Editor's Notes

Our 1983-84 TAASP Fall Preview carries some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that I owe several apologies. In Volume 9, Number 3 of the Newsletter, which carried the Baton Rouge Abstracts, I inadvertently altered three of the abstracts. They were Session 22--Nuell, L. R. (middle Tennessee), Session 32--Gee, J. and Townsend, L. (California, Berkeley), and Session 39--Park, R. (California, Berkeley). If those authors (or anyone with the accurate versions) send the full abstract to me, I will atone for my mistake by running these abstracts in a future Newsletter. In Volume 9, Number 4, I incorrectly reported Frank Manning's "The World of Play" as in press. This proceedings, "The World of Play" is available (I even have a copy) through Leisure Press. Also, I admonished K. Meier for not sending his article "On the Assiduous Re-invention of the Wheel", yet the article was in transit. There was some confusion about St. Patrick's Day, which I thought occurs in March, but Klaus showed me really occurs in May. The article appears later in this Newsletter. As well, I apologize to William Michaelis (San Francisco State) and the rest of the readership for not providing dates and
guidelines for publication in the Newsletter. In terms of guidelines, any article, note, book review, or communication regarding play is acceptable. In terms of publication deadlines, they are Nov. 15 for the January Newsletter; Jan. 15 for the March Newsletter; April 15 for the June Newsletter; and on Aug. 15 for the October Newsletter.

Our next issue will occur in 1984 and I have not received our submission from "Big Brother" yet. Do you think Orwell knows or was he just engaging in false play?

Hoping that my apologies are accepted, the good news is that several contributors heard my pleas, took them seriously, and sent notes, articles, reviews, and notices for this Newsletter. I am encouraged by the quantity, quality, and diversity of material, and hope your contributions continue. Thanks, especially for this edition, to Blanchard, Enerstvedt, Lancy, Manning, Meier, Mergen, Miracle, Nardo and Nilsen. Clearly the "M's" have it, what's happening to the rest of you in the alphabet?

Call for Papers

It's that time again scholars! Assemble your words of wisdom, block off March 28 to March 31, 1984 on your calendar, and prepare for the wonders of Clemson, South Carolina.

Now, today, without delay, send papers, symposia and panel suggestions to Dr. Bernard Mergen, American Studies Program, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. U.S.A. 20052

Your final deadline for submission is Nov. 1, 1983. Be sure to include your $15 (U.S. Funds) registration fee with your submission.

Address Changes

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A Note on "Deep Play"

Ever since Clifford Geertz published his seminal essay, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" (Daedalus, 101 (1972), pp. 1-37), the concept of "deep play" has become common in scholarly publications about play. Geertz claims to be "following" a notion of Jeremy Bentham's (p.15) in his use of the term to indicate a form of play in which the stakes are so high and the risks so great that it is not rational for participants to pursue it (see Bentham, The Theory of Legislation, ed. C. K. Ogden (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1931), p.106 n.). Because, as a proponent of utilitarianism, Bentham rates "deep play" on a narrowly defined calculus of pleasure and pain, and because Geertz wants to expand this calculus of human economy, Geertz rightly directs his attention to Bentham's use of the term.

Some confusion, however, may have arisen because of the widespread popularity of Geertz's essay. Readers may assume that Bentham originated the concept of "deep play." He did not, in fact, it is a colloquialism widely used in English literature of the eighteenth century. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, deep
"said of things involving heavy expenditure or liability" was current in the early seventeenth century, and deep was used to describe "drinking, gaming, or other practices" as early as 1577. An excerpt of a conversation recorded in James Boswell's The Life of Samuel Johnson (1971) demonstrates how the specific term deep play was used:

Boswell: I mentioned a new gaming club, of which Mr. Beauclerk had given me an account, where the members played to a desperate extent.

Johnson: Depend upon it, Sir, this is mere talk. Who is ruined by gaming? You will not find six instances in an age. There is a strange rout made about deep play: whereas you have many more people ruined by adventurous trade, and yet we do not hear such an outcry against it.

Although Johnson uses the term in its common meaning, his attitude toward deep play is uncommon. It was generally inveighed against by eighteenth-century moralists, all the while it was enjoyed by such rogues as those who wowed the audiences of John Gay's popular ballad-opera, The Beggar's Opera (1728).

Contribution ... Blanchard

Kendall Blanchard, P.O. Box 10, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN, U.S.A. 37132.

Book Review of Janet Lever: "Soccer Madness".


"Soccer madness" may describe the crazed fanaticism characteristic of many Brazilian soccer fans, but the integrating role of soccer in Brazilian society that Lever describes is anything but mad. Paradoxically, soccer, like sport competition generally, integrates through conflict, unites by dividing. This is the primary thesis of Lever's analysis, and she does an excellent job of making her point, leaving the reader thoroughly convinced that soccer is a major thread in the web of contemporary Brazilian society.

Describing soccer as the "premier international sport," sociologist Lever paints a vivid picture of the "madness" surrounding the sport in Brazil. Fans spend hard-earned dollars and overcome ridiculous logistical difficulties to crowd into mammoth stadiums (e.g., Rio's Maracana Stadium that seats 220,000 people) to watch their favorite professional team play. Political careers rise and fall with the team fortunes and loyalties of politicians. Interracial, intercultural, and international hostilities are acted out on the many playing fields that dot the Brazilian landscape. And, soccer stars are the most visible of public figures.

Nevertheless, the logic to this madness is to be seen in the cohesion it brings to the complexity of Brazilian society. This cohesion is best understood from the perspective of individual fans. It is the analysis of fan behavior that Lever makes her greatest contribution to our understanding of Brazilian soccer. Interviewing soccer fans from a variety of geographical, social, and economic backgrounds, and administering an extensive questionnaire to 200 devotees, she tests several hypotheses regarding sport spectatorship. The results are consistently interesting and often surprising.

For example, Lever's data suggest that soccer involvement is correlated with system integration (p. 107). In other words, the greater one's integration in the social system, the more likely he is to be a soccer fan. Soccer fandom can be viewed as a symbol of system involvement. This thesis is given additional credibility by Lever's discovery that soccer knowledge is correlated with general knowledge. One familiar with the latest soccer news is more likely to know also about current events in other areas (e.g., politics, international affairs) than the person showing little or no interest in soccer information.
One interesting exception to the soccer-system correlation is the fact that religious involvement tends to be inversely correlated with soccer involvement. The more one participates in regular religious activities, the less likely he is to be an avid soccer fan. It is suggested that sport ritual provides an alternative to religious ritual (p. 110).

Lever's fan questionnaire data also suggest that the greatest predictor of fandom is past athletic participation. In other words, the ex-jock is more likely to be a rabid soccer spectator if he once played himself. Contrary to the popular notion, it is not the frustrated athletic failure who turns to fandom to live the dream that never materialized; rather, it is the athlete reliving the dream who is more likely to be affected by the madness of Brazilian soccer.

Despite its contribution to social cohesion in the complex, pluralistic system that is Brazil, soccer is not without its problems. Lever notes the financial crises, the tendency for certain matches to increase rather than decrease inter-group hostilities, and the "sexual apartheid" that virtually excludes women from meaningful participation in Brazilian soccer.

Soccer Madness is a well-organized and well-written monograph. If it has any major faults, they are beyond the grasp of this reviewer. The only difficulty I had with the book was what I perceived as its theoretical ambiguity. Lever seems to operate, albeit implicitly, from a functionalist perspective throughout most of the book, stressing the integrating function of sport in Brazilian society. However, at several points, she slips into a form of symbolic analysis, suggesting that sport only manifests some underlying unity in the Brazilian system (eg. p. 121). Her reference to other theoretical perspectives (eg., Neo-Marxism) seem to add to the confusion. I think I would feel more comfortable with the book if the author included an explicit theoretical statement somewhere at the beginning. However, this apparent unresolved tension between theoretical models may be viewed as a comment on the paradox that is sport and the limitations of theoretical models in its analysis.

