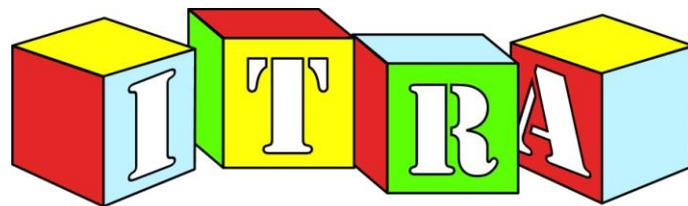


ITRA NEWSLETTER

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**INTERNATIONAL TOY
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

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PROLOGUE

The 7th ITRA conference was for many of us a memorable event during 2014 and we, the editorial team, would like to thank all of those who worked so hard, in many cases above and beyond the call of duty, and gave so much to create such wonderful memories for us all! You can read more about them in this issue.



The editorial team would like to welcome Jeffrey Goldstein, Koumudi Patil and Greta Pennell as the latest members of the ITRA Board. We also offer our heartfelt thanks to the outgoing board members, Gilles Brougère, Jean-Pierre Rossie and Miriam Morante, for all their years of service to the board and the toy research community.

The International Toy Research Association Newsletter is designed to keep members up to date with research in the fields of toys and play. In this issue, readers will find messages from both our new and our outgoing ITRA presidents, a review of the 2014 ITRA World Conference held in Braga, Portugal, a Member's Profile, the Members' Forum, information on the 2014 ITRA-BTHA Prize winners, various publications, conference previews and reviews, as well as some insightful reflections from first time conference goers! The newsletter has been formatted to allow the document to be read in either printed form or as a soft copy, which can be found on the ITRA website.

The ITRA website (<http://www.itratoyresearch.org>.) covers the following: a description of ITRA, a brief history of the association, how to become a member, and a catalogue of downloadable newsletters.

Those of you who promised material that never arrived... send it again. For those who made contributions, without which there would be many more blank spaces, a massive thank you.

Enjoy the Newsletter.

CONTENTS

Prologue.....	1
Greetings from the president of ITRA.....	2
Message from the past president of ITRA.....	3
Review of 7 th ITRA World Conference.....	4
Special Feature – My experience as a first-timer at an ITRA Conference.....	5
Special Feature – Support team comments.....	6
2014 ITRA-BTHA Prize for Outstanding Toy Research.....	8
Member Profile – Anthony D. Pellegrini.....	10
Members' Forum.....	12
Conferences & Exhibitions.....	14
Future Conferences.....	14
Past Conferences.....	14
Current Exhibitions.....	15
Past Exhibitions.....	16
Publications & Books.....	17
Miscellaneous News.....	19
ITRA 2015 Fees Notice.....	20
Epilogue.....	21

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ITRA

Dear ITRA colleagues and friends,



Thank you for assigning to me the prestigious role of president and for contributing to an enjoyable and informative 7th ITRA World Conference in Braga, Portugal. The feedback thus far has been overwhelmingly positive from the 83 delegates, who enjoyed both the scientific and the social program organised by the conference scientific and organizing committees. On behalf of the board, I would like to reiterate our thanks to Luisa Magalhães (the conference chair), and her dedicated family, Catarina Leite (organising committee) and our Portuguese hosts, in particular Professors Miguel Gonçalves and Augusto Soares da Silva at the Catholic University of Portugal, Faculty of Philosophy in Braga. I would also like to offer my thanks to Luisa's minions, the resourceful and cheerful team of students who assisted in the smooth running of such an important event for international toy research.

For those of you unable to attend, many top quality papers were presented to a knowledgeable and enthusiastic audience. Plenary keynotes, presentations and symposia prompted discussion on the many aspects of the relationship between toys, language and communication, which was the primary conference theme. Discussion topics ranged from technology and design to issues on health, gender, ethnicity issues, toys in times of crisis, globalization and evolving toy cultures. The wide diversity of the research disciplines represented is one of the key features of our international association.

Once again, the quality of the research was highlighted in the awarding of the ITRA-BTHA prizes for outstanding toy research. The Senior Prize was awarded to Marc Steinberg and the Student Prize awarded to Koumudi Patil. On behalf of ITRA, I would like to thank the British Toy and Hobby Association for their continued and longstanding support of our association and the prize. The ITRA-BTHA Prize is an important event in promoting excellence in toy research and the prizes have been awarded to deserving, innovative and significant works. The conference was honoured to host the awarding of the Lennhart Ivarsson Foundation BRIO Prize. Sudarshan Khanna and Michel Manson were awarded the 2013 and 2014 BRIO prizes respectively for their noteworthy contribution to toy research.

ITRA conferences are often catalysts for renewed vigour and interest in all things toys, friendships rekindled, new and interesting networks established, and the potential for successful collaborations and ground-breaking projects. A number of new researchers joined ITRA at the Braga conference and expressed their interest in contributing to the dissemination of information on toy research.

During the conference a new board was elected. On behalf of ITRA, I would like to sincerely thank Gilles Brougère, Jean-Pierre Rossie and Miriam Morante for all their efforts and passion over the past few years and wish them all the very best for the future. I would like to formally welcome Jeffrey Goldstein, Koumudi Patil and Greta Pennell, and look forward to their dynamism and contribution to the association's board.

The board is currently engaged in strategic discussions regarding membership, membership annual dues and the location of the forthcoming ITRA conference. The aim is to build on the association's core toy research strengths - the diversity of disciplines and nationalities represented - while reviewing processes to enhance the association's accessibility to practitioners and students engaged in toy research.

Regarding the next conference, a number of exciting proposals have been submitted, which include; Denmark, Finland, the UK and a couple of options in the USA. The intention would be to hold the 8th ITRA World Conference sometime in 2017. The location will be confirmed over the next couple of months.

In the meantime, I would like to wish you all a memorable festive period and an even better 2015!

Mark Allen
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MESSAGE FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT OF ITRA



It is my pleasure to hand the torch of ITRA president to Dr. Mark Allen, Serious Fun Research Labs. Mark has served as our able ITRA webmaster and co-editor of the ITRA Newsletter since 2008 - initially with Helena Kling and Suzy Seriff, and since 2011 with Suzy Seriff and Kati Heljakka. It is thanks to the diligence and excellent cooperation of our fantastic editorial teams that you have been kept up to date with the latest news on toy research for all these years.

ITRA has emerged with renewed energy and ideas from the last conference in Braga and we can only be grateful to Luisa Magalhães and her team at the Catholic University of Portugal for their hard work, careful planning and warm hospitality. Furthermore, ground-breaking international prize winning papers were presented to a large audience during the ITRA-BTHA prize and the BRIO prize sessions.

The board was also renewed in Braga as old members (Gilles Brougère, Jean-Pierre Rossie and Miriam Morante) left the board, paving the way for the entrance of new members (Jeffrey Goldstein, Koumudi Patil, Greta Pennell). I would like to express my gratitude to all outgoing members and especially to Gilles Brougère and Jean-Pierre Rossie who have contributed in many ways to the success of many ITRA conferences by offering their advice, help, guidance, friendship and scholarship. I would also like to thank board members and ITRA membership for entrusting me with the position of president for the past 2 years and for the period 2006-2011. I wish best of luck to our new president, Mark Allen, and my fellow board members with whom I will be sharing responsibilities from the position of vice-president and temporary treasurer.

