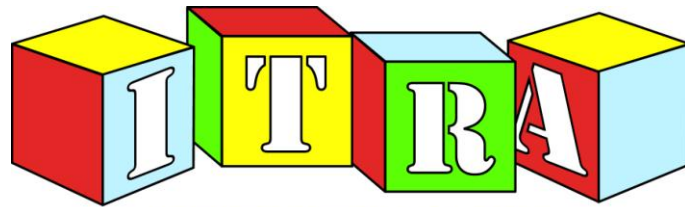


ITRA NEWSLETTER

International Toy Research Association

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**INTERNATIONAL TOY
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

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PROLOGUE

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 a note from our President, a couple of items under Member Profiles, the Members' Forum, various publications, conference and exhibition previews and reviews. Please note that many conference and exhibition organisers have been required to postpone or put their plans in abeyance due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.



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, a list of publications, 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.

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GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ITRA

Dear ITRA colleagues and friends,



It has now been almost two years since the Covid-19 virus made its presence felt, irrevocably impacting our plans and hopes, on all levels; individual, familial, societal and as an association. With that in mind, I trust this finds International Toy Research Association members, both past and present, and Friends of ITRA, safe and well during the current global pandemic.

During the process of reaching out by individual email to each registered ITRA member, it is clear that Covid-19 has weighed heavily on toy research and academia in general in terms of health and funding. A number reported being directly affected by Covid-19, through personally being, or having close family members, infected by the virus. It is a relief to hear of those who have passed through the experience relatively unscathed; best wishes, for a full recovery, go out to those currently suffering poor health, any associated stress, fatigue or uncertainty during this extraordinary time.

On a happier note, it is my great pleasure to announce, on behalf of the International Toy Research Association Board, that the 9th ITRA World Conference will be held 9th -11th Aug 2023 at The Strong Museum of Play, Rochester, USA. Greta Pennell will take the role of Conference Chair. The current plan is to issue the Call-for-Papers early in the New Year, which will include the conference theme, submission and review deadlines. Further details will be issued as they become available.

Since 1993, the International Toy Research Association has organised eight international conferences, held in; Halmstad, Sweden (1996 & 1999), London, England (2002), Alicante, Spain (2005), Nafplion, Greece (2008), Bursa, Turkey (2011), Braga, Portugal (2014), and most recently, Paris, France (2018). Rochester (2023) promises to be another wonderful opportunity to meet old research friends, make new acquaintances, update and share experiences regarding plaything research with passionate, fellow-minded toy researchers. Do not forget to check our website, www.itratoyresearch.org, and [Facebook](#) page for updated information on the conference.

I received messages that a number of ITRA students successfully defended their theses and were awarded their PhDs. Updates on various events, research activities and much more can be found in this newsletter's Members' Forum section.

The uncertainty over the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to turn many of our plans and hopes on their heads; however, I trust all ITRA members are taking good care, as we globally and individually navigate through these continued uncertain times.

I would like to wish you all a memorable festive period and a bright outlook in 2022!

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MEMBER PROFILE – Doris Bergen



Doris Bergen is a Distinguished Professor of Educational Psychology Emerita at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, having retired in 2019 after serving as chair of the department for eleven years. She has taught a range of courses related to early childhood theory and practice, play, learning, human development, assessment, research, and educational psychology.

A major focus of her research has been the study of play and the development of humour in children, including the effects of technology-enhanced toys on play, adult memories of childhood play, and gifted children's humour. She also has studied Event Related

Potentials (ERP) elicited in children engaged in two types of videogame play.

Doris directed Miami University's Center for Human Development, Learning, and Technology and the Center was named in her honour at her retirement. She is a Miami University Distinguish Scholar, having published fourteen books and over 100 refereed articles and book chapters. Publications include: *The handbook of developmentally appropriate toys* (2021), *Technology play and brain development: Infancy to adolescence and future implications* (2016), and *Play from birth to twelve: Contexts, perspectives, and meanings* (2015).

Doris' earliest memories of playing as a child developed into a lifelong interest in how play informs children's worlds and how toys enhance their play experiences. As a result, in her early teaching career – 2nd grade and preschool – Doris fostered playful ways of learning and subsequently, as a university professor, focused much of her research and writing on children's play and humour development, especially on how these aspects influence children's developmental progress. Although she has been retired for a number of years and no longer has an active research program, she continues to write about play, humour, and toys, as well as about other early childhood development topics.

An early influencer on her academic work was Dr. Bernard Spodek, who was a significant figure in early childhood education for many years. Doris wrote a number of chapters about early play and development in books that he and his colleagues published. Her first books discussed play as a medium for learning and since then she has published both articles and books on wider ranging aspects of play. In addition to play, she also studied young children's humor development since that usually accompanies their play and more recently the effects of technology-augmented toys on children's play behaviors and development. Her most recent book is composed of chapters focusing on the characteristics of different types of toys – written by various authors – discussing a broad spectrum of traditional and technology-enhanced toys.

She spent a number of years evaluating toy design and development for Fisher Price and it was through these colleagues that Doris first learned of the International Toy Research Association. Doris attended the ITRA conferences held in London, 2002, and Napflion, in 2008, during which she presented papers reviewing her research on technology-enhanced toys. She has always considered toy and play studies to be important and supports ITRA's role in bringing a broad range of researchers together to further toy design and play research. It was at the ITRA conferences that she met a number of fellow toy researchers with whom she has continued to collaborate on aspects of toy design and development, as well as having them serve as contributing writers on toys and toy development.

Doris feels that ITRA could be more proactive in making the Association known to newer faculty at universities in many different countries of the world. In her experience, researchers who focus on children's play and toy play usually do not have any colleagues with similar interests at their universities, so it is particularly important for them to find national and international colleagues engaged in similar types of research, if they are going to continue to focus on this area of research.

The later types of research which Doris conducted focused especially on the play qualities and child actions with technology-enhanced toys. She is particularly concerned that many such toys are the 'doers,' and the child has little, or no, input other than to simply push a button or respond, in some way, to the toys' actions. Doris argues that the future of play for children is now of great concern because so many children's lives are over organized and filled with technology-augmented toys that act while the child watches. Young toy researchers should be encouraged to do careful investigation of the effects of children's reduced self-organizing play time on their general development and on the ways technological toys might enhance or impede children's competence and active thought.

As for the 'fun' element of children's play experiences, Doris thinks that the greatest fun for children comes from exercising their own abilities in imagining, creating, and communicating through play. She hopes that play researchers will provide the knowledge required to ensure that children's play continues to be appreciated and enhanced by both toys and adults.

MEMBER PROFILE – Surabhi Khanna



Surabhi Khanna is a designer and educator, presently serving as faculty member and coordinator of Industrial Design at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Haryana, India. She has a master's degree in industrial design from NID, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, awarded in 2012, after she graduated with a bachelor's in architecture, in 2009. She was Assistant Professor and Program Head, Product Design at Sushant School of Design, Sushant University, between 2016 and 2019.