Perhaps, the greatest contribution Lever has made in Soccer Madness is her illustration of the importance of sport as a social institution and as a subject of social scientific investigation. The scientific rigor, the commitment to detail, and the sheer volume of data that Lever brings to her analysis of Brazilian soccer make it a model for sport studies.

Contribution... Lancy

David F. Lancy, College of Education, Utah State University, Logan, UT, U.S.A. 84322.

Videogames and Human Development: A Research Agenda for the '80's

Harvard University, with a financial boost from Atari, Inc., pulled together a diverse group of professionals and academicians for this very timely conference, held May 21st -24th, 1983. The speakers fell roughly into three categories: One-third were developers displaying their wares, some of which were spectacular indeed; one-third of the speakers had done at least preliminary research of some sort on videogames; and about one-third were Harvard employees who got a free ride, as it were. In addition to the formal presentations of videogames and applications a large exhibit room was made available to the software people (who outnumbered academicians at the conference by 5 to 1) so that participants had an opportunity to sample the entire spectrum of playful computer products. Anyone whose knowledge of videogames did not extend beyond Pac-Man and Asteroids was in for a shock. The content ("fantasy"), complexity and graphic versimilitude of the games is improving at a phenomenal rate. In addition, developers are vigorously addressing the needs of various "special" populations. William Lynch from the Palo Alto V.A. Hospital described games developed for brain-injured patients. Joyce Hakansson described games she and colleagues are developing for Milton
Bradley which are aimed at pre-school children. Sylvia Weir from M.I.T. described specially adapted hardware and software for severely handicapped children and Jerry Chaffin from Kansas described a diversified set of games developed for drill and practice in basic skills.

Given the variety of commercial games; efforts to create games for segments of the population previously "unserved"; "pocket" games; arcade-machines situated in nearly every public space; and VCS machines in every home; one is quick to appreciate that we are dealing with extraordinary phenomenon. Consider that more people had played Pac-Man within a few months of its invention, than have played Mankala during its several hundred-year history and you get a sense of it. With few exceptions, pre-video games require fairly elaborate cultural, social or interpersonal "set-ups" before they can be played, all the videogame player needs is a quarter.

Edna Mitchell from Mills College, David Brooks from USC and Patricia Greenfield from U.C.L.A. all spoke about the social impact of videogames. Brooks found generally positive results in a fairly thorough study of arcade users. The arcades do not contribute to truancy or delinquency but, rather, when well-run, provide a reasonably "wholesome" setting for peer interaction and enjoyment. Mitchell studies families in the first flush of their just-purchased home game machines. Again, her results were positive. Family interaction increased as members watched and coached each other. Several of the speakers mentioned that videogame play substitutes for TV viewing and is much more likely to induce social interaction. Patricia Greenfield built her talk around the disjunction between her experiences as a novice videogamer and those of her 14 year-old son. She described her son's facility with the games, and his surprise at her ineptitude. She suggested that their differential success was founded on her socialization via print and his via television. Her difficulty in mastering the games also convinced her that a great variety of finely-tuned sensori-motor, spatial and cognitive skills are required for successful play and thus the games might well have great educational value.

Emanuel Donchin from the University of Illinois, Tom Malone from Xerox research and Jerry Chaffin from the University of Kansas addressed various aspects of individual learning and videogames. Chaffin pointed out, for example, that in contrast to most learning experiences, in the videogame, players persist despite extremely high initial error rates. The "tolerance for frustration" threshold of our nine-year old daughter is many times higher when she is playing videogames than it is in schoolwork or even board games. I think this is because the best games always provide some small measure of instant, positive feedback even to the very inept player. Malone and other speakers tried to capture what it is that is motivating about videogames. Generally these "instant" theories ignored the extant literature on play. No one touched on the importance of context despite several direct prompts. For example, Chaffin's games for drill and practice are welcomed in the classroom but how many quarters would they earn in an arcade?

Its early days yet as far as research and theorizing on videogames is concerned but for any of you who are thinking of doing research on videogames, I can assure you of the undivided attention of the news media - they blitzed the Harvard Conference. I will start a little study on Star-Raiders and Mission Command in September. Brian Sutton-Smith and Bernie DeKoven also attended the conference. Brian's plans are a bit uncertain but we can anticipate a book on videogames from his prolific pen within a couple of years; Bernie is in the thick of it as an employee of the Children's Computer Workshop (offshoot of CTW). For those of you who just want to "play", I recommend the following games/activities: Paint; the Pond; Star Raiders; Miner 2049er; Zaxxon' Choplifter; the Pinball Construction Kit; Facemaker; and Temple of Apshai.
Contribution ... Manning

Culture and Performance

A new book series, Culture and Performance, has been launched jointly by the Congress of Social and Humanistic Studies, University of Western Ontario, and Bowling Green University Press. The series welcomes lively, theoretically-informed studies of ritual, ceremony, celebration, sports spectacles, entertainment productions, popular and folk theatre, ethnic, regional, and arts festivals, and other genres of cultural performance. Especially sought are studies pertinent to a variety of social science and humanities interests. Manuscript proposals and other correspondence should be directed to the general editor, Frank Manning, Anthropology Department, UWO, London, Ontario, N6A 5C2.

Contribution ... Renson


Special Hermes Issue on "New Perspectives of Play.

A double issue of Hermes, the journal of the Institute of Physical Education of the K.U. Leuven (Belgium) has been edited by Roland Renson and Jan Pauwels. This issue (vol. XVI, 1982-83, nr. 3-4) is dedicated to "New perspectives of play" and contains 13 articles, written in Dutch and accompanied by English and French summaries.

After the Editorial (pp. 177-181) by Renson and Pauwels, the three sections cover:

1. Play from an anthropological perspective
   - P. THYS: Play and culture: 'Homo-ludens' revisited from recent theoretical perspectives, 183-201.
   - Hilde VAN BRITSom: Play, sport and ritual, 203-217.
   - B. VANREUSEL: Innovation in play: New games and cooperative games, 259-274.

2. Play from a psychomotor perspective
   - D. van GOOl; W. HElsen & D. van GERVEN: Physiological strain during movement games measured by heart rates, 321-331.

3. Play from a methodological perspective
   - J. BOUTMANS: Children games in the teaching of sports games, 333-341.
   - J. HEYLEN: Judo games with belts, emphasizing body balance, 343-364.
   - B. VANREUSEL: Ultimate frisbee, a new game for schools and for recreational sport, 381-387.

This special play-issue can be obtained from:

HERMES
Institute of Physical Education, K.U.Leuven
Tervuurse Vest 101, B-3030 Leuven, Belgium
Price: 300 B.F. (6 U.S. $), including mailing costs.

Contribution ... Enerstvedt

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Emerging Compromises in Boys and Girls who Play the Norwegian Game of Hopscotch.

Introduction. In the following paper Enerstvedt traces changes in the game of hopscotch from the 1960 to 1980. She shows that whereas there were two earlier forms of hopscotch, mirroring traditional male and female sex roles, a compromise form developed, played by both the sexes together. The paper is particularly interesting because it is a case where we see children solving the problem of the sexes in their own way, and then it seems finally giving up that compromise. Brian Sutton-Smith.
The game of hopscotch is one of the oldest organized children's games in the western world. The ancient greeks were playing a game which might well have been the origin of hopscotch. Some hold that traces are found in Nordic bronze age. In Norway, one of the most common variants is "seksern" (the six square-figure) or "åttern" (the eight-square-figure) which has been played almost unchanged since the eighteenth century throughout Europe. In that century, it was a boy's game.

The ABC-paradise of the 1940's

My example will be taken from a variant of the game called "paradis" in Norway. It is the same word as paradise, and I prefer to use this term because of its symbolic content. Some hold that the game is a symbol of the soul's way to heaven, a pilgrimage. The Norwegian paradise-figures have squares marked with "life" and "death" and "heaven", and in some variants the player may get into a state of "absolution" when she has fulfilled the "turns". The children of course, never think of the game as a symbol.