Best wishes and season's greetings to you all,

Cleo Gougoulis
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REVIEW of 7th ITRA WORLD CONFERENCE

The Association holds international conferences every three years. So far seven international conferences have been organized: Halmstad, Sweden (1996 & 1999), London, England (2002), Alicante, Spain (2005), Nafplion, Greece (2008), Bursa, Turkey (2011), and most recently, Braga, Portugal (2014).



TOYS as LANGUAGE and COMMUNICATION

The 7th ITRA World Conference was held in conjunction with the Catholic University of Portugal's Faculty of Philosophy in Braga, Portugal, and took place 23rd - 25th July 2014. There were 83 participants from 19 countries, including Brazil, Canada, China, India, Mexico, USA and most European countries, plus many scholars from the host country, Portugal.

The Braga conference will be remembered for the warm hospitality of Luisa Magalhães and her willing team of assistants, our University hosts and the picturesque town of Braga. Conference highlights include Steven Kline's plenary lecture, the ITRA-BTHA Awards and BRIO Prize sessions, the Ponte de Lima social event, and the diversity of participants, represented in both nationality and toy-related disciplines.

Plenary keynotes, presentations and symposia covered a wide variety of subjects including; the history of toys, the relationship between toys and culture, toys in times of crisis, the various processes in toy production and design, toys used in education and as education, toys as language and communication, intergenerational play and toys, toys used in rural and urban settings, toys in storytelling, gender and toy choices, toys and health related matters, museum toy collections, the application of toys and games, playground toys, mass-manufactured and toys made by craftspersons, to mention but a few.

The ITRA-BTHA prizes were awarded during the 7th World Conference of ITRA. The Senior Prize was awarded to Marc Steinberg for *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan*, and the Student Prize awarded to Koumudi Patil, for '*Craftsmanly Thinking: Studying the Dilemma of Change and Identity in Banarasi Khilonas.*' The Lennhart Ivarsson Foundation awarded Sudarshan Khanna and Michel Manson the 2013 and 2014 BRIO prizes respectively. Michel presented his research on the history of toys and received his award at the BRIO prize session during the 7th ITRA World Conference.

The ITRA conference concluded with a closing ceremony, with special thanks to all those involved and a General Members Meeting in which the new board was elected. During the subsequent ITRA Board meeting members were elected to the following positions:

Mark Allen (UK, President and Editor-in-Chief)
Jeffrey Goldstein (Netherlands)
Cleo Gougoulis (Greece, Vice-President & Treasurer)
Katrina Heljakka (Finland, Editorial Team)
Luisa Magalhães (Portugal)
Koumudi Patil (India)
Greta Pennell (USA)
Susan Seriff (USA, Secretary & Editorial Team)
Lieselotte Van Leeuwen (UK)

SPECIAL FEATURE - My experience as a first-timer at an ITRA Conference

By Danielle Barbosa Lins de Almeida



Dr. Danielle Barbosa Lins de Almeida is a postdoctoral candidate at the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras at the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is also a lecturer at the Department of Modern Foreign Languages (DLEM) at the Federal University of Paraíba, Brazil, and holds a PhD from the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), with joint supervision on Visual Communication at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia.

Her publications include *New Perspectives on Visual Analysis: From Text to Context* (2015, in press), *Perspectives on Visual Analysis: from Photojournalism to Blog* (2008), as well as scientific articles in international journals such as *Visual Communication* (2009) and book chapters such as the *Handbook of Visual Communication*, edited by David Machin (De Gruyter Mouton, 2014). Danielle coordinates the *Visual Semiotics and Multimodality Research Group* (<http://gpsmultimodalidade.weebly.com/>)

Why did I take so long to hear about the ITRA Conference?

This is something I myself cannot explain but since I believe that things happen when they are meant to, I'm pretty sure that I was meant to make my way to the ITRA Conference in Braga in 2014.

As a linguist, I had been doing research about the semiotic choices of toy advertisements for over 10 years, when I got an email from a fellow academic in 2013 telling me how much the upcoming ITRA Conference in Braga had to do with my object of investigation. At the time, I was doing my post-doctoral research at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina and had temporarily interrupted my toy studies for research into images of self-representation in social networks.

My story with toy studies begins back in 2002 when I started my PhD research about the verbal and visual choices that guide the marketing materials for the Brazilian doll *Susi* and the North-American dolls known as *The Bratz*. I was particularly interested in examining some gender issues reverberating in the ads of these two dolls. I was convinced by the fact that toys constrain the way children see the world as they also play a fundamental role in constructing social (and gender) identities. The innovative nature of the linguistic approach I was using to analyze my dolls' ads allowed me to fly to Australia in order to learn more about a technique known as "Visual Grammar," which provided me an opportunity to publish articles on the subject, take part in seminal conferences in the field of Linguistics, and somehow foster my reputation as a toy researcher in the Brazilian academic context.

But I guess I didn't feel like a real toy researcher myself until I got to Braga this year. What I was missing, in fact, was the opportunity to be together with other toy researchers from different contexts and perspectives -- a gap the ITRA Conference could definitely fill. Once in Braga, as a first-comer at the ITRA Conference, I couldn't hide my childish enthusiasm to get to know in person those names whose works I had read during my years as a PhD researcher. Kishimoto, Brougère, Kline, they were all there, and I was feeling like an undergraduate student again!



At the Toy Museum in Ponte de Lima

Something I really loved about the ITRA Conference 2014 was the intimate nature of the event, which not only allowed us to get to know each other by our names while sharing a table over lunch but also helped us to check up on most colleagues' presentations so as to see what they are doing in terms of research in their cultural contexts as well as exchange ideas. After all, shouldn't that be the real purpose of any conference?



Before a delicious dinner in Ponte de Lima with friends from the Conference

I once heard that what makes a special place is the way people contribute to make us feel at home. I definitely felt at home in Braga and now I'm really hopeful that I can take part in future ITRA conferences.



Are Brazilians good dancers?

My very special thanks to Luisa Magalhães, Catarina Leite and Cleo Gougouli, for kindly encouraging me both to take part in the conference and to apply for financial support through the ITRA prize, which, together with the funding from the Brazilian agency of the Ministry of Education CNPq, allowed me to be at the ITRA Conference in Braga this year.

SPECIAL FEATURE – Support Team comments

The Editorial Team received the following comments from Luisa Magalhães', conference support team. We include them here in recognition that it "takes a village to raise a (child) conference," and in thanks again to their generosity of time, spirit, and energy!

Firstly, **Catarina Leite**, Organising Committee Chair:

ITRA Braga 2014 foi o primeiro congresso que organizei na totalidade desde que estou na Faculdade de Filosofia. E foi o melhor de sempre! Eu e a Luísa Magalhães trabalhamos muito mas também divertimo-nos muito a fazer este congresso acontecer. Obrigada a todos os delegados pelo vosso trabalho, entusiasmo e simpatia. Estamos à espera do próximo ITRA em Braga!