Since 2011, Surabhi has been working on projects and workshops related to heritage, innovations, and culture-based design in Asia, Europe and South America.

She has developed courses and electives related to playful design concepts for design and architectural students. She has also conducted design and education workshops for teachers, trainers and children at organizations and schools both at home and abroad. Her work has been featured in a number of magazine and newspaper articles.

Surabhi's eventual involvement in toy research has been a little circuitous, having first studied for a degree in architecture. Her final year project, which involved interviewing school children and teachers, focused on the ideology of schools and their physical manifestation. It was as a result of the interactions with the students and teachers that she decided to study for a master's degree in Toy and Game Design at NID. It was during these studies that the richness and variety of toy and play research became evident to her.

Surabhi is currently pursuing a PhD focused on the introduction of novel locally handmade toys in middle school. In 2020, the new National Education Policy was introduced across India, promoting practice-based research and the introduction of relevant findings into the school curriculum – like the inclusion of toys and play sessions as a means of learning. Her experience of being a participant and later a mentor at the International UNESCO Creativity Workshop on Inclusive Education and Development, organized by the Spielmittel organization, provided Surabhi an insight into the effects of age, cultures, and modes of play on toy design and research, all of which are continuously evolving.

In addition to Surabhi's PhD studies, she has been teaching courses related to toy and game design as a faculty member and coordinator of the Industrial Design Department at NID, Haryana. She describes enjoying her work, specifically the development of new courses and projects as well as the stimulus of engaging and conducting experiments with various stakeholders. As her research mainly involves visiting schools and interacting with students and teachers, she has found the current Covid-19 pandemic to be particularly disruptive, though there are signs that schools have started opening and access has started to improve.

Recalling her childhood, Surabhi remembers receiving a large number and variety of handmade toys. Apart from toys bought from the local market, her mother instilled in Surabhi the wonder of everyday household objects as raw materials for magical playthings – kneaded dough to make elephants and birds, tomatoes to squeeze, yogurt to spread and play, mud to touch and knead. Growing up, Surabhi and her sister had a lot of friends and evenings were spent playing games outside, such as; *chhupan chhupaai* (hide-and-peek), badminton, and *pakdam pakdaai* (catch-me-if-you-can). She remembers many of her favourite pre-teen toys – dolls and making clothes for them, blowing bubbles – which were available from street vendors on weekends. In her teens, Surabhi enjoyed fabricating simple toys like *tipi-tip tap*, kites and gifts to exchange with her friends.

Surabhi's first introduction as a professional toy researcher was at the 2018 Paris Conference during which she presented a paper 'Timeless Toys and Tales' and a symposium '1st things 1st then what? Toying with design's social agency.' Before arriving at the conference, she thought that ITRA would be comprised of mainly traditional toy or museum researchers or small toy manufacturers; however, she described being amazed by the number of countries represented and researchers exploring so many different aspects of toy research – culture, ages groups, history, technologies, collections, new trends and innovations, types of play, to name but a few. It was after this conference that Surabhi's interest in toy research became even stronger, as did her motivation to pursue a PhD program to further her own research in the field.

She observes that a number of international conferences are held tackling the broad subjects of play and games, however, it is rare to have a meeting focused on toys – the actual physical object—and spanning so many different angles of study, from the social studies and humanities angles of history, psychology, anthropology, art history, and sociology, to the more industry-oriented fields of toy design and marketing. She wishes that ITRA could be promoted to more researchers and universities – beginning with India, where there is a growing interest in the subject of toys from many different approaches.

In conclusion, Surabhi's advice to researchers is to get involved as there is still much to be explored and to build upon in the burgeoning field of toy research all around the world.

MEMBERS' FORUM

Please remember when you do submit items for inclusion in the ITRA newsletter to send them in a downloadable form. The views expressed by International Toy Research Association members do not necessarily represent those of the Association.

AUSTRIA

Christoph Kühberger, Professor at University of Salzburg, sent the following:

Here in Austria we are still in a lockdown. The number of those not yet vaccinated is too high. The hospitals are unfortunately full, even if the numbers are currently falling again. Nevertheless, I am happy to refer to my two new publications from the field of toy research:

- Kühberger, Christoph: *Of dragons and dinosaurs: How children's toys and games create ideas of the past, of history and of fiction*. In: History Education Research Journal, 18 (2), 183–198. - DOI: 10.14324/HERJ.18.2.04
- Kühberger, Christoph: *Spielzeugindianer. Seltsamer Grenzgänger zwischen den Kulturen*. In: ZwischenWelten. Disziplinäre Grenzgänge an den Rändern von Geschichtsdidaktik und Politischer Bildung, Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften. Festschrift für Béatrice Ziegler. Hg. v. K. Kuhn/M. Nitsche/J. Thyroff/M. Waldis. Münster 2021, 80-98.

Best

Christoph

CANADA

Marc Steinberg, Associate Professor at Concordia University and one of the keynote speakers at the ITRA 2018 Paris Conference wrote:

Things were looking up until Omicron but it's up and down everywhere I guess. I hope everyone is doing okay, all things considered. I have three recent publications of note (An open access co-authored book published by University of Minnesota Press and meson press, Media and Management):

- Management is enabled by media, just as media give life to management. Studying the management innovations learned through media uncovers the evolving relationship between workers and employers. With a view to history, *Media and Management* shows the interdependence of hardware, software, and human experience adjusting to algorithmically defined rhythms. The book is available here: <https://meson.press/books/media-and-management>
- A second, short piece, on the pandemic and its impacts on our ideas of convenience and platform-mediated commerce is *Pandemic Platforms: How Convenience Shapes the Inequality of Crisis*, included in this open access collection: <https://pandemicmedia.meson.press>
- A third, more substantial, article may be useful in historicizing the relation between platforms and play. This is *From Automobile Capitalism to Platform Capitalism: Toyotism as a prehistory of digital platforms* published in the journal *Organization Studies* – also open access. This article explores the automotive lineage and manufacturing origins of platforms.

I wish all ITRA members well in these difficult times.

Best wishes,

Marc

FINLAND

Katriina Heljakka, Play Expert at Mannerheim League for Child Welfare wrote:

Greetings from Finland!