Norwegian school-children still have some games only played by the one sex. In Norway, paradise was, in this century, a girl's game. Some years ago the boys started to play on their own - using figures left by the girls - or rather using figures the boys forced the girls to leave. The boys were playing in a different way than the girls played, so even if it was performed in the same figures, their game had quite a different character from the girls'.

The figure is a square, consisting of nine smaller square, three times three. Each one is filled with a capital letter, starting with A in the middle lower square. B is in the middle upper square, C in the middle on the left, D in the middle on the right. E is in the center, and F, G, H, and I are placed in the corners, starting from the upper left square, going counterclockwise and ending in the upper square on the right.

The girls' rules are the following:
1. Only one girl performs at a time.
2. The game has several "turns", like jumping on both legs, jumping on one leg, jumping cross-legged, and so on.
3. When missing, the girl has to stop and wait for a new turn until all the other girls have had their turns.
4. When a girl starts for the second time, she goes on from where she missed, not from the beginning of the game.
5. When the girls are waiting for their turn, they have an important role watching the other performers' movements. Every little error is marked, and the "sinner" is stopped at once.
6. The errors are: stepping on the lines or on the letters, moving the feet after they have been set down in a square, or touching the ground with the other foot when jumping on one foot.
7. This game - like all others - has a theoretical end. However, the game is really almost endless because generations of girls have contributed to a system of rules making it a sort of "perpetuum mobile". This is caused by the fact that
8. the game has no outstanding winner. A girl may be the first to carry through all the turns, but then she is given a "rest square" where she is free to move as she likes, and then she starts over again.
9. The competition element is on a different level from what is usually regarded as competitive games. This is a perfection game. The girls are training their movements to go through the game - remember it is a paradise - without failures. Everyone is aware of each other's abilities and weaknesses.
Neither winners nor losers.

In this game there was no real winner nor loser. Still some of the girls were more skillful and gifted than others. Some of the youngest had a long way to go before they were sufficiently experienced to be reckoned among the elite. Some never reached this stage. However, most of the girls ranked among the average. These latter mentioned girls, possessing medium competence, constituted the "public opinion" and the majority of "the people". They were most eager in keeping an eye on the performers.

In school, the girls mostly played with their classmates. Boys and girls usually had separate school-yards, or they went in separate schools. In this way, the players were equal in age, and were seldom disturbed by outsiders.

At home, in the streets, the groups more often consisted of different ages. Small girls were sometimes allowed to play with the older ones. During the game, the big ones now and then deliberately ignored the small ones' stepping on the lines or on the letters, and they even let them skip some of the more difficult turns. This was a sort of "soft" introduction to the game, and an encouragement to continue to play.

Drawing the paradise-figure was an art not too easy to master. All girls knew how to do it, but some were more gifted than others. The completed figures might sometimes be compared to works of art or of engineering.

It was almost impossible to find an abandoned figure ready to use. In the semi-circle - the "heaven" - it was written: "This paradise belongs to ... (the owners' names). Keep off!"

The paradise figure was open to many threats: rain, diligent use, the house- porter's cleaning. Still it did happen that a group of girls kept a paradise figure for many days. The lines were re-designed more than once, and the names of the owners were re-written or changed in accordance to the change in friendship among the girls. The construction of the figure was very important teamwork, usually with the most gifted as the leader.

Boys rarely took part in the game. At school the two sexes were separated, and at home the boys were afraid of being teased if they showed any interest in the game.

1963-64: "Stengern"

When I started collecting child-traditions in 1963-64, I discovered that even boys had started to play the game of hopscotch. I do not maintain that they never played before, but the shame of being caught in a girl's game was usually sufficient to keep them away from it. Sometimes the boys acted as a group, and such a group could play with girls. However, on these rare occasions, the game developed almost into a competitive game where the girls were conquered and forced to leave the game. The boys ignored the rules and were more ruthless in their attitudes toward the other players.

However, in the nineteen-sixties, the boys had started playing a game of their own. They never bothered to draw their own figures, but occupied one which was not in use for the moment, or they just scared the girls away. The boys' way of playing was called "stengern" which means: "closing", "stopping" or "preventing". The boys pushed each other out of the figure, and tried to prevent all of the other players from putting their feet down in the squares. They used familiar elements from other games, but systematized these in a new way.

1. As many boys as possible jump into square A. Those who cannot get a place are losers from the start.
2. The letters have no other meaning for the boys than that of marking the player's route.
3. Each time the boys jump into a new square, the first one tries to stop the others by placing his feet in such a way that the others will lose their balance. Everyone does the same. The last one to jump into the square is almost always sure to miss.
4. When a boy loses his balance or when he steps on the lines of the square, these are counted as failures or errors. He is then dismissed, and has no chance of getting back into the game.
5. The game has only one winner. All the others are losers. Even if the boys and girls were using the same figures for their games, their playing differs.

The girls were watching each other with merciless criticism, the boys never cared. Even the least little fault was registered by the girls. Among the boys a fault had to be so obvious that it was impossible to ignore it, before they reckoned it as a sin big enough to banish the sinner from the game.


When I revisited the same parts of the town in a new field-project in 1970-71, I observed that the school-yards now were filled with painted hop-scotch figures. They were without "heavens", without "death-squares" and the lines were some centimeters broad. This was a result of the adults' new understanding of the children's rights and their demands for play.

I even observed that boys and girls were playing together, and at first sight it looked as if it was "stengern". It was a variant which had elements both from the boys original "stengern" and from the girls "ABC-paradise". The thick lines were more fit for "stengern" than for the girls' old game, because when stepping on the thick lines, it was so obvious that it was almost nothing to argue about. So they agreed that stepping on half of the line was not a fault at all. Stepping on lines and letters had been a very important element in the girls' game because of the thinness of the lines. The girls might stand disputing for minutes while the "guilty" one was standing with her foot on the line or close to it.

Another new element had been taken into the game: instead of playing separately, the two sexes had found a more "symbiotic" form of the game. They were now playing together, and both sexes had been forced to give up some of their former rules. The girls had let go their turns and the unterminating disputes about wrong or right. The boys had obeyed the demand of letting more "human" rules govern the game. Now the weakest could take advantage to the rules letting a player step on more than half of the line before it was reckoned as a "touch". Everyone was allowed to commit three errors before being banished.

The boys and girls have been obliged to modify their rules to fit the whole group of children. They have learned that they are first of all human beings, not just representatives of two different sexes. The rules are:

1. All the children are jumping into square A, following the boys' rules. The first one is not going further until everyone is standing in the same square.

2. The children know in advance where the route goes, so the missing letters do not matter. Some figures still have the letters, but no one takes any notice of them.

3. No one is dismissed from the game after the first false step. Everyone gets three "attempts". This is corresponding to the principles of the girls' game. The "soft" line has got this element established, together with the permissions to step on half of the line.

4. Like the boys' game, this one has only one winner, but it takes more time to become the winner, one reason being that the girls stick to their traditional habit of discussing if the error really is an error. Many boys have had to give in to the girls arguing, both with regard to letting a "sinner" continue, or having to leave the game.

Analysis

During the 1940's the ABC game was carried through in a neat and gracious way without stress. Everyone used the time needed. The oldest girls showed impressive precision and skill. Everyone waited with patience for their turn. Their obedience to the rules was undisputable, but quarrels still occurred, leading to new rules being created now and then to solve conflicts. Everyone was "her sister's guardian", and when not performing, each one still played an active part in controlling the others. Pointing to the faults of others might be nearly as exciting as performing themselves.

In this I see the girls' game as a training for the woman's role: quiet
efficiency with devoted loyalty to demands and rules which the society presents to her. She is not allowed to make herself outstanding in any way. The ideal woman is the good housewife and mother. Her perfection in homely duties and virtues, makes her valued. The social control is kept by the women themselves. However, even if they criticise one another strongly, they never condemn anyone to be "out in the cold" forever. Maybe this is because women's work and their values is of less public importance than men's roles?

