City Play in New York
By Ann Richman Beresin

Editor's Note: The following article is a review of the "City Play" exhibit at the Museum of the City of New York. It seems especially appropriate for this issue of the newsletter in view of the museums devoted to play and festival available in Philadelphia during the upcoming TASP meetings. The author is a student with Brian Sutton-Smith at the University of Pennsylvania.

The exhibit, seen at the Museum of the City of New York, is a nostalgic look at the street games from 1860 to 1960, with an intelligent overview of play theory and themes, leading to a culmination of your own memory playground. The "City Play" archway bids you enter with simulated sidewalk chalk games on the wall, featuring the "City Play" hopscotch logo. As you step in you see an enlarged photo of a candy store in back, (complete with Breyers Ice Cream sign), a lifesize photo of a real city stoop on your left, exhibit tables with old toys, and numerous black and white photos of children in play in the 1940s. Voices of children at singing games coax you in to find its source. The seeking is much more satisfying than the finding, and as can even be seen by the accompanying map, the difference between the first room and the last is striking. The following comments are my own reaction to the exhibit, both as a student of play theory, and as an educator. The main categories to be examined are a) exhibit theme, b) materials used and the flow of materials, and c) level of interactivity. It is hoped that these comments might be useful for future exhibits, or for future exhibitions of "City Play" itself.

Themes of "City Play"

The major chorus of the exhibit sings of adaptability in play ("play incorporates, play transforms, play controls"), adaptability in fantasy ("transforming yourself"), adaptability in material use ("toys from found materials") and the tension caused by those who might control adaptation ("reforming play, defining private spaces, battling for turf, controlling play"). Kids are remarkably flexible, and the exhibit does well in trying to maintain a neutrality towards the variety of play environments. The only bias quoted in the many explanatory poster boards was of Lilian Wald who said that playgrounds were built in 1906 to "control" immigrant children and it would have been "better to have left the kids to have been acculturated by each other." The exhibit almost glorifies street play, the apparent freedom and excitement in the potential danger. At the end of the exhibit one might ask, so why have playgrounds, play activities at all? The closing
comment near the last room mentions that the exhibit is not meant to deny the validity of providing challenging play opportunities for children, but it seems to come as an apology, with no reason why children might need them. A delicate issue, one at the core of order and disorder, but one that could use more questioning.

**Materials and Flow**

The exhibited items were exciting to view, but the most exciting were the ones that one was able to touch or view closely as well. There was the old checker board on the real park bench, the real go-cart on the wall, and skates and sleds for close viewing. This is three out of seventeen exhibited items, however. The two video monitors added much to the exhibit, not only in terms of sight and sound, but as opportunities to stop and digest, to both speed up and slow down the tempo of the exhibit. "My Own Yard To Play In" was a terrific start and pulled me into the back of room one like a curious child. The film was made in the 1960s, but it had the look of the 40s and 50s, providing a transition from the older objects on display. The second and third rooms extended earlier themes and offered perspectives from different cultures. The photographs on the wall were essential for tying it all together, yet I wonder how a child might perceive it, given the height and seriousness of the photos themselves. In the fourth room, we hear and see 2 more films. "Pizza, Pizza Daddyo" from 1965 giving us a wonderful image of singing games within a particular group of Afro-American girls, and then we jump to "The Pigeon Game" in 1985. The transition to current time, and especially to adult play, was somewhat jarring, and could be expanded in future exhibits. At the end of the exhibit we are presented with an adult mural of a childhood remembered, with only one exhibition table offered. We go from six objects to look at in the first room, 5 in the second, 5 in the third, to 3 in the last room. The very last space is totally bare, except for a table, pencils and paper, and a request for drawings. It was like the go-cart had run out of steam.

**Interactivity**

I observed a young boy of about 10 and his grandmother go through "City Play." The objects were of interest to him, the older ones and the nostalgia to her. They walked slowly and carefully through rooms 1 and 2, then in room 3 he lost patience and walked quickly through rooms 3 and 4, practically zooming back to the exit. She looked like she wished to linger on, commenting on the games she knew, and tried hard to encourage his interest. The question that arose is one of

---

**Key:**
- An exhibit table
- An enlarged photo
- A bench
- A video monitor
- Indicates photos
audience. Clearly the Museum of New York City attracts a crowd interested in New York nostalgia, but the hopscotch logo speaks to a different audience. I kept waiting for a chance to play a game of hopscotch, kick a can, or compare singing games. I wondered how the different balls presented really bounced, or what the rules for marbles were in 1900.