- New position as Play Expert at Mannerheim League for Child Welfare. In the summer of 2021, the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (in Finnish Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto, MLL) announced that they are seeking a Play Expert for their Leikkipäivä (Playday) program. I applied and was selected for this position. As the Play Expert at MLL, I'm responsible for the coordination and development of the program. The Playday program organizes the yearly National Play Day in Finland, held in April, hosts a professional network of both private and public organizations and experts in Finland with an interest in play, and manages a website with play-related materials, such as expert blogs and scholarly articles on play, and the Play Bank with over 1000 ideas and activities for play (www.leikkipaiva.fi). In 2022, the Leikkipäivä program will organize a symposium on Sustainable Play – an inspiring (and highly relevant) topic in today's society, which will be a tremendous opportunity to spread expert knowledge on contemporary play, not forgetting the role of playthings as part of lifelong play!
- Nomination for the Genius of Play Ambassador program by the American Toy Association. There is other exciting news to share as well: TIA, the American Toy Industry Association nominated me a "Genius of Play" Ambassador. This is a true honour and tremendous opportunity to share insights from my own toy and play

research conducted over the past decade, and to learn from other play experts around the world: "The Ambassador Genius of Play program is brand-new and is an effort to amplify the voice and support the mission of The Genius of Play – a Toy Association initiative to educate parents and caregivers about the benefits of play. The program supports all toy companies by building awareness of play as a critical part of child development and driving affinity and purchase intent for toys as the essential tools of play." #GeniusofPlay

- Teaching the course "The Playful Museum Space" through toy-based learning methods. This semester, I have had the privilege to teach (live!) at the University of Turku. I designed and taught the course, "The Playful Museum Space," with a focus on the playification, gamification, and of course, toyification of the museum space and related experiences. In this course, the students co-created concepts for a local 'pseudo museum' with many playful elements with physical, fictional, functional, and affective dimensions. To build prototypes, the students used a tool and playful learning method called Comicubes, which uses cardboard cubes of various sizes, which former students had described as a "lubricant for creativity." Over many years, this tool has been employed in many contexts, with children, adults, students, artists, professionals etc. to facilitate design exercises and playful learning.

- News on the research front: Upcoming publication on toy play. Finally, some happy news about research on play during unusual circumstances: My article on teddy bear play during the pandemic (*Liberated through Teddy Bears: Resistance, resourcefulness, and resilience in toy play during the Covid-19 Pandemic*) has been accepted to be published in the upcoming Special Issue of the International Journal of Play – Play: Resilience and Vulnerability in Difficult Circumstances. Hooray!

- Book chapter *From Playborers and Kidults to Toy Players: Adults who Play for Leisure, Work, and Pleasure* My research on toys and play in adulthood is featured in a new book, edited by Mathieu Alemany Oliver and Russell W. Belk, called, *Like A Child Would Do. An Interdisciplinary Approach to Childlikeness in Past and Current Societies* by Universit  Press, Montreal.

I wish everyone happy holidays and many toylful days to come in 2022!

Kati

Mattia Thibault, Postdoctoral researcher within the Gamification Group at Tampere University, wrote: Here in Finland the situation is quite under control – for people here social distancing was already the default! I have a paper that might be of interest for ITRA about urban play during the pandemic. It does not deal directly with toys, but with playful attitudes in general.

The first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic that affected many cities around the world during the spring and summer 2020 was often met with regulations requiring people to lockdown, to quarantine or to respect social distancing. Urban spaces often became off-limits and depopulated, filled with borders isolating people confined at home. Nevertheless, in these trying times new forms of urban gamification surfaced, allowing citizens to engage their surroundings playfully, to connect with others and to escape these dire situations. In this paper, we propose an overview of the many playful activities that emerged in the cities hit by the pandemic, organised according to the urban borders they engage (windows, balconies, rooftops). We then focus on how several borders can be engaged by the same play practice, through a gamified application called Window Expeditions, which aims at participatory data generation, while addressing some of the issues related to isolation and reduced mobility of its users. In the conclusions, we discuss the potential role of urban gamification during the pandemic and, in particular, its ability to comfort, connect, increase curiosity and encourage exploration.

Wonderful news about the 2023 conference: I will try to be there!

All best

Mattia

FRANCE

Antoine Taly, from the French National Centre for Scientific Research wrote:

The main news on my side is the publication of a special issue of the Journal "sciences du jeu" on escape games, coordinated with Julian Alvarez and Mathieu Vermeulen (<https://journals.openedition.org/sdj/3399>).

In this issue we have proposed a model to analyze the immersion into escape games, together with Annelyse Nogue and Michael Freudenthal.

We propose in particular to use the model of engagement proposed by O Caira as an underlying tool.

Among perspectives would be the extension of the model to take into account object play that is absent from this model. If anyone in ITRA would be interested to discuss it they can contact me (taly864@gmail.com)!

All the best

Antoine

Thomas Bonnacarrere, from Universit  de Poitiers, wrote:

Concerning Covid-19, the situation in France is far from great – we are currently facing what politicians and mainstream media call the "fifth wave," and many people are now getting their third dose of vaccine.

Personally, I do not have much exciting news to give, as I am still fully invested in my research-action work concerning how to apprehend ecological collapse. I have spent this year working on "regenerative design," and I am pursuing this work by exploring health in situations of ecological and societal collapse. I still have a lot of work to do, but I should fully complete this complex and trans-disciplinary work at the end of next year. The only noticeable news is that I have started working on a personal creative project besides my academic work – a fantasy novel that will allow me to synthesize all my research-action work. The first book should be finished, just like my scientific work, at the end of next year (I am trying to at least!). I will keep you posted!

Best Regards
Thomas

GREECE

Cleo Gougoulis, Assistant Professor at University of Patras, ITRA co-founding member and current ITRA Treasurer, wrote:

The Greek Journal *Archaeology and Arts* (*Αρχαιολογία και Τέχνες*), which devoted in 2020 three special sections of issues 132, 133 and 134 to Play in Greece during three selected historical periods (Antiquity, Byzantine era and Contemporary era) edited by Cleo Gougoulis, has now published the three issues online. All three issues are freely available (in Greek) at <https://www.archaeology.wiki/>

A new book on play and games in *Antiquity: The collective volume Play and Games in Classical Antiquity. Definition, Transmission, Reception*, edited by Veronique Dasen and Marco Vespa was recently launched (2021) by Presses Universitaire de Liege. The book, which brings together archaeologists, historians and anthropologists of childhood and play, is an outcome of the ERC project "Locus Ludi, The Cultural Fabric of Play and Games in Classical Antiquity" based at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and directed by Veronique Dasen. Among its 22 contributors feature articles by ITRA members and friends: Cleo Gougoulis, Veronique Dasen, Marco Vespa and Michel Manson.

Giorgos Papakonstantinou, lecturer from the University of Thessaly wrote:

Life in Greece is as difficult as in the rest of Europe with the combined problems of the financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. Academic life is degrading due to state finance cuts. We also face the problem of 3rd year students that have for two years followed courses over the internet.

For the last years, Lecad Laboratory research (<http://lecad.arch.uth.gr/en>) is oriented towards interactive games in virtual environments. We are currently working on the research program, "Escape through culture".