At first sight, it looks as if there is no competitive element in the girls' games. There is no winner, no active aggressive competition. However, the degree of perfection and the judgement of each other's performances are two elements which contain competition on a certain level.

Boys do not need to be perfect in the same way as girls do. Society demands them to reach their goal by other means. Boys have to be trained into efficiency, strength and independence. All their games are more or less directed towards the fulfillment of this aim. When the boys play hop-scotch, they struggle to be the first - the leader, - to be the best in maneuvering the other players out of the game, and at the same time be the best in the physical side of the game.

The boys do not have more than one chance in this game. As long as they hang on, they are "inside", but making a false step is sufficient to put the unlucky one down forever. He is a loser, and is doomed to stay ringside and be just an onlooker. This game is a picture of "the survival of the fittest".

For generations girls have been able to develop and make suitable the game of hop-scotch to express their culture. Boys left this game in the 19th century for other games more fitted for their use. Recently, they have seen possibilities in this old game, and changed it from the "girlish" type into a more "masculine" game. The latest addition, the mixture of the feminine and masculine variants has obviously been developed as a result of the new experience by the children.

On both sides they have been forced to renounce some of their former rules, and it may look as if it is the girls who have lost the greatest part of their game. But the feminine elements which have disappeared are just those elements which made interfering into the girls' games impossible for the boys. These elements were foreign for the boys' sense of reality. When boys made a mistake in their games, resulting in punishment like total exclusions, they did not have a "social control" of the same type as the girls. The boys did not see small errors as faults. As in real life, they had the possibilities of making experiences regarded as "natural" to boys. This fact separated the two sexes as long as the same freedom was denied to the girls.

Little by little, new ideas about man and woman's "nature" have developed among the adults. Some of the children meet these ideas in their own homes. But mostly they meet them in kindergarten, at school, on the television-screen, and in literature and newspapers. Girls have started taking part in boys' traditional sports, women have occupied men's employments, and men have started to do women's work. Mothers teach their sons to express feelings and their daughters to fight. But is this influencing children's games?

My conclusion is that both boys and girls, have conceived the new spirit of the time and, try to express this in their games. Some games will disappear, new ones will be created, and some will be changed in the same way as the "paradise" has. I believe that those games which have sufficient excitement, challenge and offer possibilities for development will survive, because children are both loyal to traditions and at the same time have the gift for creating new systems to make their culture live.

Klaus V. Meier, The University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada, N6A 5C2 This paper was presented at the ninth annual meeting of TAASP in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, February, 1983. The
This paper was occasioned, in part, by a comment contained within Cheska's 1982 Presidential Address to the Association for the Anthropological Study of Play. In her discussion of the Association's published proceedings of the annual meetings from 1975 to 1982, she asserted that therein "we have developed a fine treasure chest of ... literature representing the current (state of the art in) research in play" (1982, p.9). However, treasure chests are rather flexible containers which may hold within their confines, and aggrandize by the splendiferous nature of the vessel alone, materials and goods which are neither desirous nor praiseworthy.

To ascertain the true nature of this body of literature, I decided to undertake a detailed content analysis of all of the one hundred and sixty-nine articles contained within the seven proceedings published to date by T.A.A.S.P. From the moment of commencement of this undertaking, it was apparent that there were substantial problems at hand.

Curiously enough, although anthropologists engaged in writing about play often read and periodically cite, they seldom appear to listen seriously to each other. Despite clear and substantial evidence that this negative assessment is often applicable to the general area of theories of play, the focus of the discussion at hand is limited to the more specific topic of anthropological definitions of, and postulations about, the nature and essence of the concept of play.

Unfortunately, the accumulated literature under perusal is replete with recurring contradictions, endless definitional circles, repeated questionable and fallacious dichotomies, inappropriate paradigmatic shifts, and additional conceptual incongruities. Of course, documentation is necessary to reinforce this rather negative evaluation; it is this task to which I now wish to turn my attention.

Infrastructural Inadequacies

Not surprisingly, in the writings of a scholarly society dedicated to the study of play, praise of this phenomenon is ubiquitous. Norbeck's (1977, p. 15) comments in the first article of the inaugural proceedings are indicative of this general state of affairs: "play should not be regarded as interlude in human behavior, a dispensable if refreshing indulgence, but as a vitally important activity of human life that in fact exists among the members of all human societies." Similarly, Csikszentmihalyi (1981, p. 24) asserted that playfulness "is not an expendable luxury. It is the stuff of life, it is what gives us the experience of freedom, of transcendence, of growth". However, before the positive consequences of this general position may be fully explored, it is necessary to delineate clearly the conceptual infrastructure, and it is precisely at this stage that significant difficulties arise.

The demanding preliminary task of "defining primary conceptual frameworks," as Fox (1980, p. 52) pointed out, "becomes particularly problematic when the definitions must be both broadly applicable and contextually meaningful." As might reasonably be expected in an association which entitles the keynote presentation at its annual meetings "The Johan Huizinga Address," many anthropologists acknowledge and support, either in their entirety or with only slight modifications, the definitions tendered originally in Homo Ludens (1955). In fact, Norbeck (1977, p. 19), in the inaugural Huizinga lecture listed at least fifteen traits or descriptive characteristics of play identified in that seminal volume; further, although he rejected some cardinal attributes such as agonism or competition, he contended that Huizinga provided "a richer working base" for formulations about play than that to be found elsewhere.

Obviously, this assessment is shared by numerous other anthropologists in both their theoretical and field studies. For example, Conn and Marquez (1983, p. 67) utilized Huizinga's altered social context component to label pinball play as a public
In addition, Salomone's (1977) study of "friendly" witchdoctors postulated that since Huizinga's major play characteristics of order, tension, movement, change rhythm, solemnity, and rapture are also traits embodied in religious beliefs and experiences, it is possible to conclude that religion is a game and thus play.2 Further, Fox (1980, p. 52) utilized Norbeck's modification of Huizinga's play definition -- namely, that play "transcends ordinary behavior" because it is a "voluntary pleasurable behavior that is separated in time from other activities and that has a quality of make-believe" -- to assert that play and ritual are very "similar in terms of function in many cultural contexts." Similarly, Goldberg (1982, p. 42-43), citing Handelman's work on metacommunicative frames, noted that although play and ritual are multiple, complementary frames with different transmissions, the two share numerous important characteristics.

Not unexpectedly, Caillois -- predominantly based upon the brief discussion of play and the more comprehensive classification system of games presented in his very influential book Man, Play and Games (1961), and closely echoed in several articles published separately -- receives almost as much acknowledgement and support in the anthropological literature. In the first proceedings volume, for example, Olofson (1977, p. 167) utilized Caillois' formulations, although totally and inappropriately mistaking his game categories for elements of play,3 to discuss selected activities of the Hausa society of Nigeria. In the same set of writings, Mouledoux (1977), also and just as inexplicably mistaking game categories for types of play, championed and utilized Caillois' definitions, albeit supplemented by Huizinga among others, as the basis for the development of a descriptive play observation instrument. In the second volume, Mouledoux (1977b) again appropriated Caillois' scheme, this time to supplement Piaget's model, for developmental research. Finally in the latest volume, Jorgensen (1983, p. 91) utilized Caillois' explication of the "make-believe" or "second reality" element of play to investigate speech play and anti-school parodies.

Admittedly, most anthropologists are no longer ensconced at the stage of appealing to Huizinga and Caillois as almost canonical authorities; however, others have been substituted. Although numerous famous explorations of play are often referred to in the literature, including the pertinent works of Freud and Erikson (cf. Cheska, 1978), I wish to discuss only two; namely, Piaget's studies rather briefly, and Bateson's writings in somewhat greater depth.