The ITRA Conference Braga 2014 was the first conference I organized from the outset, since I started working at Faculty of Philosophy. And it was the best conference ever! Luisa Magalhães and I worked hard and had a lot of fun making the conference happen. Thank you to all the delegates for your presentations, enthusiasm and kindness. We are waiting for the next ITRA in Braga!

Catarina Freitas, 3rd year Communication student:

For me the ITRA Conference was one of the best and more enriching experiences of my academic life. This event gave me the opportunity to meet nice, intelligent and fun people. ITRA showed me that toys are not just for kids and we all should keep a little bit of the child who lives inside us. Thank you for the opportunity to meet you all, for the affection and, of course, for the laughs.

João Moura, Conference logo designer and photographer:

It was a good homecoming. We had three days of hard work, a lot of camaraderie and "play" and I met people from around the world. I have that good feeling of accomplishment. I tried to be a very helpful person and was eager to help others, together with all the competence of the Conference staff mostly composed of students from the Department of Communication Sciences, Faculty of Philosophy, the Portuguese Catholic University, Braga.



Rita Macedo, 2nd year Communication student:

I never thought waking up so early could be so easy! A Conference that is in memory of those who participated in it. Thanks ITRA.

Cláudia Carvalho, 2nd year Communication student:

I very much enjoyed the ITRA Conference; it was quite fun! In addition to the experience of belonging to the Conference staff, which was very enriching, I really appreciated all of the people with whom I had the opportunity to socialize. The most rewarding day for me in my journey along this Conference, was the first day when all the participants gathered at the end of the day for the cocktail and "dancing" and all lived and played a lot, matching the main objective of the Conference. Thank you all!

Andreia Marques, 2nd year Communication student:

Joining the ITRA Conference was like going back to childhood. A contagious joy. Three days of commitment, but in the end we were always compensated with good humour. It was important because we created links with people from other countries. Thanks to everyone who participated and made this the best Conference!

Thank you, Gracias, OBRIGADA

Kisses, Besos, Beijos!!

Sara Lopes, 2nd year Communication student:

Joining the ITRA Conference staff was a memorable experience. It was a conference with lots of entertainment and much sympathy. Feeling the gratitude and sympathy of the participants was one of the best things. Seeing the smiles on their faces was unforgettable. It was certainly an experience I would gladly repeat.



Ana Cristina Santos, 2nd year Communication student:

ITRA was a very rewarding experience where everyone helped one another. An experience where we all had fun and I wouldn't mind repeating it! An experience I will never forget; that I will keep for life. We even made friends during ITRA. It is and will be something good to remember!

Catarins Isabel Gouveia (11) volunteer staff participant©!

I enjoyed the ITRA Conference; it was a really nice experience! It's well done, I think all the people liked it, and I hope my mother can do another ITRA with more persons. I will never forget ITRA.

2014 ITRA-BTHA PRIZE FOR OUTSTANDING TOY RESEARCH

By Jeffrey Goldstein

The ITRA-BTHA Prizes for outstanding toy research were awarded on 24th July 2014 at the ITRA World Conference in Braga, Portugal. Natasha Crookes introduced the BTHA and the *Make Time 2 Play* campaign. Jeffrey Goldstein announced the two ITRA-BTHA Prize winners for 2014.

The purpose of the ITRA-BTHA Prize is to recognise outstanding toy research. To qualify for the prize, the work must have been conducted or published since the previous ITRA World Conference and be submitted by the researcher or nominated by a member of ITRA. Papers, either published or unpublished, in any area of toy research, are eligible. Research on the uses, design, and effects of toys in child development, education, science, and medicine are considered for the awards. Theoretical and historical papers will also be considered as long as these are linked to potential research.

The Awards Committee evaluates applications on the basis of originality, the significance of the work, creativity, methodology, clarity of presentation, and importance. The committee faced difficult choices among several outstanding candidates. The ITRA Awards Committee consists of Gilles Brougère (France), Cleo Gougoulis (Greece), Sudarshan Khanna (India), Lydia Plowman (U.K.), and Jeffrey Goldstein (Netherlands).

The winners of the ITRA-BTHA Prize for 2014 are Marc Steinberg for *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan*. The 2014 ITRA-BTHA Student Prize is awarded to Koumudi Patil, for her doctoral dissertation at the Indian Institute of Technology, '*Craftsmanly Thinking: Studying the Dilemma of Change and Identity in Banarasi Khilonas*.'

Patil, an anthropologist, studied contemporary craftsmen in India who make traditional toys by hand, but make adaptations for an export market. Steinberg, who received a PhD in Modern Culture & Media from Brown University, writes about media convergence in mid-20th century Japan and its influence on mass-produced toys.

Although the prize winning entries are quite different in approach, topic, and culture, in both instances the authors describe how changes in the modern economy - particularly intercultural contacts and products for export - led to changes in the toys that are made, how they are used, and how they influence a sense of both personal and cultural identity.

The prize-winning research is summarized below.

Koumudi Patil. Craftsmanly Thinking: Studying the Dilemma of Change and Identity in Banarasi Khilonas (toys). Doctoral thesis, Indian Institute of Technology, Powai, India, 2013. kppatil@iitk.ac.in
Koumudi Patil is assistant professor in the Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Design Program at Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur. She works closely with the government of India on design and technological issues related to indigenous crafts, which employs more people than nearly any other in India.

Her dissertation is an ethnographic study of workshops in Banarasi, India, where craftsmen turn out traditional toys. *Khilona* (traditional toys) are produced in stages, with each person making his own adaptations and passing it on to the next craftsman to modify. [This sounds a lot like jazz. Patil herself makes the connection between traditional crafts, such as making toys, and music in that both involve coordination of mind and hands, as do surgery and playing tennis.]

Marc Steinberg. (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada). Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan, 2012. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. marc.steinberg@concordia.ca
Marc Steinberg is assistant professor of Film Studies in the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. His research interests include Japanese animation, visual culture, media convergence, and the impact of media theory on Japan's creative industries. His book, *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan* (University of Minnesota Press, 2012), offers an account of media convergence in Japan that explores the development of Japanese television animation or 'anime' in the 1960s, and the material culture, particularly toys, that accompanied it.

Steinberg traces the beginnings of media convergence to 1963, when *Astro Boy* hit Japanese TV screens for the first time. Sponsored by a chocolate manufacturer, *Astro Boy* quickly became a cultural icon in Japan.

Media characters exist outside their media embodiments, e.g., Barbie and Superman are comic books, TV animation, films, video games, stickers, posters, trading cards, toys, and more. Just slapping a sticker onto an

object imbues it with characteristics of Barbie/Superman. In this way, characters are means of communication, and they are communicated about by children.

With this disembodiment, children's play began to change, from BEING the character (eg, dressing like Superman), to PLAYING WITH the character.