The project will develop a digital escape game infrastructure for mobile devices and computers, with the use of Augmented Reality. Using Greek literary texts and their English translations related to specific elements of the Greek cultural landscape as depicted by prominent Greek writers, the project will support the creation of interactive escape games available for indoor or outdoor use. In particular, the digital game "Escape through Culture" will be approaching the cultural experience in multiple ways, through the layers of literature, space (and time), and the cultural landscape itself, namely through a "hyperspace," where the additional dimensions will constitute the interpretative parameters of the user's engagement.

Best regards
Giorgos

Vassiliki Riga, Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education, University of Patras, wrote:

I think we are all tired of Covid-19 and its effects in all areas of our lives. But the only choice is to keep going. The news regarding the ITRA conference is excellent! The only relevant academic update I have is a guide for child motor development for teachers, parents and students that can be downloaded for free from <http://epee.upatras.gr/ekdoseis>. It's written in Greek.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a better year for all the members of ITRA and all the world!
Vassiliki

NIGERIA

Uwemedimo Iwaketok, retired lecturer and researcher from the University of Jos and profiled in the 2021 Spring edition of the ITRA Newsletter, wrote:

It is good to know that the ITRA conference will be held in 2023. I believe this is heart-warming news for the ITRA family. I am doing well and seem to be busier than I had thought. I enjoy the busyness very much. I am writing now more in my language – Ibibio. The publications are recommended texts used at the tertiary, secondary and primary levels of education in my state and by extension, country.

Although Covid-19 does not seem to adversely affect indoor/outdoor activities, I have not given much attention to toys, perhaps because I am living now in a place a bit removed from a native setting. However, my publications – plays, short stories, critical works, and folktales – which I have recreated make copious

references to childhood tradition. For instance neo-riddles, playsongs/school songs and existing oral forms are copiously used in my works. The purpose is to preserve and propagate Ibibio oral and written literature and the Ibibio language.

Stay safe and regards to the ITRA family.

Uwemedimo

SWITZERLAND

Véronique Dasen, Professor in Classical Archaeology and Art History at the University of Fribourg, wrote: The research project “Locus Ludi. The Cultural Fabric of Play and Games in Classical Antiquity” funded by the European Research Council (ERC AdG # 741520) based at the University of Fribourg has been very active during the second half year 2021.

• Four collective publications are now out:

Dasen, V., Vespa, M. (eds), *Play and Games in Antiquity: Definition, Transmission, Reception*, Collection Jeu/Play/Spiel 2, Liège, Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2021.

Dasen V., Haziza Th. (eds), Dossier *Jeux, normes et/ou transgressions, Kentron. Revue pluridisciplinaire du monde antique*, 36, 2021.

Dasen V. (ed.), Dossier *Eros en jeu, Métis. Anthropologie des mondes grecs anciens*, 19, 2021

Out in January 2022: Caré, B., Dasen, V., Schädler, U. (eds), Back to the Game: Reframing Play and Games in Context. XXI Board Game Studies Annual Colloquium, *International Society for Board Game Studies, April, 24-26, 2018, Benaki Museum – Italian School of Archaeology at Athens (Board Games Studies Supplement)*, Lisbon, Associação Ludus, 2021.

The full list of publications by the team members with single contributions and by invited contributors is here:

<https://locusludi.ch/team-publications/>

<https://locusludi.ch/associated-researchers-publications/>

Books to download are here: <https://locusludi.ch/the-project/>

• We are currently preparing a new series of collective works to be published in autumn 2022:

Arnette M.-L., Dasen V., Dossier *Joueuses! Clio. Femmes, genre, histoire*, 56, 2022.

Dasen V., Haziza Th. (eds), *Violence et jeu, de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, Caen, PUC, 2021.

Daniaux Th., Dasen V. (eds), *Locus Ludi. Quoi de neuf sur la culture ludique antique ? Special issue, Pallas*, 2022.

Dasen, V. Vespa, M. (eds), *Toys as Cultural Artefacts in Ancient Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Cultures. Anthropological and Material Approaches*, Mergoil, Monographies Instrumentum, 2022.

Dasen, V., Pace, A., Penn, T., Schädler, U. (eds), *The Archaeology of Play : Material Approaches to Games and Gaming in the Ancient World*, Mergoil, Monographies Instrumentum, 2022.

• We also organised two international conferences remote and hybrid:

<https://locusludi.ch/locusludi-conferences/>

• The Locus Ludi team is also happy to invite ITRA colleagues to join for the next conference (hybrid) on *Roman Dolls* at Fribourg University in June 2022. Programme and date to come.

• Worldwide guestspeakers and listeners (Belgium, France, Great-Britain, Israel, Italy, Greece, Poland, Switzerland, USA) continued to join us weekly via Skype in autumn 2021. For the full list of talks, see:

<https://locusludi.ch/locus-ludi-webinar/>

• Members of the *Locus Ludi* team also took part in many scientific events and seminars related to ludic culture, such as the cycle of lectures organised by Fatih Parlak at the Bogaziçi University “Games in Cultural History Seminars” (U. Schädler, V. Dasen, A. Pace), with contributions to wide audience events when they could take place (22.10.2021. “*Locus Ludi* : Quoi de neuf ?”, presentation of the research results at the Couvent des Cordeliers, open day of the Institut du monde antique et byzantin).

For example, selection (full list here: <https://locusludi.ch/lectures-locusludi-team/>)

Kind regards,

Véronique

UNITED KINGDOM

Anna Borzenkova, Research Associate at Heriot-Watt University, wrote:

It is great that the ITRA Board has agreed to hold the next conference in 2023. Hopefully the situation with Covid-19 will be better by then.

I'm still working as a Research Associate at Heriot-Watt University. Currently we are working on a research project, “Developing Sustainable Transportation in National Parks.” It aims to encourage sustainable transportation in the Lake District National Park through gamification and focuses on the behavioural component of the issue. Here is the link to GIECS group blog about this project – “[Gaming for Innovation, Education, Climate, and Society](#)”.

Transportation-related issues in national parks are a widely recognised problem. This is particularly relevant for national parks situated in densely populated areas, like most parks in the UK, including the Lake District. Intensive traffic creates environmental burdens for the local population and puts a strain on local infrastructure, which is often unable to accommodate the increased demand for travellers.



In response to the increasing problem, various projects have been proposed and developed, including changes to the transportation options and services, such as seasonal road closure, public transport scheduling and subsidies to bus services, electric bike schemes and dedicated traffic-free walking and cycling routes, flexible permit schemes and travel cards, or number-plate recognition technology. However, fundamentally, these efforts will yield results only if visitors are willing to change their behaviour and switch to more sustainable transportation options, even if it causes them minor inconvenience. In contrast, this project proposes to employ gamification technique to address the behavioural aspect of the problem.