These audiences are not mutually exclusive, and the issue of space is a real one. To really play at "City Play" would require some space. Yet the last room was practically empty, and the memory of playgrounds, while a good idea, did not offer an exciting enough medium to entice participation. The fantasy of the stoop and the candy store enticed me in, and the sound and movement of the go-cart enticed me through. If the fantasy could be sustained just a bit longer, the exhibit could be much more playful.

---

Playfully Yours
By Bryan Sutton-Smith

Thinking casually about how far we have progressed in the study of play and eliminating books of readings or articles of small scale accounts (the latter is a bit absurd because it eliminates Bateson, Fein, Freud, etc.) one would need to give commendation for originality to the books by Lieberman, Smilansky, Siukin, Garvey, Singer, Kliger, Ellis, Schwartzman, Goodman, Mergen, Cavallo, Winnicott, Berne and Bretherton. But the major and most influential books, for me at least, would have to be by: Huizinga, Fagen, Berlyne, Csikszentmihalyi, Piaget, and the Opies. And now we are about to witness the publication of a book which I believe will put all others in a secondary place both for its originality and as a simply massive overview of play scholarship. The book is by Mihai I. Spariosu, a Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Georgia, Athens, 30602. Its title is Dionysus Reborn and it will be published later this year by the Cornell University Press. An earlier title was: "Returns of the Repressed: The Play of Modern Philosophical and Scientific Discourse." Essentially it is an analysis of the irrational character of play (the Heraclitean play of the Gods) as perceived in preplatonic Greek discourse; its disappearance from Plato onwards; its return against formidable resistance during Romanticism and its struggle to surface ever since. There are few heroes in this story except perhaps Nietzsche and Freud who are about the only ones who manage to stay fairly clear about the role of irrational power seeking in the fundamental character of play. Almost everyone else in one way or another sweeps it under the rug and that includes Kant, Schiller, Fink, Gadamer, Deleuze, and Derrida. It includes Spencer, Groos, Piaget, Bateson and Thorn. It includes Vaihinger, Einstein and most other modern physicists who wrote on play. Even Spencer who wrote about the struggle for survival mirrored in play also had mankind transcending that struggle in the familiar aesthetic notions of Schiller. Erikson had a special closet for this unpretty kind of play called "pseudo play" and Winnicott talked of "play's frightening aspect." What's exciting about the book is the massive metaphysical struggle that it describes between the powers of disorder in play -- which would include games of chance, deep play, symbolic inversion, carnival, playfighting, play cruelty, television violence, playgrounds after Siukin, War Toys, play therapy, the Gamesman after Maccoby, or game playing after Berne, intimate play and masks of play -- and their opposite. These powers are pitted against the overwhelming post enlightenment preference for the power of order, as epitomized by games of strategy, skill, rule games, educational games, nursery school play, laboratory play studies, flow, being there, conflict enculturation theory, the idealization of play, and school play. It is a most exciting work, undoubtedly the most comprehensive historical account of play ever written. As its author says, play is not the subject matter of any one discipline. It involves all disciplines and it itself irredeemably undisciplined. For some of us who have been writing about games of disorder, cruel play and the idealization of play for several decades, the emergence of this work is an amazing transcendence. The paradox is that Mihai sees himself as an opponent of power manipulation and is a refugee from one of its Eastern European forms. His book clearly implies that he finds the masking of irrational play in rational trappings as an even worse deceit.

---

On the State of Play & Culture
By Garry Chick, Editor

To this point we have accomplished something that most scholarly journals do not -- we have made it past the first volume. Volume 2, Number 1 will appear in February 1989 and will contain eight articles and a book review, making it the largest issue to date. I believe that the quality of the journal has been high and I wish to thank the members of the editorial board for their assistance in keeping it so.
We are currently rejecting about 50% of the manuscripts that are submitted for publication review, not counting presidential addresses and other invited papers. While some view a high rejection rate as a measure of the distinction and quality of a journal, and in a perverse sort of way, it may be one, I feel that manuscripts with the germ of a good idea, but which may not be up to par in other ways, deserve to be nurtured. Again, the editorial board members, as well as several other individuals whom I have asked to review manuscripts, have done exceptional jobs in helping authors to produce the best manuscripts possible, truly rescuing some in the process.

Unfortunately, some submissions fail to meet minimal criteria for quality or may simply not be appropriate for Play & Culture. The latter problem usually results in a judgment call on my part but I always attempt to suggest alternative outlets for manuscripts that do not fit under the rubric of play, broadly conceived. Indeed, I have contacted the editors of several other journals in an effort to see that manuscripts end up at the most appropriate outlet.

