of *The Educational Centre for Games in Israel*. (E.C.G.I.)



LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends and Colleagues,
Greetings. Thank you for trusting me with the role of ITRA President.

It is indeed an honour and it will be a joyful opportunity for me to work with you all. My association with the world of toy design and research began some twenty five years ago when I was teaching industrial design students at the National Institute of Design in India. I was intrigued by our indigenous dynamic toys, most of which were outstanding in their creativity, innovation and design .So many questions arose in the toy workshops I ran for children, teachers and design students. What makes a toy interesting and valuable? Why are some toys popular across cultures? Can we learn from toys? How do we go about designing a new toy? These questions have not been fully resolved even today but in the process I learned a lot from children and those working with them.

My association with ITRA began in 1996 when I attended the World Conference held in Halmstad University. It was a welcome surprise to meet toy researchers, delegates from the toy industry and representatives of institutions from all over the world. That was when I had my first meeting with Brian Sutton-Smith a remarkable toy researcher and a creative player. Yet, even after the second World Conference in 1999, my doubts concerning the inadequacies of the working relationship between researchers and the toy industry continued. The Third ITRA World Conference, in London, highlighted the changing contexts of toy research. This major program was planned and brought to realisation by Jeffrey Goldstein. Thanks to the organisational skills of our hosts in Alicante, the Fourth ITRA World Conference gave insight into the interfacing of business and research.

I feel that ITRA has made a considerable contribution to the working relationships between research and practice. Together we can strengthen its networking, especially with institutions and individuals from countries not sufficiently represented in the field. We shall continue to share news of research ideas, projects and activities.

May we all work together with joy and playfulness.

Thank you again.

Warm Regards.

Sudarshan Khanna

Do visit Sudarshan's charming web site. www.sudarshankhanna.com

He heads the Toy Centre and the *Toy Design and Development* Post Graduate Programme at the National Institute of Design, India.

In 1995 the Government of India gave him the National Award for Lifetime Work in promoting Design Science among children.

The books he has authored are fascinating. Let us hope that at the next conference we may see something from the many films that have been made about his work.

Besides being our President he is also the Chairperson of the "Toys for Tomorrow-Vision Action Forum" which brings the toy industry, toy designers, educators and researchers together.

LETTER FROM OUR VICE-PRESIDENT

Professor Gisela Wegener-Spoehring is our past president and is now, ex-officio, our vice-president. We all thank her for her efforts on behalf of ITRA and were sorry to hear that her exertions concerning the visit to India on our behalf led to her being unwell.

At the conference in Alicante she thanked our hosts on our behalf for the success of the proceedings pointing out their empathy and strictness. She mentioned especially Malena Fabregat and Maria Costa. Gisela told us how proud she is of ITRA's development and its growing worldwide membership. She expects that the outcome of the Conference is that participants will take upon themselves the work of strengthening contacts between industry and science. University researchers should not confine themselves in ivory towers and people in industry should take scientific results seriously. *Play is a world that demands respect, care and protection* are the words that Gisela repeated in both her opening and closing remarks. Thank you Gisela for your adroit and capable chairing, for your immediate administration of formal matters concerning the association and for your elegant delivery.

Gisela, a founder member of ITRA, began her career as a primary school teacher. She achieved her doctorate in 1978 and her professorship in 1995. From 2002 she has held the Chair for Education at the University of Koln, the largest university in Germany. It has the largest teachers' training department in Europe. In her leisure time Gisela is a passionate runner.

<http://www.uni-koeln.de/ew-fak/paedagogik/wegener-spoehring/>



(The Minutes of the meetings of the Board and the General Meeting (including the list of the Board Members) was sent as an E-Bulletin to the address list of members and friends of ITRA last October. I am willing to e-mail them to anyone, on request. Helena.)



Professor Brian Sutton-Smith, a founder member of ITRA, opened the Congress in Alicante. Not only was it an honour and a source of pride to us that he was present at the Congress but his scintillating and humorous lecture kept in mind the down to earth, rowdiness of play – an element often put aside. The autobiographical stories with which he illustrated his points are unforgettable. Brian has given us a list of sources relevant to his presentation. It will be available on the website.

Brian Sutton-Smith is Professor Emeritus of Education and Folklore, University of Pennsylvania . Since 1960 he has written and edited numerous books on games, play and learning and has received a large number of awards and honours.