Numerous research papers acknowledge the contributions of Piaget's typologies, from his tripartite classification of play types (sensory motor, symbolic, and games) to the previously mentioned model of child development. In one of his papers, for example, Duthie (1977) supported Piaget's basic model, but added the dynamic feature of sensoristasis (that is, the desire to activate the reticulate arousal system) to compensate for its static nature.

However, Piaget has come under significant attack. For one, it has been argued that since "the structure of play is an inevitable outcome of the structure of the child mind," it is clear that in Piaget's view play represents immature cognitive functioning; consequently, adult play is relegated to the status of being perceived as merely an "infantile remnant" (Guilmette and Duthie, 1982, p. 87). In addition, Sutton-Smith (1971) provided extended criticism and attempted to repudiate major components of Piaget's models. Finally, Post's (1978) review of the critical literature on Piaget delineated additional points of incompleteness and contention.

These efforts are all surely important steps in the right direction. Much more of this type of critical analysis is required for a field of inquiry to advance; and, as I will attempt to demonstrate at this point, the work of Bateson and his supporters and commentators would be a most appropriate target.

Within the last fifteen years in general, and certainly within the specific studies under discussion, it has been the vogue for anthropologists to wax poetically about Bateson's contributions to play theory. His conception of play as a signal or "meta-message" -- best understood as a
frame demarking a class of behaviors not to be taken seriously or often about something which does not exist, rather than as the sum of messages or contents to be found therein -- has achieved wide recognition and remarkable support. In fact, Bateson's signal "this is play" has become a "buzz-phrase" not only for this Association, but also considerably beyond.

It has inspired and oriented many of the papers contained within the proceedings, including the following representative, but by no means exhaustive, selection: Grayzel's (1978) study of play behavior in State Penitentaries; Gorfain's (1983) discussion of Shakespeare's Hamlet as a ludic event; Handelman's (1980, p. 58) interpretation of the Naven ritual as a metacommunicative activity, which he presented and structured as an unabashed, "appreciative commentary" on Bateson; and finally, Schwartzman's, J. (1981) appreciation of Handelman's appreciation of Bateson's paradigm to explore the paradoxical nature of post-modern or anti-realist literary works of fiction, which are "created by the interplay of several logical levels of communication, which negate one another and are contingent on the context of that communication, and not reducible to the sum of the messages that compose them" (Schwartzman, J., 1980, p. 39, paraphrasing Bateson). In fact, Schwartzman (1980; 1981; 1982) was so enamoured by Bateson's framework that he utilized it to analyze the same topic in three consecutive articles published in the fourth, fifth, and sixth proceedings, respectively.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Bateson's message about play is the overwhelming support, and even febrile partisanship, which it has produced. Indeed, remarkably few of the anthropological writings criticize it at all.

Denzin's 1980 keynote paper, which is itself flawed, as I will attempt to demonstrate shortly, is one such rare challenge. Although he concurred that play is the name of a "frame for action", Denzin contended that the paradox of play does not lie at the Batesonian level of the message "this is play." He insisted that "there is more to play than the recognition of a paradox of logical types"; that is, "play transcends communicative and metacommunicative contradictions." Denzin (1982, p. 13, 23) found unsupportable and thus rejected Bateson's notions of, and Goffman's subsequent elaborations on, the frames and messages of play, which he argued assume "a recurring eidos, or essence to the play frame experience."

In forwarding his own symbolic interactionist conception, Denzin (1982, p. 13) adopted Simmel's approach and designated play to be an emergent, emotionally laden, social process; specifically, it was postulated to be a "recurring interactional form whose content and substance must be established on every occasion of its occurrence." Further, he asserted that play is a necessarily competitive process, thus apparently leaving little, if any, room for individual play. This led him to make the bemusing, outrageous and, of course, erroneous claim that "boasting and threatening are basic to play" (1982, p. 20).

But there are more significant conceptual problems at hand in Denzin's paper. Within the short space of three paragraphs, he forwarded the following two quite contradictory assertions. First, "the world of play is not -- as Calliope's (sic), Huizinga and others would have it -- distinct from and apart from every day taken-for-granted reality. It occurs in the immediately experienced here-and-now." Second, only nineteen lines later, "In playing, persons suspend tones of seriousness and ... detach themselves from literal, taken-for-granted reality; they fool around, tell funny stories, laugh and tease one another, although they may do so with a studied seriousness" (1982, p. 13-14). Although such contradictions, may be appropriately placed in an article entitled "The Paradoxes of Play", surely the less said about their merits or usefulness the better.

Csikszentmihalyi (1981) offered a more substantive criticism. Although he agreed that play involved the acceptance of an alternative set of rules and goals -- that is, we play only when we "learn to shift from one set of rules to another, and are able to communicate that shift to others" -- he refused to accept
Bateson's implied hierarchy attributing "higher epistemological status to one set of goals and rules over the other." In direct contrast to Bateson, he asserted that "an activity is not play because it suspends or evades the rules of reality, but because the player freely accepts the goals and rules that constrain his or her actions, knowing full well that he or she need not do so" (p. 20). In other words, play does not consist of the "moratorium on reality" (p. 19) implied in Bateson's message "this is not real." Csikszentmihalyi (1981, p. 15) argues successfully in my opinion, that is is questionable indeed to hold the "assumption that the arbitrariness of play can be contrasted to a solid, permanent, objective reality." Such activities as rock climbing, spelunking, and sky diving, whose "consequences affect life directly, and thus are not at all removed from so-called 'reality'," clearly demonstrate that it is untenable to assert that these play activities are not to be taken seriously or are about something which doesn't exist. "Is climbing a vertical face of rock at the risk of one's life" in any manner "not real"? By changing goals, play restructures reality to, at times, "risk the things that matter most in ordinary life, such as life and money, for a set of different goals" (p. 16, 17). In summary, play is not necessarily based upon an avoidance of directly dealing with reality; rather, it involves a change of perspective on the part of the participant to effect a temporary transformation or suspension of normal social dictates.

Needless to say, the entire issue of clearly identifying the differences between the "real" and "unreal" world is in need of further detailed investigation. Although it is possible to concur with Csikszentmihalyi that Bateson's assertion that "this is play" necessarily implies that this is, somehow, "not real" is obviously incorrect, considerable additional analysis is required to establish the nature and boundaries of any such epistemological uncertainty. Nonetheless, it is apparent that Bateson's postulations are in dire need of further critical scrutiny, rather than unquestioned allegiance. In fact, I suspect that there is a great deal less to Bateson's theory of play than meets the eye; and this needs to be delineated far more extensively and precisely.

At this stage of the paper, before forwarding some rather harsh conclusions concerning the state of the art in play research, I wish to focus attention upon three specific, exemplary and recurring problems in the literature under investigation: first, the question of the interchangeability of the concepts of "play" and "game"; second, the feasibility of a play-work dichotomy; and third, the persistent utilization of circular reasoning. The next section addressed the first of these problems.

The Interchangeability of "Play" and "Games"

The literature is replete with both overt and covert support for assertions similar to the one that was forwarded by Adams (1980, p.151), in his study of the Basotho domain of games, namely, that "playing and games are not categorically differentiated activities." Beran (1977, p.81), for example, defined play and games as "systematic cultural patterns" which are one and the same. Similarly, Duthie (1980, p. 93, 91) claimed that sport is "an extension of play" and, further, that both sport and games "are simply enduring play forms" demonstrating wide appeal. Finally, Blanchard (1980, p.83) contended that sport may be classified as a game form and, in addition, that it may be defined as "a form of play that involves physical exertion, formal competition, and an explicit set of rules."