Gamification will be used in two phases of the project. During the first phase, a gamified simulation application will be developed. It will capture all the transportation alternatives for different routes in the Lake District, highlight trade-offs for different options and measure the value that visitors assign to different attributes of the offered transportation options through their choices. This app will be useful for visitors because it will offer an aggregated source of information about different transportation choices, while allowing to study visitors' attitudes and preferences. This application will also capture the choices that could have been made, if alternative options were available. The insight gathered from the first phase will lay the foundation for the second phase of the project, which will include the development of a system of gamified interventions that is designed to actively influence visitors' transportation behaviour and encourage the visitors to make more sustainable choices.

As part of the previous project I have been working on "Empowering Brazil's impoverished communities through critical decision-making: a communitarian communicative strategy." In this project, we developed a gamified intervention that aimed at promoting critical thinking and filtering of information in the context of the pandemic and fake news surrounding it in Brazil. Here is the link with some illustrations from the game and a description: <https://giecs.site.hw.ac.uk/2021/07/28/role-playing-brazilian-heroes-in-impoverished-communities/>. Also, good news is that at the end of May, I finally officially was awarded my PhD (<https://wlv.openrepository.com/handle/2436/624234>). It took longer than I expected because of the lockdown.

Kind regards,

Anna

Vicki Thomas, Senior Lecturer in Design at the University of Northampton and profiled in the 2020 Winter edition of the ITRA Newsletter, wrote:

Reflections on lockdown? Well first time around I took to doing jigsaws as I listened to the press conferences. Teaching and attending conferences online developed as people learned that you still need breaks! I really attended some wonderful events relevant to my interest in the "Greening of the Toy Industry"; the Play Conference in the United States, and two "Sustainability in Licensing" conferences organised by Products of Change (POC). Their members include several major toy companies and retailers. It was great to see the efforts to collaborate and share information. POC and my design Consultancy have just exhibited at Brand Licensing Europe and from the resulting inquiries we have had, greener playthings seem to be high on the agenda. It was a similar response at an Association of Cultural Enterprises event earlier in the year when all the museums and gallery events and shop buyers were looking to be greener.

I was asked by a toy firm to see if I could help them develop a new biodegradable material through my connections with the University of Northampton. So, I have now submitted a proposal for a new research centre GMT - The centre for the Study of the Application and Impact of Green Materials and Technologies. Although not officially launched yet, we held a series of events on campus inviting local companies and organisations. For example, we learnt about the recycling of all the plastic Burger King toys, once the company decided to cease giving them away with the kids' meals.

The pandemic stimulated all sorts of creativity and playfulness. Some toy companies, like jigsaw producers, were in production flat out and could not take bespoke orders or even run new designs. Others with production in China are waiting for shipments...so looking to produce locally for all or at least part of their production. Writing this and looking at the year ahead I think I will have a paper to submit for 2023.

Kind regards,

Vicki

USA

Miriam Forman-Brunell, Professor Emerita from the University of Missouri-Kansas City wrote:

I edited *Deconstructing Dolls: Girlhoods and the Meanings of Play* (Berghahn, 2021). I am revising a paper, *The Errand Runner and the Girling of Work*, presented at the European Labor History Network conference in

Amsterdam in 2019, for publication in *Historein* (a special issue of the Greek-international journal (forthcoming, 2022)). I am currently working on a book-length manuscript, *Fresh Girl: A History of My German Jewish Mother*, that examines my mother's life in Nazi Germany and as an adolescent refugee in wartime New York within the broader context of many prevailing historically constructed girlhoods and her ongoing resistance to family expectations and fascist demands to conform.

In my retirement, I am continuing to create *Anidolls*, handcrafted needle-felted dolls with expressive elements of animals.

Happy holidays.

Miriam

Lisa Murphy, co-facilitator of Porch Play Chats wrote:

Greetings from the American Association for Promoting the Child's Right to Play (IPAUSA), the USA Affiliate of the International Play Association. I am reaching out to fellow ITRA members to see if anyone might be interested in joining us on the porch (virtually!) to talk about play!

Porch Play Chats are conversations with experts regarding various topics related to the overall importance of play. We release a new Porch Play Chat each week and they have quickly become valuable resources for faculty, IPA USA members, IPA World Members, Teachers, Directors, the general public, and School Administrators.

All Porch Play Chats are free to view and one of the many initiatives IPA USA has used to advocate for the child's right to play. Here is a link to the 2020 line up: <https://ipausa.org/advocacy/porch-play-chats/porch-play-chat-calendar/> and here is a link to the 2021 line up: <https://ipausa.org/advocacy/porch-play-chats/porch-play-chats-playlist-2021/>

Deb Lawrence and Lisa Murphy are co-facilitators of Porch Play Chats (PPCs). To keep the momentum going, our next set of Porch Play Chats tapings will take place in January 2022. If you are interested in participating in our next series, please send an email to LTAC@ooeygoeey.com (Lisa's email) with the following:

- Your full name
- Where you are located
- The title of your porch chat
- A question to get you started
- A brief bio for a quick introduction

And then either Lisa or Deb will follow up with some date & time options (we schedule based out of New York EST). And if January doesn't work out, we can keep you on the interest list for the next round of recordings!

Each Porch Play Chat is no more than 30 minutes long, so we will not take up too much of your time. Feel free to forward this announcement to any of your play-minded colleagues who might want to join us for a chat on the porch! Deb and I are always looking to promote others who are advocates for play.

If you have any general questions feel free to reach out to me, Lisa Murphy, Florida, USA,

LTAC@ooeygoeey.com

Hope to see you on the porch!

Lisa Murphy

Greta Pennell, Professor Emeriti from the University of Indianapolis and current ITRA Vice-President sent us the following:

The Toys That Built America (2021) is a four part documentary series (each episode runs about 41 minutes + commercial breaks) produced by the Six West Media Group for A & E Networks' History cable channel. Each episode mixes dramatic re-enactments and archival footage with commentary by toy experts like Chris Bensch from The Strong National Museum of Play and author Tim Walsh, inventors like Azhelle Wade, and industry professionals like David Erwin, formerly with Hasbro, and Laurie Schact, from Toybook. Starting with Walsh's idea that "some of



the best toys break some sort of rule," the stories told highlight various forms of rule breaking that contributed to their inspiration, serendipitous discovery, and often intense competition. Originally airing on Sunday evenings in the USA, the first three episodes are now available for streaming at <https://play.history.com/>. However, watching the episodes in their entirety requires watching and/or interacting with 5-6 commercial messages per episode. The series is distributed nationally by A+E Networks as *The Toys That Built the World*.

Episode #1, *Masters of Innovation*, tells the stories behind the rise (and fall) of the iconic toys, brands (i.e., Slinky, Silly Putty, Wham-O Sling Shot, Hula Hoop, Super Ball, Frisbee, Slip and Slide) and people behind them.

Episode #2, *Clash of the Toy Titans*, focuses on the rivalries between Hasbro and Mattel, especially as exemplified through GI Joe's and Barbie's move from Toyland to TV land. The challenges created from going from toy box to box office for these iconic toys, especially in the face of seismic shifts in the cultural landscape are examined in the latter part of the episode.