One member of the prize committee wrote of *Anime's Media Mix*: "It is almost impossible to look at commercially available toys in isolation these days. 'Anime's Media Mix' is itself an interdisciplinary mixture of marketing, media theory, consumerism, and anthropology in international and historical perspective. Toys are, literally, at the centre of the book as chapter 3 deals with character toys and their links to other media in an approach that is rich in detail. Although the focus is on the 1950s and 1960s, this approach is equally applicable to technological developments in toys and games on different platforms and across different media."

Abstract of Steinberg's ITRA talk, via Skype from Tokyo:

Toys as Media, Or, How Should We Research Toys in the Media Mix Era?

"In this talk I will address the challenge of researching what we might call, following a 1960s Japanese term, mass media toys. In particular, I would like to follow the development of the mass media toy in 1960s Japan, in relation to the rise of television animation and what has since come to be known as the media mix. Focusing on the phenomenon of media franchising and the emergence of the mass media toy, we are confronted with the following questions: what is a toy in an era of generalized character-based merchandising strategies? What is the status of the toy in an era of media relationality? And what methods should we use to study these media toys? This presentation will broach these questions by way of the two toy objects that are the focus of much of *Anime's Media Mix*: character figurines and stickers. Examining these objects at a key historical moment in the emergence of the mass media toy in Japan, I will explore how the mediatization of popular characters requires us to rethink issues of materiality, marketing, licensing and toy culture, then and now."

Winners of the ITRA-BTHA Research Awards

Senior Prize

2008

Jan Phillips. *Accomplishing Family Through Toy Consumption*. In Karin M. Ekstrom & Birgitte Tufte (eds.). (2007). *Children, Media And Consumption*. Goteborg, Sweden: NORDICOM

2011

Prof. Minna Ruckenstein. *Toying With The World: Children, Virtual Pets And The Value Of Mobility*. *Childhood* (2010)

2014

Marc Steinberg. (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. marc.steinberg@concordia.ca). *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys And Characters In Japan, 2012*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Student Prize

2008

Hyun-Jung Oh. *The Phenomenon Of Dolls' Houses: Putting Together Memories And Fantasies*. Master's thesis, Anthropology, Material & Visual Culture, University College London.

2011

Vasanti Jadv. *Infants' Preferences For Toys, Colours, And Shapes: Sex Differences And Similarities*. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* (2010)

2014

Koumudi Patil. *Craftsmanly Thinking: Studying The Dilemma Of Change And Identity In Banarasi Khilonas (Toys)*. Doctoral thesis, Indian Institute of Technology, Powai, India, 2013.

MEMBER PROFILE – Anthony D. Pellegrini

by Greta Pennell



Tony Pellegrini received a PhD in psychology from Ohio State University. He was a professor in the Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of Georgia until 1998 where he also served as Director of Cognitive Studies Group for the Institute for Behavioural Research. From 1998-2003 he was Honorary Professor of Human Development at the University of Cardiff as well as professor in the Department of Education at the University of Minnesota where he is now Emeriti faculty.

He is author or editor of 19 books including the *Oxford Handbook of Play* (2011), *The Role of Play in Human Development* (2009) and the popular textbook *Observing Children in Their Natural Worlds* (1996, 2004, 2012).

Kicking off the 7th ITRA World Conference, Stephen Kline's plenary address re-introduced us to the diverse group of scholars and industry people who came together to form ITRA in 1993. His review not only evoked fond memories, it piqued my interest in how other founding members came to toys as a focus of research. Soon after returning to the U.S., I was able to re-connect with founding ITRA member, Anthony D. Pellegrini to talk about his experiences with ITRA and future directions for toy research.

Tony's involvement with ITRA began with an invitation by Jeffrey Goldstein. "I was good friends and colleagues with Peter Smith and spent a lot of time in Sheffield and Jeff contacted me about getting together this group. Basically Jeff contacted me because of my interest in play." Tony further recalled, "The Utrecht group was most interesting and we had lots of fun. The interdisciplinary nature of the group was really, really appealing. Added on top of that they had some of the seminal minds, at least in the field of play, there... I got to really spend time and talk with seminal minds in the field of play. That was the high point, the interdisciplinary nature and on top of that the high quality of the people."

One of those people was Brian Sutton-Smith who Tony describes as "arguably one of the most creative people in all of developmental psychology. He certainly pre-dated Bruner's ideas on play; he certainly pre-dated Bruner's idea on narrative. He was an incredibly creative guy. I used to say to him, Brian you look at something by turning it upside down first. He was so smart, and clever, and so much fun to be around."

Tony holds founding member Greta Fein in equally high esteem. Reminiscing about the day before the Utrecht meeting when the two of them rented a car to visit museums, he says, "My favourite memory of the whole organization was tangential to the meeting. It was that I got to spend a day with Greta Fein. She was not only a wonderful, warm woman, but she was smart as hell. She was like this little grandmother with the mind of a Yale Ph.D. She was a wonderful person and it was a great loss when she died."

Another interesting thing about ITRA in those early years was the distinction drawn between toy and play research. Tony suggested that at that point in time, it helped establish an identity for ITRA. "It was very clear that toys were their primary interest, and things like play, while related to toy research, was not central to their mission." Tony went on to describe ITRA's focus on toys as both a strength and a challenge, especially in the current climate of highly competitive research funding and limited funds for travel.

The focus on toys per se allows for a wonderful mix of scholars from different disciplines-history, sociology, psychology and industry. You get very interesting people with "intellectual clout" like Stephen Kline who is "a social psychologist but he's also a communication guy, not just your same old developmental psychology, [and] Jeff Goldstein who is really good at making connections. Plus, there were ideas that challenged things," something that Tony noted generally comes with interdisciplinary folks.

Reflecting further on changes in toy research over the last 21 years, Tony observed, "Toy research was peripheral to begin with. It used to be, at least in psychology where you got toy researchers, people looking at the effect of toys on how kids played. So it was the independent variable, not the dependent variable. Now, you don't even see stuff with toys in psychology... I see that there is a fair amount of historical research that has been done in the past couple of years. For example, books in Germany on toys at various points in German history."

So what does Tony see as key questions and directions for future toy research? "The never-ending question of the relation between video games and aggression. For years, Ed Donnerstein studied violent pornography conducting really interesting experiments where he manipulated different dimensions of pornography and violent pornography and violence and looked at these behavioural outcomes. I think we need better experiments with video games. I mean, as I remember back in the day, Joop Hellendoorn was one of the few people who did an

experimental study of video games and kids' actual behaviour. There are a lot of correlational studies that look at video games and then correlate game play with other things, but I think we need more experimental studies of things like video games, of aggression surrounding video games, certainly on kids' socializing. There is this concern that kids aren't socializing much because they are spending all their time with their nose in their personal devices or whatever you call them. Are they spending their time getting their reinforcement from these electronic gizmos that they are carrying around? What's the effect on kids' social competence of these games?; Does it make a difference whether they are solitary games, or whether they're dyadic, triadic, distant players or kids next to each other? That sort of stuff is crucial."