Naturally, rejecting half of the manuscripts that are submitted causes a problem when you are not exactly overwhelmed with submissions in the first place. We are beginning to develop a backlog (about one issue’s worth) so my stress level is staying somewhat within bounds. For authors, however, this means that we can get very fast turnaround times for publication. Hence I hope that everyone will take advantage of the situation as long as it lasts (of course, if everyone does, then the situation will not last long).

I also want to thank Human Kinetics Publishers for their work on the journal. I believe they have put together a very attractive product and their editorial work has been first rate.

Finally, I would ask anyone who has not received their copies of the journal, are missing one, or have experienced other mailing problems to contact me immediately. Further, since new memberships will begin with Volume 2, those who wish to have Volume 1 as well should contact either me or Human Kinetics Publishers.

Meeting Update
From Linda Hughes and Andy Miracle

Travel: to the Sheraton University City Hotel

From the airport: go to the information desk in the baggage claim area and ask about the next shuttle to center city hotels. Shuttles leave regularly at a cost of $6 one-way. A cab should cost $12-15.

By car: from New York City/New Jersey: NJ turnpike to Exit 4. Route 73 North to Route 295 South. Go over the Walt Whitman Bridge to Route 76 West (Schuylkill Expressway). Exit left onto South Street. Go right on 33rd Street, left on Walnut Street, right on 36th Street, one block to hotel. From Washington, DC/Baltimore: Route 95 North to Route 76 West (Schuylkill Expressway). Exit left onto South Street. Follow directions above. From Western PA: PA Tpk to Exit 24 (Valley Forge). Route 76 East (Schuylkill Expressway) to 30th Street Exit. At top of exit ramp make a right (road bears to the left). Right on Market Street. Left on 36th Street to hotel.

Parking: garage parking at the hotel is $5/day (you can go in and out as much as you like). There are university lots close by, but they cost as much or more.

Program Updates

Those who can arrive in time should pay special attention to the video on mumming to be shown by Laurence Salzmann at 9 am Thursday. There is still room for participants in the trip to the Mummer’s Museum, to depart at 10:45 am Thursday. Interested parties should contact Andy Miracle or Linda Hughes as soon as possible.

The Saturday evening trip to Atlantic City will be to Bally’s Park Place. The bus will depart at 6 pm Saturday, with return scheduled for 2 am Sunday. Cost of the trip is $18, of which $12 will be returned in quarters for gambling at the casino. A cheap night on the town, and an opportunity to see fellow TASPers in action!
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

1989 Annual Meeting of
The Association for the Study of Play
Philadelphia, February 22-25

Local Arrangements: Linda A. Hughes (Delaware)
Program Chair: Andrew W. Miracle (Texas Christian)
TASP President: Ann Marie Guilmette (Brock)

All meetings will be held either in the Sheraton University City Hotel (SUCH) or in the Graduate School of Education (GSE) of the University of Pennsylvania.

Wednesday, February 22

7:00p - Registration and Open House
10:00p - President’s Suite, Sheraton University City Hotel

Thursday, February 23

8:00a - Registration
4:00p - GSE D Floor (outside D-9&10)

8:30a - Man and the Environment (GSE D-9&10)
10:15a - Symposium organized and chaired by Wanni W. Anderson (Brown)

8:30 Maria-Intes Arratiea (York) "Bulls at Sunrise and Bulls at Sunset: The Play and Ritual of the Sanformines of Pamplona"

8:50 William O. Beeman (Brown) "Animals and Animal Images in Iranian Performance"

9:10 Elizabeth A. Lawrence (Tufts) "The Wild and the Tame: Human-Horse Interactions in Rodeo"

9:30 Wanni W. Anderson (Brown) "Beyond the Cockfight: Dove-cooing Contest in Thailand"

9:50 Dan Ben-Amos (Pennsylvania) Discussant

9:00a - A video on mumming: "Who's Havin' Fun?" by Laurence Salzmann
10:30a - Discussion: Charles E. Welch (Temple) (GSE D-45)
10:30 - Sport Meanings: Narrative and Visual Texts (GSE D-9&10)
12:30p Symposium organized and chaired by Janet Harris (UNC-Greensboro)

10:30 Kathleen M. Kinkema (UNC-Greensboro) "The '87 Lakers and Celtics: A Sporting Narrative"