Episode #3, *Toy Car Wars*, begins in post-WWII England and the invention of Match Box vehicles in 1950's following its development and expansion to the US market where by 1962 one million Matchbox cars were being produced per week; more than all the real cars being made worldwide per year. The Matchbox story is juxtaposed with Mattel's stops and starts in pursuit of a winning toy car design. Once Mattel shifts from making a "hot" looking car as they did with the failed "Dream Car" to a car that could really go and go fast, Hot Wheels was born...and the race was on. The episode also highlights how changes in American culture and its love affair with the automobile helped drive the success of these iconic toys.

Episode #4, *Board Game Empires*, is scheduled to premier on December 19, 2021. The episode chronicles the stories of Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers.

Jim and Greta Pennell, Emeriti from the University of Indianapolis, forwarded us the following update: Greta and Jim Pennell were named co-recipients of the Association for Humanist Sociology Distinguished Service award in November, 2021 (<https://bit.ly/3pwo27J>).

CONFERENCES & EXHIBITIONS

This section covers current, up-coming and past conferences and exhibitions. Previews and reviews of conferences are sought for the Spring Edition of the ITRA Newsletter. Due to the current international Covid-19 pandemic, many conference organisers have placed their conference plans on hold. More information will be published once it becomes available.

FUTURE CONFERENCES

April 2022

Value of Play: The Nature of Play, will be held at The Conference Center and Inn at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina 2nd – 6th April, 2022.

The Play Conference, as it is commonly known, is an annual professional conference presented by the US Play Coalition. The latest research and practices in the field of play are presented at the conference, which brings together play researchers, educators, health scientists, architects, landscape architects, designers, planners, park and recreation professionals, business and community leaders, psychologists, physicians and parents from across the U.S. and beyond. “The Nature of Play” is a play on words, allowing for broad interpretation by presenters! As always, the play conference will explore play across the lifespan, play in the workplace, play in the classroom, play in Nature and address universal issues of access, equity, inclusion and more.

See the conference website: <https://usplaycoalition.org/playconference22>



DiGRA 2022: Bringing Worlds Together, will take place in Guadalajara, Mexico, at the Riu Plaza Hotel, 25th – 29th April 2022.

The theme of the upcoming DiGRA 2022 is “Bringing Worlds Together,” exploring games as spaces of speculative possibility, ambiguity and liminality.

Game studies have always considered games – especially digital ones – as hybrid forms, able to combine various cultural phenomena to create limned spaces of uncertain ontology. The tradition to perceive games through interferences, uneasy alliances, disturbing dissonances or outright conflicts is rich. Diverse worlds, literally and metaphorically, collide at play: technological infrastructures, cultural practices, political, ethical, aesthetic and ontological dimensions. These can manifest in a variety of research focus points, including: the way the physical body of the player is merged with the electronic components of the machine and the digital space; the collision of the fictive narrative and real rule-set, governing the way fiction can unfold; the tension between global production regimes and vernacular resistance practices; or the circulation of camaraderie and oppression in player communities. But above all, games are always embedded within broader existing value systems. They can reflect those or challenge their status quo, paving new ways of becoming in the world.

The past months of the worldwide pandemic have also shown the capacity of games and play to literally bring remote worlds together, whether as practices of intimate socialization otherwise hindered by lock-downs and physical isolation, spaces of political resistance or products of increased consumption able to distract from long hours of boredom.

We would like to encourage scholarly reflection on all those diverse ways in which games bring different worlds together.

For more information see: conference website: <http://digra2022.org>

GamiFIN 2022: GamiFIN Conference 2022, will be held online and in-person at the PAIDIA Living Lab in Tampere, Finland, 26th – 29th April, 2022.

The GamiFIN conference is an annual academic conference which focuses on the development, implementation and dissemination of gamification research. The conference brings together an international group of academics and aims to contribute to the overall development of gamification as a process and a tool.

GamiFIN is hosted by the Gamification Group in affiliation with the University of Tampere. The conference provides an excellent platform for multidisciplinary research, and encourages innovation, development of technology as well as networking among the leading scholars within the field of gamification, game studies, business-studies and human-computer interaction.

GamiFIN is already the leading conference related to gamification and is quickly becoming a prominent academic conference in the world on the interaction of economics and game research.

Conference website: <http://gamifinconference.com/>



PAST CONFERENCES

June 2021

Toys as Cultural Artefacts in Ancient Greek and Roman Cultures: Anthropological and Material Approaches, was hosted online by Fribourg University, 22nd – 24th June, 2021.

The international conference *Toys as Cultural Artefacts*, organised by the research team of the European Research Council (ERC) Project *Locus ludi*, in collaboration with the Society for the Study of Childhood in the Past (SSCP), invited experts from different disciplines - anthropologists, archaeologists, philologists, art historians – to share reflections on the cultural notion of toy and playful experience in ancient Greece and Rome in a multidisciplinary and diachronic perspective.

For more information see: https://locusludi.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Call.Conference-Toys.ERC_LocusLudi.2020.pdf

July 2021

Time to Play: Research, Policy and Practice, 28th ICCP World Play Conference took place online, 8th – 9th July 2021.

The conference was organized by International Council for Children’s Play in cooperation with the University Autonomous of Madrid and the Spanish Education and Development Foundation.

Play is an activity that humans practice throughout their whole lives and in all cultures. Ludic activities vary in relation to children’s capacities and to what is valued in each society. Sports were the product of industrial societies. Videogames are the new ludic practices of our technological culture. Therefore, play is an activity studied from many academic disciplines with very different methodologies. Play is a need for all human beings. The UN has recognized play as a child’s right, and it has been ratified by more than a hundred countries. However, every day it is more evident that many children have enormous difficulties in being able to exercise this right.

The theme of the 28th World Play Conference focused on questions like:

- Do children have enough time to play?
- How could we both increase our research on play and disseminate it more?
- Do we need to analyse our social policies in relation to play?
- And how could we improve our play practices?

Factors like the concentration of populations in large cities, urban speculation and the progressive disappearance of public spaces, the difficulty of children to be able to move autonomously and with security – these are all factors that contribute to a progressive disappearance of traditional games and the places in which they could be played.

For more information see: <https://eventos.uam.es/62962/detail/28th-iccp-world-conference-on-play.html>

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

September 2021 – January 2022

Murano Glass Toys, is being held at the Murano, Glass Museum, Venice, Italy, until 6th January 2022.

The Murano Glass Toys exhibition will be open to the public from 4 September 2021 to 6 January 2022 at the Glass Museum in Murano, an initiative, part of The Venice Glass Week, conceived with the aim of promoting the regional brand Vetro Artistico® Murano. This is an ambitious project, characterized by an innovative setting: no longer a glass exhibition to “look at but not touch,” but a real interactive and multimedia installation, a room where the visitor can play and be amazed.