Freely admitting that he is a "dyed in the wool empirical guy," Tony offered the following advice to future toy researchers. "Get the best scientific education you can. It doesn't have to be experimental, but it has to be empirical. By empirical I mean rely on data with documented reliability and validity. Be theory driven but find something that you love. Don't just chase something because you think it is going to lead to something that is going to have a payoff. Do something that you love because then you will have an impact because you'll be interested in it, you'll turn out a better product, and have a better life while you're doing it."

Tony acknowledged that this advice might seem a bit canned, but it is the same thing he and his wife told their children as they embarked on their graduate studies. Of course, doing what you love, especially when it focuses on toys often adds the extra hurdle of finding funding to support the work. To that end Tony suggests making connections to other constructs (e.g., social competence or aggression). Drawing on his early work on rough and tumble play he explained, "When I first started studying rough and tumble play I was interested in aggression, but that wasn't my primary reason. I certainly wasn't interested in bullying, but I knew that if I put a bullying hook on a proposal that I wrote, we could get funding and then I could study rough and tumble play. So this is what I think you have to do, you have to think broadly." This is also an area where connections and relationships between toy researchers and the toy industry can help. When asked if this might present a conflict of interest, Tony was quick to dismiss the concern as more of a straw man than real problem asking, "How is it different from writing grant proposals for the NSF, NIH or Department of Defence, or some foundation? Even when you write for a journal, you frame what it is you are saying according to an audience." Recounting his experiences working on a project for Fischer-Price Tony said, "I never got the feeling that they were trying to inhibit what we were saying. From my view they were just interested in what we had to say. They didn't use much of it, but I never felt compromised." Similarly, when it came to ITRA's relationship with the toy industry, Tony stated that he "NEVER, ever, ever, ever, ever got the feeling that whatever we said was influenced by the people who were supporting the organization;" and that a strong relationship between the two was not only a win-win situation then, but perhaps even more important today.

Turning our conversation to Tony's current work, he explained that now in his third year of retirement he doesn't think of himself as an "active academic." Nevertheless, he still serves on several editorial boards and reads *Animal Behaviour*, *Child Development*, and the *International Journal of Behavioural Development*. He is also doing consulting work. His most recent project involves reviewing depositions for a case on school violence. His last academic paper focused on differentiating object play, constructive play, tool use and tool making, and this remains an area of interest for him. Tony elaborated, "I'm really interested in cultural transmission and how when kids do something creative with an object, which I think they do when they are playing with it, how that creative use gets transmitted through a group."

Describing his career as a researcher and professor as "the best job in the world," Tony finds himself "sort of at loose ends trying to sort out what I want to do with the next phase of my life." One thing that retirement has provided him is time to play. He is an avid cross-country skier, often travelling to Norway and other parts of Scandinavia to indulge his passion. "In the winter I'm cross-country skiing probably five days a week and in the summer I'm training to cross-country ski. This is what I love to do."

Of course what member profile would be complete without a discussion of favourite childhood toys? For Tony, it was playing cowboys. He also loved sports, but wasn't sure that his tennis racket or other sport equipment would count as a toy per se. While they still have lots of toys in their home, Tony noted that virtually all of them belong to their two grown children. Legos, Star Wars toys, and Breyer horses constitute the most extensive collections. While the former are still in residence, the Breyer horses have relocated now that his daughter (who also attended the ITRA meeting in Halmstad) is married with a home and child of her own. Tony and his wife will soon be moving to a smaller home in the Minneapolis area, but there is one toy that he refuses to part with: A hockey game with a long pole that you push. Tony explained that the reason he still has and will keep this toy is "simply because I still like to play with my son, and we now have a grandson who is almost two, so I'm eagerly awaiting playing it with him."

Who knows, maybe by the time the 8th ITRA World Conference rolls around, Tony will have some intergenerational toy stories to share and a new budding scholar in tow.

MEMBERS' FORUM

Please remember when you do send items for inclusion in the Newsletter to send them in a downloadable form.

ARGENTINA

Stela Maris Ferrarese Capettini writes to inform the ITRA membership that the Ethnic Games and Play Museum is now on Facebook.

FINLAND

Kati Heljakka writes:

Play Away: Photoplay and Installations at the P-galleria, Pori, Finland.

I have studied the art of making comics for over a year now. My initial idea was to fill the gallery with toy-related comics. What remains of the original idea is one comic story displayed among other creations, singular images, and/or works of playful art. My pieces function as potential entry-points to stories, both fictional and factual.

This year's seemingly endless flow of war-themed news headlines changed the course of my exhibition plans. Play Away offers viewers a chance to reflect on toys and the playing accompanied with them from the thematic perspectives of freedom, restrictions, (both dark and even gaudy) humour and seriousness. Through the images and text, I ask questions such as: What are we allowed to play with? How can we play despite of prohibitions and attitudes in times of war?

One comic artist I met aptly ascertained, "Only a healthy person is able to play." Yet research shows that children and adults continue to joke and play even in times of war, suggesting that play may be a strategy for survival or an avenue to deal with difficult things.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the igniting of the Winter War in Finland. Arguably, my own generation usually approaches war from the standpoint of imagination. For us, waging war happens in imaginative realms influenced by narratives familiar from entertainment. In the independent state of Finland it is hard even to imagine the true horrors of war. Nevertheless, the imminence of it seems to creep closer all the time. Can one play with the theme of war in order to understand it better?

My exhibition is divided in two parts, which are "Toys in War" and "War in Toys." In the first, toy characters take action as participants in war. In the second part of my exhibition the idea of war and violence is in the toy itself. One of the works in the exhibition is based on a war-time photograph, in which a soldier is bent over the body of a partly undressed female soldier. The woman in the picture was an enemy, as the corpses of Finnish soldiers were not represented in photographs this way.

Toys have the startling capacity to express human emotions – besides joy and happiness they also express fear, uncertainty and uneasiness. They are because of – or despite that – images of the human being. In photoplay, toys are enlivened and harnessed as vehicles for storytelling.

The theme of the comic *Karjala 1944* is wartime Finland and its manuscript comes from Finnish comic artist Hanneriina Moisseinen. The toy version is my creation.



ISRAEL

Helena Kling writes:

A New Toy for Grandma

I am very happy that in my lifetime 3D printers will become affordable and I expect to have one as a birthday present in the next year or so. I shall be able to make toys and games together with my grandchildren in a corner of my kitchen. (I have no garage). We can look forward to moulding sweets for parties and layering paper for board games and doll's houses and making parts of construction sets and personalizing dolls and figures. Might I become the enemy of the workers of the toy industry? I do not think so.

Chris Anderson is part of the Maker Culture, people who make things and communicate how. In chapter five of his latest book, "Makers," is the delightfully told story of how he helped his daughters solve their desire to refurbish their doll's house. What miniature furniture that they could buy was in no way suitable because it was the wrong scale, flimsily made or vastly expensive. He preferred, remembering previous experience with his children, not to get out his woodworking tools. However, he had a 3D printer and a computer in the house. With a few clicks they chose plans for the furniture and after sloshing around with the 3D printer the two girls had the perfect doll's house furniture. In his words "If you are a toy company, this story should give you chills." That depends, I say.