The BRIO Prize is awarded annually by the Lennart Ivarsson Scholarship Fund to eminent researchers or organisations. The award aims at highlighting successful scientific efforts in the areas of play, of toys and of the importance of play for children's development and for organisations that influence the development of children and young people

BRIO Prize 2004

At a ceremony in Osby, Sweden on 29th of October 2004 **Dr. Jean -Pierre Rossie**, one of ITRA's founding members, received the BRIO Prize. On behalf of the jury Mr. Dag Ivarsson praised " *the value of Jean-Pierre's research on North African children's play and toys and its contribution to our knowledge about the links between cultures.*" As usual Jean-Pierre's modesty is apparent in his presentation of his innovative work. Read Jean-Pierre's speech [here](#) Jean-Pierre' work is available on **SITREC website**. www.sitrec.kth.se

BRIO Prize 2005

Dr. Cleo Gougoulis was awarded the BRIO Prize 2005 on 2nd. December for "her years of scientific studies, which specifically concentrate ethno-geographically and historically on the cultural and socioconditional aspects of children's toys' journey from the manufacturing industry, into children's rooms, and eventually as exhibits in museums ". Cleo, a founder member of ITRA is currently ITRA's treasurer. She is an anthropologist working on a free lance basis for the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation in Nafplion, Greece. She teaches courses on the anthropology of play at Greek Universities and is general editor of the journal *Ethnographica*. Cleo has edited two interdisciplinary volumes on play and is currently working on a book of *Folklore Studies of Greek Children's Play 1850-1950*.

A press release including a fuller description of Cleo's work was sent to members of ITRA in an e-bulletin in December. Amongst the comments received afterwards was this from Brian Sutton-Smith; "Cheers for Cleo --a great choice"; and from Birgitta Almquist; "I was the one that nominated her and know all about it. Cleo was one of the invited initiator of ITRA in 1993, and we have been friends and colleagues ever since. I respect her and her work very much, and have her over 300 pp thesis on my desk. he is a very modest researcher (sic.)and indeed with her thesis and other writings she has managed to insert some valuable cultural aspects into toy research business. Since I was the first to receive the scholarship some fifteen years ago, is every year asked by them to nominate someone . (I have honoured Birgitta's request not to edit her contributions. Ed.)

NEWS FROM COLLEAGUES

Some of you who were acquainted with **Denise Garon** may not have heard of her demise after suffering with cancer. **Adriana Friedmann** let us know that Denise died in Quebec on 23rd. November. Denise developed ESAR a system of classification and analysis of play and toys.

It is described on the website <http://www.quaidesludes.com/esar/esar.htm>

Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto a member of our Board, writes from Brazil; "We are organizing a new website about play and toys with articles, digitalized videos of play and teacher training, images of toys and children's' play, workshops, and many other things including games to learn Braille. We invite those of you who read Portugese to join us in building a network to study play and education. www.labrimp.fe.usp.br. (I especially enjoyed the pictures of the playroom with its diaphanous hangings and shiny clothes for dressing up. Ed.)

Maria Regina Ofele in Argentina is the director of the Institute for Research and Education in Play. She writes in their webpage that "The Institute was set up to deepen the subject of Play with a broader criterion, without any restriction to a discipline in particular. We believe it is necessary to provide our Institute with a more regional profile, blending the particular and specific visions of our country and those of Latin America." [María Regina Öfele, Ph.D.](#)

There is an English version of their website available www.instituto.ws

Their elegant newsletter is at <http://www.instituto.ws/iifj/esp/cap09.htm>

Dr. Toy (a.k.a. [Stevanne Auerbach, Ph.D.](#)) has completed the latest instalment of her [100 Best Children's Products](#) . The list includes 2005's [10 Best Products](#) in the following categories: Active Products, Audio/Visual Products, Creative Products, Educational Products, Games, High-Tech Products, Socially Responsible Products, and Toys. <http://www.drtoy.com/>

Yasuyo Koizumi the Director of the Japanese National Council of Toy Libraries was awarded the Medal with a Green Ribbon from the Japanese Government last November. Congratulations! Do let us know how the Celebration Party went.

The publications of many ITRA members appear on **Don Nilsen's** listing of **PLAY, GAMES, AND SPORTS**. Contact Don don.nilsen@asu.edu and ask him to send it to you if you have never seen it.