The project involves fourteen Murano glass masters from as many concessionary companies of the Vetro Artistico® Murano brand who have put themselves to the test for the occasion, addressing a theme far from their usual production. In Murano Glass Toys, glass lives, moves and interacts with the viewer: in this magical atmosphere, visitors can experience or relive the emotions related to their childhood and youth.

Exhibition website: <https://museovetro.visitmuve.it/en/mostre-en/mostre-in-corso-en/exhibition-murano-glass-toys/2021/08/19625/exhibition-murano-glass-toys/>



December 2021 – January 2022

Toys from Yesteryear, is being held at the Gladstone Regional Art Gallery Museum, Queensland, Australia, until the 22nd January 2022.

Toys from Yesteryear is an exhibition for everyone; a special place for children and a nostalgic link to the past for adults. Don’t miss seeing, The Dolls’ Tea Party, wooden games, trucks, planes, and antique toys.

Objects from the Gallery & Museum's community collection are displayed, alongside treasured items loaned by local families.

Museum website: <https://gragm.qld.gov.au/exhibitions/toys-from-yesteryear>

September 2021 – February 2022

Dangerous games: Treacherous Toys We Loved As Kids, is being held at the Napa Valley Museum, Yountville, USA until 13 February 2022.

It's hard to believe so many of us survived childhood, given the treacherous, toxic, yet tantalizing toys we played with as kids! We dove head-first onto slippery sheets of plastic called the Slip 'N Slide, plucked bugs (sometimes edible) called Creepy Crawlers out of plastic goop in searing hot moulds, dodged skull-piercing flying arrows called Lawn Darts, and played with explosives, molten hot glass, dangerous dyes – even radioactive material – all in the name of good clean fun.

Enjoy a blast from the past – literally – as you and your friends and family travel through our exclusive exhibition celebrating those wild, wacky, “whammo” wonders that were our childhood toys. Amuse yourself with our “Back to the Backyard” collection of Hula Hoops and other hands-on toys – safely of course. No dart guns or Red Ryder Rifles are allowed because “you’ll put your eye out!”

Includes an original audio tour narrated by “The Voice of Disney” Bill Rogers, and written by Laura Rafaty for the Napa Valley Museum Yountville, adapted in part from: “Wham-O Summer: Back to the Backyard.”

See the exhibition website: <https://napavalleymuseum.org/exhibition/dangerous-games-treacherous-toys-we-loved-as-kids/>

June 2021 - February 2022

Play, is being held in the Gandel Atrium at the National Museum Australia, Canberra, Australia, until 14th February 2022.

There are several hundred toys or children's objects in the National Historical Collection. A smaller selection of these items is on display in *Play*, with each item chosen for its compelling history and strong association with a particular child. Children will always find a way to play, whatever their circumstances. Playing games, making and sharing toys, and telling stories is how they learn about the world around them.

Exhibition highlights: A toy tractor made from old banana boxes, scrap metal and a piece of string shows the childhood ingenuity of a young boy living in Australia during the Second World War; A much-loved toy pig with a missing tail connects the United States to Australia in the aftermath of the Second World War; A toy rocking horse which belonged to Andrew Gibson, who grew up at Burrungurroolung station near Goulburn, New South Wales, during the 1920s and 30s; and Hetherington doll's house - Eva Howie made this doll's house in the 1930s for her eldest daughter, Barbara Hetherington. The house is furnished with many tiny items, some of them handcrafted from bread dough.

More information available at: <https://www.nma.gov.au/explore/collection/highlights/toys>

FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

February – June 2022

Our Toy Story, will be held at the Connaught Theatre, Worthing, UK, 12th February – 19th June 2022.

An exciting new exhibition using our wonderful toy collection to tell the story of how children and adults alike have entertained themselves through the years. From 18th century board games and Victorian clock-work insects, to Playmobil knights and castles, this display will chart the development of toys over the last two centuries. Look out for rare Hornby train engines, classic Airfix soldiers, traditional farm models and even some Teletubbies!

Please Note: This exhibition is free but donations are gladly welcomed. No need to book, just turn up.

Exhibition website: <https://wtm.uk/events/exhibition-our-toy-story/>

April 2022

Dolls-house Exhibition, will be held at the Newby Hall & Gardens, Ripon, UK, from 1st April 2022.

Newby Hall is now the permanent home to one of the finest collections of dolls-houses and miniatures in the world, thanks to the generosity of collectors Caroline Hamilton and Jane Fiddick. For well over 40 years friends Caroline and Jane have shared a passion for dolls-houses and a talent for bringing the miniature world to life. With nearly 70 houses of all shapes, sizes, styles and ages this is also one of the most important private collections on display anywhere in the world. Visitors will be amazed by the attention to detail in each tiny room, arranged in clever and amusing scenes and peopled by extraordinary characters.

Caroline and Jane are well known and highly respected throughout the dolls-house world, exhibiting internationally for nearly 30 years. Their collection ranges from small 'room boxes' such as Grandmama's

Parlour to the very grand Beagle House and Best House. In between, there are Victorian shops, rustic family homes, architectural classics and even a yuppie bachelor pad!
The Dolls-House Collection is located in the heart of Newby Hall's beautiful 25-acre garden, next to the Garden Restaurant, and is free to visit with a gardens admission ticket.
For more information see: <https://www.newbyhall.com/things-to-do/dollshouse-exhibition/>

PAST EXHIBITIONS

June 2021

The Summer Farm Toy Show, was held at the National Farm Toy Museum in Dyersville, Iowa, USA, 5th – 6th June 2021

By Greta Pennell

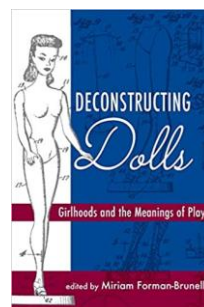
The Summer Farm Toy Show featured a parade of actual working tractors on Saturday night and contests for the best toy farm display. The museum (<https://www.nationalfarmtoymuseum.com>) featured several special exhibits including Ertl Land, celebrating 75 years of farm toys spanning some of the original toys Fred Ertl, Sr. first made in 1945 from molten war surplus metals. Another special exhibit celebrated the 100th Anniversary of John Deere's entrance into the tractor business, via the history of farm toys and miniature replicas to trace the evolution of John Deere's iconic green and yellow tractors.

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.

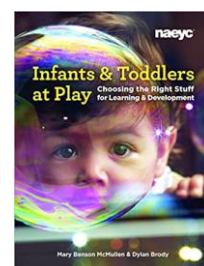
Forman-Brunell, M. (2021) *Deconstructing Dolls: Girlhoods and the Meanings of Play* is an edited collection of eight articles previously published in 2012 as a special issue of the journal *Girlhood Studies*.