I do not think that a grandmother and her grandchildren making toys on her kitchen table shall pose a threat to an industry. What they can produce will be no competition for well made, cleverly contrived, colourful, interesting and fashionable manufactured toys. What it might lead to could be a decline in the toy market of the shoddy, the badly made and the potentially dangerous.

Look seriously at the ramifications of our relationship with this machine once it shall be in our homes. Where shall the materials be stored? (Not in the kitchen. Just the names of the stuff sound toxic). Who will regulate the safety of the materials and the product? From where will we get the plans of the toys and games that we shall want to make? Should they be free of charge or should they be tied to proprietary rights and licenses? Shall toy companies chase after their protection rights and tempt children to conspire and scorn the law?

Should not consent to the sharing of one's ideas and respect and credit for another person's innovations and efforts be a battle cry?

What will be the rights of the grandmother, or grandchild, who designs new toys and sends them downstream on the www river of the net? Shall they ever get remuneration or credit? Should all this be regulated? Will the market do its work if we stand back and do nothing? What can be learned from the hardships the music industry encountered upon entering the digital age? The ease and magnitude of copying and infringing performer's rights has become abundant and many attempts at providing economically sound protection are being discussed (such as creative commons licenses).

A hot legal topic is the issue of producing replacement parts of, for instance, kitchen equipment. This breaks the original manufacturer's hold on the secondary market. May we envisage that toy manufacturers shall give plans together with the toys they are selling so that children can make bits and pieces for themselves to enhance their play? Should we not be encouraging manufacturers to do this?

Not new questions. They have been asked, though not in my words, for the past few years. As yet there have been no answers that would help me.

By the time I get my own machine my aspirations shall have to be revised. My grandchildren already have access to 3D printers. The 14 year old is learning how to program plans for the printer. The 11 year old is full of ideas for 3D board games constructed by layering paper. I am waiting to be amazed by the ideas for new toys and games that the younger ones, in their turn, are sure to create.

MORROCCO

Jean-Pierre Rossie (www.sanatoypplay.org) writes:

In order to save this information for the future, some 30 short and longer videos about Moroccan children's toy making and play activities, only available on my website, are now also available on YouTube in the channel: (sanatoypplay_rossie.jp) https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=sanatoypplay+rossie+jp

So doing these videos will remain available when my website stops, just like many of my publications that are available on Scribd and Academia.edu.

https://www.scribd.com/jean_pierre_rossie

<https://independent.academia.edu/JeanPierreRossie>

To facilitate the access to the references and notes of these videos one can use the following document: Rossie, Jean-Pierre (2014). Videos on Moroccan children's play and toys available on YouTube: References and Notes, 33 p. There also exists a French version of this document. Both documents are available on Scribd:

https://www.scribd.com/doc/248682535/Videos-on-Moroccan-Children-s-Play-and-Toys-available-on-YouTube-References-and-Notes?secret_password=NmBDHwJpJqw0RjWThxZr

<https://www.scribd.com/doc/248693278/Videos-sur-les-Jeux-et-Jouets-des-Enfants-Marocains-disponibles-sur-YouTube-References-et-Notices>

and on Academia.edu:

https://www.academia.edu/9556731/Videos_on_Play_and_Toys_of_Moroccan_Children_available_on_YouTube_References_and_Notes

https://www.academia.edu/9556781/Videos_sur_les_Jeux_et_Jouets_des_Enfants_Marocains_disponibles_sur_YouTube_Références_et_Notice

Another video, also available on the above mentioned YouTube channel, is of special interest to ITRA:

"Children's Spirits - 5th ITRA Conference Nafplion July 2008," a video made by Hernâni Gouveia (Braga, Portugal). First one sees parts of the Nafplion Folklore Museum followed by images from the conference' reception and the conference' participants. During the reception some Nafplion children – wearing masks they made during workshops in the 'Stathmos Childhood Museum' and inspired by masks made by Moroccan children from the Tiznit region – take the situation into their hands and demand that the president of ITRA read a statement in favour of their play and toy making rights: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYQjs3gUdf0>

CONFERENCES & EXHIBITIONS

This section covers both up-coming and past conferences and exhibitions. Hopefully mentioning past events will not induce depression as to what you may have missed, while we trust previews of future events will whet your appetite to attend. Previews and reviews of conferences are sought for the next edition of the ITRA Newsletter.

FUTURE CONFERENCES

February 2015

The 27th ICCP World Play Conference will take place in Brussels, Belgium, 1st – 3rd February 2015. The theme is “*Researching Play – Challenges and Opportunities*,” and abstracts would be welcome on this theme.

For more information about the conference and how to submit an abstract, please visit the conference website:

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/27th-iccp-world-play-conference-tickets-10509031797



March 2015

The Association for the Study of Play 41st Annual International Conference will be held at the University of Texas at San Antonio, USA, 4th -7th March 2015

The theme is *Play Across the Lifespan*, and proposals are encouraged from all academic disciplines related to play and from play practitioners and advocates. Formats include individual papers, workshops, roundtables, and posters. Presentations will be organized according to three tracks: play from the past, play in the present, and play as part of the future. Submissions from undergraduate researchers and graduate students are encouraged.

More details available at:

<http://www.tasplay.org/about-us/conference/call-for-papers/>



October 2015

The 9th European Conference on Games Based Learning ECGBL 2015 will take place in Nord-Trondelag University College, Steinkjer, Norway, 8th – 9th October 2015.

For more information and call for papers visit:

<http://academic-conferences.org/ecgbl/ecgbl2015/ecgbl15-home.htm>

September 2017

The International Play Association Conference, will be held in Calgary, Canada in September 2017

The theme of the conference will be *Unleashing the Power of Play*.

For more information visit:

<http://arpaonline.ca/events/ipacalgary2017/>

PAST CONFERENCES

July 2014

The 26th International Society for Humour Studies Conference, was held at the University Hall of Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 7th -11th July 2014.

See the following website for details:

<http://ishs2014utrecht.nl/>



September 2014

The 24th Conference of EECERA (The European Early Childhood Education Research Association) was held at the Creta Maris Conference Centre, Crete, Greece, 7th -10th September 2014.

The primary theme of the conference was *Us, Them and Me: Universal, Targeted and Individuated Early Childhood Programmes*.

For further information see the following website:

<https://www.eecera2014.org>



October 2014

Play for Life, *Exploring the Lifelong Benefits of Inclusive Play*, was held at the Chicago Marriot O'Hare, Chicago, USA, 18th – 19th October 2014.

Past symposiums have been extraordinary opportunities for participants and presenters to bond over their mutual belief in the power of play to positively impact people of all ages and abilities.

For further information see the following website:

<https://www.facebook.com/InclusivePlaySymposium>



ECGBL 2014 8th European Conference on Games Based Learning was held in Berlin, Germany, 9th – 10th October 2014.

The Conference was an opportunity for scholars and practitioners interested in the issues related to GBL to share their thinking and research findings. Papers covered various issues and aspects of GBL in education and training: technology and implementation issues associated with the development of GBL; use of mobile and MMOGs for learning; pedagogical issues associated with GBL; social and ethical issues in GBL; GBL best cases and practices, and other related aspects.