During the Conference mentions were made of the good service available at the [Children's Play Information Service](#). (Your Editor visits there and renews her membership whenever she is in London.) The National Children's Bureau's Library and Information Service has a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary collection of books, journals and literature on all aspects of children's and young people's social care, health and education. It is the largest collection of resources about children's and young people's issues in the U.K. <http://www.ncb.org.uk> . A complete list of the library's journal holdings is [available here](#) . The library is open to visitors by

appointment so do contact **Anna Kassman-McKerrell** cpis@ncb.org.uk before you arrive in London. (Mention that you got the information in the ITRA newsletter and that you are an ITRA member or friend of the association.) Look up the address in the A-Z carefully before your visit as the roads in that particular area of London "just grew".

TOY EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

"Toys for Tomorrow". The first workshop of "Toys for Tomorrow Forum" was held in December 2003 with the purpose of sharing ideas and experiences and to evolve specific directions to lead to collaborative programs and projects. The Second International Workshop was held from the 22nd. to the 25th. February, 2006 at The National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad , India. It was an intensive experience for the participant professionals in the field. The future oriented workshop led to an international exchange of ideas and experiences. toyforum@nid.edu www.nid.edu

The **BTHA Toy Fair 2006** was organised by the British Toy and Hobby Association on 25 -28 January in London. Several members of ITRA attended. www.toyfair.co.uk

The theme of the **TASP 2006** conference is **"The Power of Play."** It will be held May 17 to 21 at Brock University in St. Catharines , Ontario, Canada.

For information about submission of a proposal, consult the website or contact:

Dr. Ann Marie Guilmette, First Vice-President, and 2006 TASP Conference Chair, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Brock University, 500 Glenridge Ave., St. Catharines, Ontario, L2S 3A1, Canada, Phone: 905-688-5550, Ext. 3124; Fax: 905-984-4843; E-mail: aguilmette@brocku.ca

Website for TASP is <http://www.csuchico.edu/kine/tasp/>

The **Japanese National Council of Toy Libraries** has moved to new offices next to the Kabuki Theatre in Ginza, Tokyo. renrakukai@toylib.or.jp

The **International Colloquium on Board Games Studies** invites all scholars to submit articles in the area of board game research at Colloquia IX which will be held in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil May 3rd to 6th, 2006 . tatiane@origem.com.br.

The purpose of the Colloquium is to illustrate individual research, to discuss the role of board games in the academic arena, and to enhance multidisciplinary cooperation in games research. The **International Society for Board Game Studies** www.boardgamesstudies.org/ is an interdisciplinary group dedicated to research on board games and the history and development of board games around the world. Some of the research is very general and examines board games as a part of play and learning in different cultures. Other studies relate to specific board games and their evolution. The Board Game Studies colloquia began as Board Games in Academia, following a preliminary gathering in the early 1990s in England, hosted by Irving Finkel, (The Big Game Hunter,) curator (keeper) of the Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum .

The **10th. International Conference of Toy Libraries** was held in Pretoria, Tswane, in South Africa in September 2005.

The **British Library website** lists associations and publications connected to the Toys and Games industry. You get to it by pasting

<http://www.bl.uk/collections/business/toysindu.htm> Searching for "toys" there comes

up with some gems. However certain classes of material are not included in the British National Bibliography. In some cases this is because they are more properly included elsewhere. Some classes of material, e.g. toys and games, are considered as being outside the remit of the national bibliography.

A US Patent has been granted for a "toy gas-fired missile and launcher assembly" (US patent 6,055,910). The gas in question? Colonic gas generated by the user. The actual patent application will be available on our website. Reading it is a gas.



Message from our Treasurer

ITRA 2006 Fees Notice

Annual membership: 50 EUROS

Retiree/ Student membership: 25 EUROS

Payments may be made;

- a) through bank transfer to the following account number

International Toy Research Association, <i>National Bank of Greece, Pal. Phaliro branch 175</i> Account number: 175/480074.53 IBAN Number: GR16 0110 1750 0000 1754 8007 453 SWIFT: ETHNGRAA
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- b) by sending an International Money Order, payable to ITRA, to the treasurer at the following address:

Cleo Gougoulis 54 Ag. Alexandrou St. P. Phaleron, 175 61 Athens Greece
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Please notify me by sending an e-mail to: cleogou@yahoo.gr
when you send your fees to the bank.

Mention what amount and in which currency you paid.

Regards from,
Cleo Gougoulis
ITRA treasurer
cleogougoulis@yahoo.gr

Members who attended the Alicante conference are exempted from 2006 dues. Also, please note that the last ITRA meeting in Alicante on August 8th 2005, decided that conference fees in the future will cover ITRA membership fees for three years.