This frequent and largely indiscriminate interchanging of categories -- of course, abetted by the fact that Huizinga, Callois, and other "classic" scholars often treated play and games as virtually synonymous terms, naturally falling into the same category -- has resulted in the tendency for anthropologists of play to report and study predominantly formalized games (Schwartzman, H. and Barbera, 1977, p. 26-27). For instance, Salter (1977), in his study of the activities of Eastern Woodland Indians, freely interchanged playforms and games without providing a substantive definition of either.
Despite the widespread occurrence of such bland equations or collapsing techniques, however, procedures of this nature may be most illegitimate. For one, they presume exactly what should be questioned, explored, and resolved. Similar to the incompatible characteristics often attributed to play itself -- for example, Piaget suggested that play is often spontaneous and unorganized, whereas Huizinga stressed the necessary presence of rules and social organization in play -- it is possible to contend that play and games possess significantly different components. In the way of illustration, it appears defensible to suggest that whereas games invariably possess a rule structure, play does not. Stevens (1977b, p. 240), for one, questioned the inclusion of rules in both Huizinga's and Caillois' definitions of play. Bamberg (1983, p. 139) in his paper on the use of metaphor and play in young children, distinguished play from games by asserting that the former is necessarily spontaneous while the latter "follow highly routine and/or stereotyped rules." Finally, Sack (1977, p. 188) stated that such activities as a child joyfully rolling down a grassy embankment have little or no constitutive or normative regulation. It is necessary to note that any attempt to claim that an implied social structure is unconsciously present in occurrences of the type immediately preceding is simply a matter of begging the question, without assisting in its resolution.

The claim which I wish to forward here is not that spontaneity is an essential component of play -- at the very least, such a notion is contestable -- but rather that, although games may at times possess important manifestations of play, it is credible to differentiate these activities quite completely. Contrary to any postulations specifying a necessary identification or equation of play and games, it is possible for a game, or for that matter a sport (which is a different category again), to fulfill all of the requirements of "gamehood" without demonstrating any play characteristics whatsoever. In other words, a game is not invariably, as it is sometimes claimed to be, "the ultimate play form" (Robinson, 1978, p. 144). On the other hand, models which attempt to argue for major differentiation or even absolute discreteness among the three concepts such as Edward's (1973, p. 57) readily discardable play-game-sport continuum present their own significant conceptual difficulties.

In concluding this section of the analysis, it is necessary to emphasize that the very conspicuous lack of resolution of this issue in the anthropology of play literature is both unfortunate and counterproductive. Indeed, careful theoretical efforts directed toward the resolution of the forementioned conceptual difficulties should be solicited and supported forthwith.

The Play-Work Dichotomy

It has been strongly contended that, in anthropological investigations, "studies of play cannot be separated from studies of work" (Schwartzman, H., 1980, p. 315). Indeed, it appears as if the nature of the relationship between these two forms of human endeavor has been particularly problematic in this field. Two distinct and contradictory positions are readily identifiable in the literature: the first supports the establishment of a dichotomy between play and work; the second petitions for the elimination of just such a notion. A brief delineation of some of the stances advocated in connection with this issue will be helpful in demonstrating the extent of the bifurcation.

Mergen (1977, p. 59) cited Bowen's 1909 work as one of the earliest instances of a championing of a psychological (i.e., attitudinal) continuum with work and play occupying opposite poles. Guilmette (1977) differentiated the "play dimension" characterized by fun, relaxation, and intrinsic rewards) from the "non-play dimension" (involving emphasis on winning, the pursuit of trophies, etc.). Mouledoux (1977a) also distinguished play from non-play forms such as art or work. Finally, Sack (1977) argued for the maintenance of a major distinction between sport as play and sport as work. He asserted that an activity may be perceived as play as long
as the primary motivation is independent of extrinsic rewards and the demands on which these rewards are contingent; on the other hand, the more the activity is oriented toward utilitarian or obligatory concerns, the more it approximates a work orientation.

The contrary position was supported by Lancy (1977, p.87), for one, who contended that play and work are "integrated." Daher (1981) utilized the writings of Thoreau to support a notion of the possibility of the fusion of work and play in a single activity. Humphrey (1981) suggested that there is a very hazy (in fact, non-existent) line which separates work, play, life and cosmology. Finally, Mergen (1978), in a study of American shipyard workers, claimed that the postulated dichotomy is false because the "flow experience" frequently manifested during play is also often present in the rhythm of work activities.

Stevens (1980, p317) chose to make the previously mentioned dichotomy the focus of his 1978 Presidential Address. He began his attempt "to bring some clarity to (definitional) waters that are now pretty muddy" by emphasizing what he termed the "apparently forgotten attribute" of Huizinga's classic definition of play, namely, that of "absorbing the player intensely and utterly." Stevens then proceeded by equating this characteristic with Csikszentmihalyi's description of the "flow experience", that is, the process of intense involvement and optimal harmonious interaction with the environment. Subsequently, reference to selected studies indicating that a significant number of people have flow experiences during their work endeavors, or even during moments of frontline warfare, led him to quote a line from a piece of personal correspondence with Csikszentmihalyi in which the latter bluntly asserted "so much for the dichotomy of play and work" (p.319). Stevens (p.318) concurred completely with this assessment and terminated his address with the contention that "much of our investigations into what constitutes 'play' has been bounded by a false conceptual dichotomy" between play and work which has stood "in the way of meaningful advance in several aspects of our field of study."

Unfortunately, Steven's, and for that matter Csikszentmihalyi's, rather facile dismissals of the bifurcation on the grounds previously delineated are clearly erroneous. At best, all that has been demonstrated is that the one particular experiential characteristic chosen for discussion -- namely, the participant's intense absorption in an activity -- may not be an attribute sufficient to differentiate, in and of itself, play from work. However, this by no means invalidates the dichotomy, since it is clearly possible to contend that the two classes of activities may be radically discriminated on other, and perhaps more important, necessary components. It is readily apparent that Stevens unjustifiably assumed as a given exactly what he had to prove, namely, that the specific characteristic chosen for his discussion is the one and only essential attribute which defines play; however, not even Huizinga forwardd such a restrictive claim. In conclusion, I wish to assert that Stevens was simply mistaken if he thought that he had done anything substantive to close the issue. Regrettably, the waters are in greater need of clarification at this point than before he waded therein.

As Schwartzman (1980, p. 315-16) pointed out in her introduction to Steven's address, his paper elicited some interesting responses, including a brief note from Bateson, in which he argued, in part, that "the dichotomy of play and work is not necessarily a false one" since the actions of individuals in many cultures are both "premised" and guided by a radical work-play distinction. However, and contrary to the previous statement, it is readily apparent that a dichotomy, or for that matter a principle of conduct, may indeed be false even if belief in it guides action.

At this point, it is necessary to present a brief note of clarification and purpose. Herein, I do not necessarily wish either to support or to refute the contention that there is a viable and legitimate dichotomy between play and work. On the contrary, my intention is far more modest in scope; namely, to point out that the
issue has most assuredly not been addressed in a satisfactory manner, much less successfully resolved, despite the numerous postulations to be found in the literature which tend to convey just such an impression.

On Circular Reasoning

In this section, I wish to discuss, and thereby hopefully preclude the future use of a particular mode of theoretical argumentation which is both deceptive in its pretense to legitimacy and, more importantly, harmful to the careful development of play theory. In its simplest form, the procedure consists of asserting that previously forwarded conceptions of play are inadequate because they do not successfully incorporate certain characteristics demonstrated within or by a specific form of human activity, say 'X', which represents a type of behavior which the author claims to be an instance of play. Consequently, 'X' is delineated, its selected traits specified, and a call for a new conception of play which accommodates the activity at hand is stridently championed. However, most often such a maneuver is not only frustrating, but also self-defeating and illegitimate. Hopefully, the following somewhat extended discussion of one rather prominent example of this type of enterprise will suffice to preclude subsequent attempts in anthropological research to employ such an inappropriate technique.