More details available at:

<http://academic-conferences.org/ecgbl/ecgbl2014/ecgbl14-call-papers.htm>

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Until January 2015

Toys of the '50s, '60s and '70s, Minnesota History Center, St. Paul, USA.

Gumby. Barbie. Slinky. Mr. Potato Head. Wham-O. Spirograph. Hot Wheels. The names of popular toys from the 1950s, '60s and '70s capture the craziness, the joy, the sheer fun of being a kid. But beneath those nutty names are rich veins of nostalgia, memory and history.

The stories of the kids who played with these toys, the adults who bought them, the child-rearing experts who judged them and the people who invented them, reflect the rhythms of American life. Experience the toys and their stories through three imagined living rooms that bring the decades back to life.

For further information see the following website:

<http://www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/exhibits/toys-of-50s-60s-and-70s>



Until March 2015

“Miška and I”: exhibition at Toy Museum Hevosenkenkä, Espoo, Finland.

The Finnish Toy Museum Hevosenkenkä showcases Russian toy treasures in an exhibition which runs through spring 2015. *The Miška and I* exhibition features character toys, play sets and toy vehicles with a special focus on various types of dolls.

PAST EXHIBITIONS

Play-related exhibitions in Munich, Germany

By Artemis Yagou

The Handwerk gallery in central Munich specializes in crafts and often presents toys and play-related handcrafted objects (www.facebook.com/galerie.handwerk). Two recent exhibitions focused specifically on objects created for children. The first exhibition was entitled "Die kleine Welt - für Kinder gestaltet (The little world - Designed for children) and lasted from 5th September to 4th October 2014. It included a variety of functional objects for children, including furniture, crockery, toys, musical instruments, and accessories; the



Objects for outdoor play: www.tau.de

exhibitors originated from Germany, Austria, France, Holland, Slovakia, and Spain. The second exhibition was entitled "Künstlerisches Spielzeug-spielerische Kunst" (Artistic playthings - Playful art), from 26th November till 30th December 2014. Exhibitors from Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the Czech Republic presented a variety of playthings and playful objects, including small wooden animals, board games, and puppets.

The exhibition entitled "Spielten damit wirklich Kinder?" (Did children really play with these?) at the Bavarian National Museum (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum) started on 1st March 2014 (and is expected to remain open for several months as the museum prepares for a major renovation to take place in the next couple of years). It showcases around sixty objects, a small fraction of the museum's toy collection, including among others wooden animals, puzzles, board games, dolls, building blocks, train sets, and optical toys. The exhibits are representative of toys and games that were available to upper-class children in Germany from the middle of the 19th century till the beginning of the 20th. The exhibition emphasizes the educational character of many of the objects presented, especially the most expensive ones: these had to be used under adult supervision and were meant to prepare children for their future roles in society.

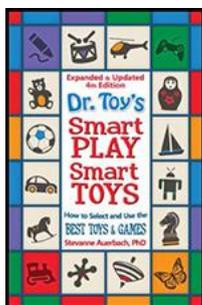


Educational globe, Germany, mid 19th century.

PUBLICATIONS & BOOKS

Book reviews, or book recommendations, are sought for the next edition of the ITRA Newsletter. Please submit these to the Editorial Team at itranevsltr@gmail.com. This edition also includes calls for papers on upcoming publications.

Stevanne Auerbach (2014) *Dr. Toy's Smart Play Smart Toys: How to Select and Use The Best Toys & Games* (4th Ed). Regent Press. ISBN-13: 9781587902758

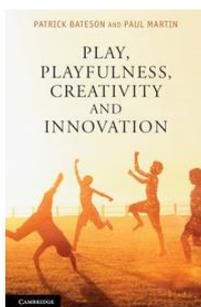


The fourth, completely revised edition is a unique, comprehensive guide to help parents select and use the best toys and games for developing "Play Quotient" (PQ) and expanding a child's playfulness. The book assists parents in navigating toy and play options, offers tips on evaluating toy safety, and suggests innumerable diverse activities. The book identifies educational and age-appropriate toys, important craft supplies for playtime and offers hundreds of useful ways to make play a life-long and nurturing experience. A great addition to the library of anyone who cares about children. This book is a valuable resource for parent, grandparents, teachers, toy store personnel, toy designers and anyone in the toy industry. The book has been published in 12 countries.

Bateson, P. & Martin, P. (2013). *Play, Playfulness, Creativity and Innovation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Online ISBN:9781139057691, Hardback ISBN:9781107015135, Paperback ISBN:9781107689343

Review by Lieselotte van Leeuwen

Different toys influence playful activities in different ways. For those who are interested in toys supporting creativity as a building block for innovation the book contains a compact review of research regarding the link between playful play (characterized by the authors as play in a positive mood in the absence of a prescriptive set of rules or conditions) and creativity. While toys are not addressed explicitly, the text does illuminate the type of playful activities to be fostered if toys should support creativity.



The authors are eminent scholars in the fields of ethnology and behavioural biology. Therefore their perspective on the function of creativity is that of adaptability to changing environmental circumstances. Creative behaviour in this context requires openness to new experiences and the ability to create novel combinations of existing thoughts, memories and actions. A playful state of mind in the absence of stress and anxiety is associated with higher creativity. In this state individuals of all ages are more inclined to behave spontaneously, flexible and less constrained by prescriptive rules and conventions. In social situations this might lead to increased and varied interactions, role reversal and co-operation.

In relationship to objects, their multiple characteristics and potential for enabling a variety of actions is more likely to be discovered in this state than in a strictly goal directed one in which one specific sub-set of object characteristics provides the means to one end. Analogous to the evolutionary process, the creative process is understood as producing a wide variety of possibilities for social and/or material action. Some of these might turn out later on to be instrumental in the solution of problems arising for the individual or group. The link between playful play and innovation thus lies in the skill to discover action possibilities and by doing so increase

the probability to solve complex problems. One consequence of this approach is that the immediate usefulness of playfully discovered forms of behaviour is not relevant beyond sustaining the self-rewarding positive mood. The temporal separation of the playful activity and its potential ‘pay-off’ for complex problem solving is a reminder for toy researchers and toy designers, that the value of play is manifold and indirect. Therefore, at least in the context of creativity, the immediate concrete ‘usefulness’ of a playful activity is of lesser relevance. What is relevant however, is for toys to provide motivation and opportunity to playfully try out many ways of relating to the social and material environment. Ambiguity rather than specificity of objects invites flexibility in thinking and acting. While a playful mood can’t be prescribed, the motivation to play can be met or caused by opportunities for playful engagement.

While approaching the question from an evolutionary angle, the authors critically review research from animal as well as human play, neuroscience, psychology, creativity- and business studies. It is this open-minded and focused integration of multidisciplinary sources which makes the book in my view particularly useful. Instead of a set of answers, the authors derive at a list of intriguing questions for future research. Its open-endedness combined with the transparent writing style make this book a brilliant resource for students from diverse academic fields.

Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, a web-based, peer-reviewed scholarly journal that focuses on social science research about cyberspace has launched a call for papers for a special issue on game playing titled, *The Experience and Benefits of Game Playing*.