10:50 Laura Hills (UNC-Greensboro) "Narrative and Sport: Views on a Journalistic Account of the 1986 World Series"

11:10 Janet C. Harris (UNC-Greensboro) "Three Collegiate Basketball Players: Youths' Conceptions Compared with Roles in a Journalistic Athletic Narrative"

11:30 Margaret C. Duncan (Wisconsin-Milwaukee) "The Meanings and Appeals of Sports Photographs: The 1984 and 1988 Olympic Games"

11:50 Joseph J. Dombrowski (Illinois State Psychiatric Institute) "16th Century Play in Bruegel's 'Children's Games'"

10:45a - 1:30p Trip to Mummers Museum (requires registration, reservation advised) Place for loading bus to be announced

2:00p - 3:30p Studies in Early Childhood Innovative Play (GSE D-9&10)
Symposium organized and chaired by Brian Sutton-Smith (Pennsylvania)

2:00 Margaret Guerra (Pennsylvania) "Swaggering -- A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Lunch Time Grotesqueries in the Day Care Centre"

2:15 Ann Beresin (Pennsylvania) "The War Play Dilemma: An Examination of the Two-sided Theory"

2:30 Kathleen Connor (Pennsylvania) "Aggression in the Eye of the Beholder -- An Experimental Study Contrasting the Effects of the Presence or Absence of War Toys on Children and Adults"

2:45 Mary Ann Magee (Pennsylvania) "Social Play as Performance -- A Video Tape Analysis of the Play of Five Preschool 4-5 Year Old Groups Analyzed in Performance Theory Terms"

3:00 John Gerstmyer (Pennsylvania) "A Two-Year-Old Play Performance -- A Video Tape Microethnography of a Variety of Bed Time Play Frames and Their Terminations"

2:00p - Native Americans and Play (GSE D-45)
3:15p Chair: John Loy (Illinois)

2:00 Suzanne Gaskins (Chicago) "Symbolic Play in a Mayan Village"

2:20 Harvey Scott (Alberta) "Traditional and Transitional Dene Play Culture"

2:40 Victoria Paraschak (Windsor) "Self-Determination and Native Sport: An Issue of Control?"
3:30p – Play and Performance (GSE D-9&10)
5:00p Chair: Frank A. Salamone (SUNY-Purchase/Elizabeth Seton)

3:30 Patrick Biesty (Morris) "If you Sing in the Rain ... A Semiotic Analysis of the Male Dancer in the Film"

3:50 Rolf Kloepfer (Mannheim) "How to Analyze Postmodernist Theater as a Multimedia Performance"

4:10 Frank A. Salamone (SUNY-Purchase/Elizabeth Seton) "Puttin' It On"

4:30 Sylvia Sparkis (Illinois) "Tourism and Folklore: When Two Play Forms Meet"

3:30p – Children's Play (GSE C-34)
5:00p Chair: E. Peter Johnsen (Kansas)

3:30 E. Peter Johnsen, Laurie Ford and D.B. Tracy ( Kansas) "Children's Patterns of Play and Leisure at Home"

3:50 James F. Christie (Arizona State) and E. Peter Johnsen (Kansas) "School Settings: A Confounding Variable in Play Research"

4:10 Jeffrey L. Danksy (Eastern Michigan) "Sociodramatic Play Tutoring: Liberation or Manipulation?"

5:30p – Keynote Address by Max Kaplan (Sheraton University City Hotel)
8:00p "Play and Leisure: Waltzing with Strauss, Dancing with the Devil" Followed by Reception with Cash Bar

Friday, February 24

8:00a – Registration
4:00p GSE Main Lobby

8:30a – Sport Involvement: Triathletes and Sprinters (GSE C-11)
10:00a Chair: Dan C. Hilliard (Southwestern)

8:30 Jackie Eller (Middle Tennessee State) and Robert Sands (Illinois) "Arrogance of Speed: Emotion Management and the College Sprinter"

8:50 Dan C. Hilliard (Southwestern) "Tri-ing Times: Change and Conflict in a Participant Sport"

9:10 Jane E. Granskog (CSU-Bakersfield) To Tri or not to Tri: The Impact of Involvement in Multisport Endurance Activities upon Gender Roles and Identity
8:30a - Speech Play (GSE C12)
Chair: Myrdene Anderson (Purdue)

8:30  Skif Peterson (Purdue) "Multiple Play and Interplay in Buckminster Fuller’s Tetrascroll"

8:50  Anne C. Burson-Tolpin (Pennsylvania) Amphoterrible and Blastomycin: Speech Play and Anti-Language Among American Physicians