This special issue set the stage for Forman-Brunell & Whitney's (2015), edited volume *Doll Studies: The Many Meanings of Girls' Toys and Play* whose thirteen contributions provided a more comprehensive examination of the multi-layered and intersectional messages conveyed through all sorts of dolls and their accoutrements. Two of the chapters in *Dolls Studies* were drawn directly from the 2012 special issue. However, examination of race and social class as experienced and enacted through dolls is much less evident. So why repackage work that is nearly a decade old and, for those in academia at least, likely accessible through their academic libraries? Forman-Brunell explains that her goal in republishing these "trailblazing" works in this new format is to "achieve greater visibility" by lowering the accessibility obstacles posed by journals in general and special issues in particular (pay walls, limited distribution, etc) (p. ix). So while the 2021 edition isn't forging "new" ground, the findings are still informative and acutely relevant. Indeed, the final chapter by Seow that examines how race and social class are experienced and enacted through dolls is particularly timely. Forman-Brunell's goal to extend the availability of this pioneering work to a broader audience is laudable.



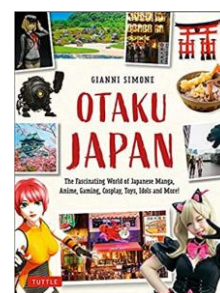
McMullen, M. B. (2021) *Infants and Toddlers at Play: Choosing the Right Stuff for Learning and Development*. National Association for the Education of Young Children. ISBN 978-1938113741

Early childhood educators know how important it is to choose the right materials to include in your infant and toddler program. There are so many options, and often your budget won't stretch to cover everything you'd like to include. With this guide, discover ideas for both familiar and new play materials and how they not only support the cognitive, physical, and social and emotional development of children from birth to age 3 but also meet the diverse needs of individual children. With a thoughtful selection of appropriate materials, you can enhance the quality of your program and create an accessible, inclusive, and equity-based environment that makes all children feel welcome.



Simone, G. (2021) *Otaku Japan: Explore the World of Japanese Manga, Anime, Gaming, Cosplay, Toys and More!* Tuttle Publishing. ISBN 978-4805315149

Whether you're planning a trip to Japan, or are just interested in manga, anime and Japanese pop culture, let *Otaku Japan Travel Guide* transport you to the global capital of cool! If you're crazy about manga, anime, gaming, cosplay, toys and idols, this book is for you. In this practical travel guide, hundreds of iconic shops, restaurants, cafes and clubs across Japan are described in loving detail with precise directions on how to get to each location. Maps, URLs, opening hours and colour photographs will transport you the length and breadth of Japan, from snowy Hokkaido to sunny Kyushu, on an unforgettable trip to the centres of otaku culture. The book is also packed with fascinating feature articles where you'll meet idols and game developers, giant robots and anime trains-and even take a tour around Godzilla's Tokyo! Highlights include: Exploring Akihabara Universal Studios, Japan, Kyoto's International Manga Museum, Nagoya's Ninja Museum, Licca-chan Castle, The World Cosplay Summit ...and much, much more! The book is divided into 3 main chapters. Chapter 1 gives comprehensive coverage of attractions in the Tokyo area; Chapter 2 covers the Kansai area (Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto and other major cities in the west of Japan); Chapter 3 covers otaku attractions that can be found in the rest of the country from Hokkaido in the north to Kyushu in the south. Illustrated with more than 300 colour photographs and 21 maps, this is an indispensable guide for anyone with an interest in Japan's otaku landscape.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

- 1) From Lego to Barbie & Hot Wheels cars – your kids’ old toys could be worth Thousands
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/fabulous/17071932/finance-expert-toys-worth-thousands/>
- 2) Christmas toys from the 1990s that were at the top of children's wish-lists
<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/lifestyle/other/christmas-toys-from-the-1990s-that-were-at-the-top-of-childrens-wish-lists/ar-AARXMmk>
- 3) 10 reasons to rent your child's toys this Christmas – instead of buying them
<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/opinion/featuresediting/19785610.10-reasons-rent-childs-toys-christmas---instead-buying/>
- 4) My kids want plastic toys. I want to go green. Here's the middle ground.
<https://www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/shopping/my-kids-want-plastic-toys-i-want-to-go-green-heres-the-middle-ground/ar-AARGMXJ>
- 5) Mexico City program takes toy guns out of kids’ hands in bid to curb future violence
<https://www.courthousenews.com/mexico-city-program-takes-toy-guns-out-of-kids-hands-in-bid-to-curb-future-violence/>
- 6) What the Research Says: Impact of Specific Toys on Play
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/play/specific-toys-play>
- 7) Why kids should not have lots of toys – and what to do if yours have too many
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-12-20/why-kids-shouldnt-have-lots-of-toys-what-do-too-many/100704836>
- 8) Can toys be educational? The same can be said for any household object
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/dec/10/can-toys-be-educational-the-same-can-be-said-for-any-household-object>
- 9) In this season of giving, watch out for harmful chemicals in plastic toys
<https://news.umich.edu/in-this-season-of-giving-watch-out-for-harmful-chemicals-in-plastic-toys/>
- 10) Almost half of toys sold via online marketplaces are unsafe for children, report finds
<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/toys-children-safety-danger-amazon-ebay-b1933241.html>
- 11) YouTube is driving higher toy purchases than broadcast TV
<https://www.toynews-online.biz/2021/08/19/youtube-is-driving-higher-toy-purchases-than-broadcast-tv-new-giraffe-insights-study-reveals/>
- 12) Survey reveals how parents really feel about Christmas toy shopping
<https://www.toynews-online.biz/2021/11/12/survey-reveals-how-parents-really-feel-about-christmas-toy-shopping/>
- 13) Future AI toys could be smarter than parents, but a lot less protective
<https://www.cNBC.com/2021/07/11/future-ai-toys-may-be-smarter-than-parents-and-less-protective.html>
- 14) The top 12 games your kids should play if you want them to be a genius
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/fabulous/16240291/activities-toys-kids-genius-dr-robert-titzer/>
- 15) McDonald’s Happy Meal toys are getting a major sustainability makeover
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/aliciakelso/2021/09/21/mcdonalds-happy-meal-toys-are-getting-a-major-sustainability-makeover/>
- 16) The Genius of Play launches “Once upon a Playtime” podcast
<https://apnews.com/press-release/pr-newswire/alicia-silverstone-4c2ab830a071c76dc569c4a3c0e817b4>
- 17) The benefits of risky play
<https://globaltoynews.com/2021/11/23/the-benefits-of-risky-play%ef%bf%bc/>



ITRA 2022 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 8th ITRA conference in Paris, France, 2018 have been exempted from paying ITRA dues for the years 2019 through 2023.

If you were not able to attend the conference in Paris, you must submit your annual membership fee for 2022 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, events or research you would like to recommend, or if you would like to propose an ITRA member we could profile, do not hesitate to contact either Suzy or Mark, via itranwsltr@gmail.com. We intend to publish a Spring edition in May 2022. 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 & Mark

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