Some of the questions to be explored are: Does a video game drive players toward abilities needed for enhancing their quality of life? What is the role of affective experiences provided by video games? Does video gaming play a significant role in coping strategies? Is video gaming a leisure activity fostering the acquisition of techniques related to well-being? How does the video gaming experience bring players toward a better self-knowledge? Can video games help players to reflect on a deep level?

More information can be found at:

<http://www.cyberpsychology.eu>

Play and Folklore, issue 62, can be viewed on the Museum Victoria website.

In this issue the editor, Judy McKinthy, is asking for help in identifying a folk doll from East Asia carrying a toy gourd mouth instrument (traditional wind instrument). Judy would like to know “where this delightful toy was made and how it made its way into a Melbourne op shop” where she found it.

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/about/books-and-journals/journals/play-and-folklore/2010-2019/>

The **American Journal of Play** published by The Strong in Rochester, New York has launched a new issue alert (October 2014). The issue is devoted to cognitive Neuroaesthetics.

Articles in the Volume 7, Number 1, Fall 2014 issue include:

- *Making Sense of the Modernist Muse: Creative Cognition and Play at the Bauhaus* by Phillip A. Prager, assistant professor at the IT University of Copenhagen.
- *How Play Makes for a More Adaptable Brain: A Comparative Neural Perspective* by Sergio M. Pellis, professor at the University of Lethbridge Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience; Vivien C. Pellis; adjunct assistant professor at the University of Lethbridge Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience; and Brett T. Himmler, graduate student at the University of Lethbridge Canada.
- *To Think Without Thinking: The Implications of Combinatory Play and the Creative Process for Neuroaesthetics* by Victoria Stevens, clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst and adjunct member of the faculty at the Pacifica Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara.

More info can be found at:

www.journalofplay.org



The International Journal of Play

The journal welcomes: reports on research projects; papers concerned with theory-practice links; policy critiques and expositions; reviews and analysis of contemporary and historical publications; essays, memoirs, and other forms of reflective writing; writing that builds on the experience and voices of children and young people; and, theoretical position papers.

The International Journal of Play will appear three times a year and the contents of the first issue can be found at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rijp20/current>



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

- 1) Police called out to a report of a suspected escaped crocodile discovered the "animal" was an inflatable toy.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-29634122>
- 2) Fans throw toys on basketball court for children in need in Arkansas.
<http://www.wday.com/news/fans-throw-toys-basketball-court-children-need-arkansas-3630734>
- 3) NASA - International Toys in Space.
<http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/microgravity/home/toys-in-space.html#.VJMzkcli6Ek>
- 4) Bringing children's dreams to life: Team of artists transform doodles into real-life cuddly toys.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2850846/Bringing-children-s-dreams-life-Team-artists-transform-doodles-real-life-cuddly-toys.html>
- 5) Redesigning play time: How an engineer creates toys from trash to educate children.
<http://sustainablog.org/2014/12/redesigning-play-time-engineer-creates-toys-trash-educate-children/>
- 6) Group urges parents to consider noise levels before buying toys for children.
<http://ktar.com/22/1787127/Group-urges-parents-to-consider-noise-levels-before-buying-toys-for-children>
- 7) How to teach kids to be grateful: Give them less.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/11/how-to-teach-kids-to-be-grateful-give-them-less/383244/>
- 8) Brightly coloured toys for children are dangerous.
<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/141127/nation-current-affairs/article/brightly-coloured-toys-children-are-dangerous-potentially>
- 9) Space hoppers, Etch-A-Sketch and slinky named most iconic children's toys ever.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2869885/Space-hoppers-Etch-Sketch-slinkies-named-iconic-children-s-toys-Christmas-s-Frozen-Elsa-doll-sings-speaks-lights-up.html>
- 10) Cuddly bunny reunited with little girl after a man who found it tweeted photos of toy like a tourist around Cambridge.
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lostrabbit-cuddly-bunny-reunited-with-little-girl-after-man-who-found-it-tweeted-photos-of-toy-like-a-tourist-around-cambridge-9933446.html>
- 11) Consumer watchdog group lists '10 worst toys' for children.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/11/20/consumer-watchdog-group-lists-10-worst-toys-for-children/>
- 12) Thousands of fake toys have been seized in the UK.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/30514703>
- 13) Toy tradition brings joy to adults, kids.
<http://krqe.com/2014/12/17/toy-tradition-brings-joy-to-adults-kids/>
- 14) Lego: can this most analogue of toys really be a modern urban planning tool?
<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/dec/18/lego-toys-urban-planning-tool-architects-mit>
- 15) Spider-Man web blaster toy case under review from Supreme Court.
<http://uk.ign.com/articles/2014/12/15/spider-man-web-blaster-toy-case-under-review-from-supreme-court>
- 16) No more girl-boy toy divide, says UK Minister.
<http://news.sky.com/story/1393553/no-more-girl-boy-toy-divide-says-minister>
- 17) Tech toys to make children smarter.
<http://www.wsj.com/articles/tech-toys-to-make-children-smarter-1418753372>
- 18) The man who brings 20,000 toys back to life
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-30439066>



ITRA 2015 Fees Notice

Please note that, according to the ITRA Board's decision in Alicante, 8th August 2005, conference fees cover ITRA membership fees until the following conference. This means that conference participants who paid full registration fees for the 7th ITRA conference in Braga, Portugal 2014 have been exempted from paying ITRA dues for the years 2015 through 2017.

If you were not able to attend the conference in Braga this past summer, you must submit your annual membership fee for 2015 to remain an ITRA member in good standing.

Annual membership: €50
Retiree// Student membership: €25

Payments may be made;

a) through bank transfer to the following account number

International Toy Research Association,
National Bank of Greece, Pal. Phaliro branch 175
Account number: 175/480074.53
IBAN Number: GR16 0110 1750 0000 1754 8007 453
SWIFT: ETHNGRAA

b) by sending an International Money Order, payable to ITRA, to the treasurer at the following address:

Cleo Gougoulis
73 Terpsihoris St.
P.Phaleron
17562 Athens
Greece

Please notify the ITRA treasurer, Cleo Gougoulis, by sending an e-mail to: cleogougoulis@yahoo.gr, when you send your fees to the bank. It is important to mention what amount and in which currency you paid.

EPILOGUE

If you attended a conference this year - toy related, preferably - have anything to say, whether about yourself, publications you have read or would like to recommend to the ITRA membership, events, research or just anything, or would like to propose an ITRA member we could profile, do not hesitate to contact either Suzy, Kati or Mark, via itrnewsletter@gmail.com. We intend to publish a Spring edition in May 2015. In the meantime, the editors of the newsletter would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue of the ITRA newsletter.

We would encourage you to feel free to send the editors articles, which we can share with the rest of the ITRA members. If English is not your first language, please do not let this be a hindrance to contacting the Editorial Team; we are more than happy to assist in editing items from contributors.

The Editorial Team would like to wish all ITRA members a festive holiday season and a peaceful new year.

Regards
Suzy, Kati & Mark

We do not stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing.
Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