In their paper on play and the emotions, based predominantly on the affect theory forwarded by Jungian analysis and psychotherapy, Stewart and Stewart (1981, p. 42-45) asserted that "if there is any characteristic of play that has achieved general recognition ... it is that play is voluntary activity engaged in just for the fun of it, for the joyful pleasure that is play." Further, they emphatically contended that "play must be motivated by joy." It is precisely this ubiquitous notion of the necessary intertwining of joy and play which Sutton-Smith (1983) attacked in his study of the playground activities of nineteenth century New Zealand children. In this brief paper, he presented several instances of "furtive, brutal and cruel" activities (p. 103), which he claimed were not entered into voluntarily and did not necessarily produce positive effects. As a consequence of these observations, Sutton-Smith concluded that previous notions of play must be repudiated; in other words, because of these manifestations of children's behavior, he argued that the "romanticized" idealization of play as a voluntary, intrinsically motivated activity must be significantly altered, if not totally discarded.

Unfortunately, Sutton-Smith's assertions are less than suasive for rather simple reasons regrettably similar to those advanced in the immediately preceding section on the premature or false dismissal of the work-play dichotomy. That is, he granted at the start of his discussion specifically what he needed most to demonstrate; namely that the activities described are indeed play activities and, as such, serve as substantial evidence clearly arguing against the previously forwarded notions of play. But how was it determined that the activities described were instances of play in the first place; that is, how were they recognized as play, if not in conformity with an appropriately encompassing criterion accepted prior to the observation? In other words, Sutton-Smith simply presumed exactly what he most assuredly had to prove.

It should be noted at this point that, although he did not appear to comprehend that the statement effectively undermined, if not irreparably damaged, his entire position, Sutton-Smith (p. 108) admitted this significant deficiency in his conclusions: "I am assuming that in these examples I am talking about play." However, if one does not accept this bland assumption -- a reaction certainly justifiable on a number of legitimate grounds -- the argument developed in Sutton-Smith's paper may be readily and convincingly challenged.

Further, it is not an altogether difficult task to construct a defense of "traditional" play characterics and definitions against Sutton-Smith's questionable charges. It may be legitimately contended that if children participate in a certain activity due to coercion, peer pressure, status seeking, or the desire to attain social acceptance, or if such engagements continue to
produce negative rather than positive effects, the activity under consideration, in whatever form it takes, is simply not an instance of play behavior. That is, if compulsion and the desire to attain social respectibility are the major causes of participation, or if intrinsic rewards are negated -- no matter if induced, controlled, and sustained by the children engaged -- the activity lies outside of the play realm. Such activities, however, may most assuredly be games or sports since these enterprises do not necessarily have play, in the manner previously outlined, at their core. To presume that all children's activities conducted on the playground, even under their volition, must necessarily be instances of play is somewhat akin to suggesting that whatever actions a cook undertakes in the kitchen is related to, if not an integral part of, the activity of food preparation. Thus, if the cook writes cheques on the sideboard, participates in conversation with another person, or even engages in sexual relations, voluntarily or through coercion, on the butcher block island, these ventures must all be accommodated in a revised definition of cooking. The burden of proof, supporting demands for conceptual revision, surely lies with the negative in such instances.

On a somewhat related issue, it is readily apparent that there are additional assumptions to be unearthed in the literature which may profitably be challenged. There is, at times, a failure to recognize the importance of content and reference distinctions between noun and adjectival word forms; for instance, Nardo (1982, p. 34) simply assumed that because John Donne's poetry is playful, it is ipso facto play. However, this is a point to be won, not simply granted. Unfortunately, space does not permit an exploration of this and similar instances.

Hopefully, this discussion has demonstrated that it is important to recognize and discard presumptions and circular reasoning of the forementioned type, if the nature of play is to be clarified rather than obfuscated and, consequently, significant progress is to be manifested in the field.

Conclusions

It is evident from the preceding analysis that there is indeed "considerable diversity of opinion regarding the salient characteristics of play which distinguish it from other behaviors or activities" (Harris, 1981, p. 27). However, to condone the continuation of such a state of affairs is not only regrettable, but also significantly counterproductive. It would serve well to keep in mind the viewpoint expressed by Townshend (1980, p. 244), in his strong critique of Roberts et al's early papers on the conflict-enculturation hypothesis, namely, that "we are trying to run before we can walk. Not only will we not get far, but we risk setting out on a false track leading to a dead end." Thus, if the underlying definitions, paradigms, and interpretations of an area of research are confused or contradictory, meaningful discourse and advancement is severely handicapped, if not vitiated.

Although the task of adequately delineating the essential structure and function of the phenomenon of play is surely not a conundrum, the research surveyed tends to support such a conclusion. Therefore, I would like to issue a call to end the assiduous re-invention of the wheel through the undertaking of a careful, destructive analysis of the existing literature concerned with this topic. There is an obvious need for precise definitions and tightly drawn parameters, as well as the clear identification of models and positions no longer tenable; in short, the play literature is in desperate need not only of correction, but also of restructuring. Please note, that a request for tightly drawn and clearly defined analyses, aimed towards the unpacking and reduction of the current network of variables suggested as being inherent in play, is in no manner whatsoever "theoretically destructive to the development of a minimally distorted understanding of play," as Schwartzman, H. (cited by Harris, 1981, p. 27) erroneously suggested. To urge the elimination of circular reasoning, unnecessary and unproductive conceptual paradoxes, and
continued support of incompatible attributes, is a call for clarity, not impoverishment.

Consequently, to advance beyond the current inadequate state of the art, there is a necessity to terminate endless gyres— if you wish, chaos in the anthropology of play brickyard — and to move forthrightly towards amelioration, if not closure, by providing conceptual maps more unassailable than those previously tendered.

Perhaps, seven years beyond the centenary of the publication of Lewis Carroll's The Hunting of the Snark (1981, p. 47), I might be allowed to suggest in conclusion, that researchers attempting to discover play have "sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care; They pursued it with forks and hope." Nonetheless, it is now time to urge a more successful end to this disparate enterprise and a termination of these particular circular games which anthropologists play because, with all due apologies, play is most definitely not a Boojum, you see.

Notes

1. Cf. Lancy and Tindall (1977); Stevens (1977); Salter (1978); Schwartzman, H., (1980); Cheska (1981); Loy (1982); and Manning (1983). These volumes are presumed by Cheska, and numerous other anthropologists studying play and sport, to be among, if not the embodiment of, the most significant and seminal works available in the subdiscipline.

2. This rather facile identification or equation of play and game, echoed extensively throughout the literature, causes significant theoretical difficulties. This issue, of necessity, will be addressed in a subsequent section of the paper.

3. As mentioned in the reference note immediately preceding, and as will be demonstrated clearly later, such indiscriminate utilization and/or collapsing of the categories of play and game causes major problems. Caillois' writings seem to be the main source of this confusion and its continued expression in the field.

4. This state of affairs also places in doubt Harris' (1981, p. 27) contention held by the players which involves a relatively weak commitment to the attainment of goals." This assertion is at least questionable, if not false; it would appear possible to dedicate oneself fully to the enterprise at hand without, somehow, vitiating the play attitude or damaging play as a contextual category.

5. It should be noted, however, that Bamberg (1983, p. 139) did vacillate somewhat in his position by postulating that games may be perceived as "ritualized play that follow particular mental plans and goals."

6. It should be noted that the sociology of sport literature does not fare appreciably better in terms of the conceptual question at hand. For a critical discussion of the deficiencies in that field of inquiry, as well as the delineation of a suggested path of rectification, see Meier (1981), particularly pages 85-91.

7. It is both instructive and indicative to note that the three previously mentioned papers, unfortunately, all fail to provide any clear description or explanation, much less precise definition or adequate conceptual model, of either of the two major terms. It is also disconcerting to discover the number of additional anthropologists who simply assume that the two concepts, play in particular, are unproblematic and, consequently, present their material without an adequate conceptual foundation. As I hope to demonstrate herein, such erroneous presuppositions produce serious difficulties for many of the studies at hand.

8. This specific assertion will be critically challenged subsequently in this section of the paper.

9. Other traits sometimes postulated to be integral components of the "flow experience" include feelings of elation, moments of heightened concentration, loss of self-awareness, the institution of reflex action, and even feelings of transcendence.

10. However, it must be noted that
or playfulness should be confused with play forms or play behavior."

11. Bateson's response was published in the T.A.A.S.P. Newsletter (Spring, 1979). The quotation following in the text is Schwartzman's paraphrase of Bateson's comments.

12. It may be apparent to the careful reader that the reasoning employed in this statement is in jeopardy of violating Bateson's own warnings against mixing logical types. The nature of logical tests of validity is partially at stake here.

13. For example, the plethora of research studies clearly demonstrating the invalidity of the catharsis of aggression hypothesis has done relatively little to dissuade its promotion as either an organizational guide to structure violent contact sports or as a motivator for participation therein.

14. Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that there are variations on this theme in evidence in the literature. In his discussion of the analytic distinctions contained within the conceptual model of play and games developed by the South African Basotho culture, Adams (1980, p. 151), for example, noted that these two categories are placed in opposition not to work but to war. Unfortunately, space does not permit even a cursory discussion of this suggested dichotomy.

15. It is, of course, a mistake to assume that if children have to engage in certain game or sports activities such as fighting, to demonstrate social power or to achieve acceptance, that such activities are proper examples of play rather than non-play phenomena. In Berne's (1984) terms, most of the "games people play" demonstrate no manifestation of play whatsoever, but may be far more appropriately considered as status enhancement maneuvers.

16. I have defended this contention concerning the distinction between play and game or sport forms in considerable depth elsewhere (Meier, 1981). The interested reader is directed specifically to pages 91-97.

17. Indeed as La Faye (paraphrased by Guilmette and Duthie, 1981, p. 37) pointed out, the analysis of play need not violate principles of "logical consistency or, for that matter, comprehensiveness, parsimony, falsifiability, contributiveness and precision."

References


Bateson, G. Gregory Bateson on play and work. The Association for the Anthropological Study of Play Newsletter, 1979, 4, #4, 2-4.


UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Oct. 21 - 23 AES (American Folklore Society), Annual Meeting, Radisson Plaza, Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.

Oct. 27 - 30 NASS (North American Society for Sociology of Sport), St. Louis, MO. For information: Susan Greendorfer, Department of Physical Education, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, U.S.A. 61801


July 19 - 26, 1984 Olympic Scientific Congress -- TAASP. Write: Audy Miracle, Department of Sociology, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas U.S.A.

June 10 - 15, 1984 Fourth International Conference on Humor, P.O. Box 394, 61003 Tel Aviv, Israel.

1985 Fifth International Conference on Humor, College Cork, Ireland.

If you know of upcoming conferences in your specialty, drop a note to:
Ann Marie Guilmette, School of Physical Education and Recreation, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario Canada L2S 3A1

TAASP Mailing Labels

Does TAASP have a correct mailing label for you? Did you receive your TAASP Newsletter at a correct address? Did your colleague receive his/her Newsletter? To ensure a correct and accurate mailing, please forward any changes or corrections to Dr. J. Beran, TAASP Secretary-Treasurer, 300 PEB, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50010 U. S. A. Your changes could be forwarded on the attached (p. 28) Membership Application form.
NEW TAASP T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE

TAASP t-shirts with a new design were prepared for the February meeting in Baton Rouge. Featuring the ape and skeleton from the traditional logo, the new shirts show them in a pose apropos Mardi Gras. No member nor friend of TAASP should be without one of these shirts.

The shirts are blue and come in an assortment of sizes for adults and children. The adult sizes are: small (34-36), medium (38-40), large (42-44), and extra large (46-48). The youth sizes are: small (6-8), medium (10-12), and large (14-16). (There are a few gold colored shirts in adult sizes small and medium only.)

The shirts cost U.S.$7.50 each. This includes postage for North American destinations. For overseas destinations, please add an additional U.S.$1.00 for surface delivery or an additional U.S.$4.00 for air mail.

Whether or not you were able to attend the meeting in Baton Rouge and revel with the TAASP crew at Mardi Gras, you will want one of these shirts which commemorate a high point for many. Also, these shirts make excellent gifts, especially for those who think they have everything.

To obtain shirts, send a cheque or money order for U.S.$7.50 for each shirt to: Andy Miracle, Department of Sociology, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas 76129, U.S.A. Please remit in U.S. dollars or the equivalent Canadian dollars.

(SEE ATTACHED LOGO, p. 25)
CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF PLAY, GAMES, & SPORT

March 28-31, 1984
Clemson, South Carolina

COMBINED MEETING:

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE ON SPORT AND SOCIETY
Fourth Annual Meeting

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF PLAY (TAASP)
Tenth Annual Meeting

THE NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT (NASSS)
Special Regional Meeting

SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES:
Academic panels, Plenary sessions, Keynote addresses, Social events, Literature displays, Interdisciplinary dialogue.

Send paper or panel proposals by October 15, 1983, to:

TAASP
Dr. Bernard Mergen, American Studies Program
George Washington University, Washington, D.C. 20052

NASSS
Dr. John Loy, Room 213 Freer Gym, 906 S. Goodwin Ave.
University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois 61801

For information on registration and local arrangements contact:
Dr. Joseph L. Arbeta, Hardin Hall 105, Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina, Tele. (803) 656-3153/4

Convention air fares and special travel assistance for the conference will be available through Eastern Airlines and Small World Travel of Clemson. Details will be provided in a future mailing.
1984 Olympic Scientific Congress
Eugene, Oregon July 19–26, 1984

Conference Schedule:

July 19
Registration, Opening Ceremonies, Banquet

July 20–21, 24–25
Disciplinary (TAASP) Meetings, Interdisciplinary Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Cultural Festival

July 22–23
Recreation, Tours of the Region

July 23 p.m.
Keynote Addresses, Cultural Festival

July 26
Disciplinary Meetings, Social, Closing Ceremony

Transportation: Information about reduced fares from Europe and points in North America is available by completing the flight information section of the Congress registration form.

Call for Papers: Contributions to the meetings must be original and may not have appeared in print prior to the Congress. All authors are expected to present their work personally. The 1984 Olympic Scientific Congress will retain copyright of the abstracts and papers accepted for presentation. It is expected that some papers may be published in proceedings.

Organized Symposia: Submit title, list of participants, and symposium abstract to Andy Miracle by September 1, 1983.

Paper Abstracts: Abstracts for all papers, whether volunteered or as part of an organized symposium, must be submitted by October 15, 1983.* For the TAASP program send abstracts to: Andy Miracle, Dept. of Sociology, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas 76129. Abstracts for the Congress’ Interdisciplinary Sessions should be sent to: 1984 Olympic Scientific Congress, 1479 Moss Street, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

Housing: TAASP delegates may secure lodging in dorms at $35 per day, which includes three meals. For motel accommodations, TAASP delegates should select, in order, 1) The Holiday Inn ($29-44), or 2) New Oregon Motel ($45-53). All accommodations can be reserved on the registration form. Be sure to indicate that you are a TAASP delegate on your hotel registration form.

Registration: The fee is $165. Students may register for $65 if they are registered for the University of Oregon summer session.

Key Dates:
October 15, 1983- Deadline for submitting abstracts*
January 15, 1984- Notification of acceptance
March 15, 1984- Final registration without late fee

*Deadline extended until November 15, 1983.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Fiscal - June - 1982-83)

Name (please print)

Mailing Address

Institution or Agency

Interests in play

Mail to: Dr. Janice Beran,
TAASP Secretary-Treasurer
300 PEB
Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa 50010

New [ ] Renewal [ ]

Type of Membership

Student ($7.50) [ ]

Foreign membership $9.50 in U.S. Funds
(including $2.00 for Postage)

Professional ($15.00) [ ]

Foreign membership $17.00 in U.S. Funds
(including $2.00 for Postage)

Life ($200.00) [ ]

Institutional ($20.00) [ ]

Pay in U.S. dollars. Members from other countries, remember to add $2.00 for Postage.

Students Only:

School

Signature of faculty advisor or member

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(Reprinted, 1977 under title THE STUDY OF PLAY: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS)

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