9:10  Jane Gladden Kelton (New York) "The ‘Crack’ is Mighty Tonight: Speech Play in an Irish-American Music Session"

9:30  Ralph H. Steele (East Carolina) "Liberty-Bell-Shaped Curves, and (Aha!) A Cry of Free(=play)dom"

10:15a - Joint Plenary Session with Ethnography in Education Research Forum:
12:30p  "School Play" Organized and chaired by Frederick Erickson (Pennsylvania) and Brian Sutton-Smith (Pennsylvania) (GSE D-9&10)

Discussants: James E. Johnsen (Kansas), James F. Christie (Arizona State), Clem Adelman (Bulmershe), and Andrew W. Miracle (Texas Christian)

2:00p - Open Discussion on the TASP journal, play & culture
3:00p  Garry Chick, editor (GSE C-11)

3:00p - Sport and the Social Construction of Reality (GSE C-11)
Chair: C. Roger Rees (Adelphi)

3:00  Jay Mechling (UC-Davis) "Intramural Football and the Social Construction of Gender"

3:20  Andrew W. Miracle (Texas Christian) and C. Roger Rees (Adelphi) "Sport: A Myth for Modern Life"

3:40  Steven J. Jackson, Jeremy W. Howell and David L. Andrews (Illinois) "Playing Along the 49th Paradox: Sport and the Social Construction of Reality"

4:00  Kathryn M. Borman and Denis Lowe (Cincinnati) "Explaining the Rules of the Game: Adolescents Tell How to Play Soccer"
3:00p - Children's Play Activities and Play Things (GSE C-12)
4:30p Chair: Bernard Mergen (George Washington)

3:00 Bruce Cunningham (Wisconsin-Stout) "Preschool Work and Play Activities: Child, Teacher and Parent Perspectives"
3:20 Lynn Hartle (Penn State) "Blocks on the Playground"
3:40 Leesa Fawcett, Dian Marino and Stephen Kline (York) "Characterization of Play: Play Drawings"
4:00 Stephen Kline, Leesa Fawcett and Debra Pentecost (York) "Characterization of Play: Toy Marketing"

4:45p - Trip to the Please Touch Museum: Tour and Reception
7:00 On space available basis (reservations recommended)

8:00p - Ethnography in Education Research Forum Keynote Address:
9:00p "Observations on Play as Reflections on Doing" by Clem Adelman (Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Reading, England) (Stiteler Hall B-6)

Saturday, February 25

7:30a - Breakfast for the editorial board of Play & Culture (by invitation)
9:00a Sheraton University City Hotel (room to be announced)

8:00a - Registration
12:00n GSE Main Lobby

9:00a - Definitional and Theoretical Issues in Play Research (GSE C-11)
11:00a Chair: John Bowman (Pembroke State)

9:00 George Eisen (California State Polytechnic) "Children's Play/Adult Play: Theoretical Considerations"
9:20 John Bowman (Pembroke State) "Playing with Games: 'Playful' Vs. 'Serious' Games"

9:40 Ana Marjanovic-Shane (Pennsylvania) "Orientation in Play and Metaphor"

10:00 Joan Weatherly (Memphis State) "'Playing the Fool': Tricksters, Tramps and Ecology"
10:20 Frank A. Salamone (SUNY-Purchase/Elizabeth Seton) "Through a Glass, Darkly: An Infinite Progression of Mirrors"
10:00a — Adult Play (GSE C-12)
   Chair: Jay Mechling (UC-Davis)

10:00 — John Douglas Bloom (Minnesota) "Fantasy, Memory and Subjectivity in
        the Minnesota Twins Open Tryout Camp"

10:20 — Steven J. Jackson (Illinois) "Power Play Revisited: A Reanalysis and
        Reinterpretation of Play in the Workplace"

10:40 — Camille Bacon-Smith (Pennsylvania) "Propriety and Play in an Art
        Community"

* 11:00 — Olga F. Chitiguel (New York) "Postmodern Games with Images"

1:00p — Issues of Cognition and Emotion in Children’s Play (GSE C-12)
   Chair: Roger D. Phillips (Delaware)

1:00 — Rimmert van der Kooij (Groningen) "Play and Behavioral Disorders in
       School Children"

1:20 — Robyn Holmes (Rutgers) "The Presentation of Children’s Friendships
       from a Cognitive/Structural Anthropological Perspective"

1:40 — Barbara Fisher (North Shore Hospital, NY) "Vocal Indicators of
       Levels of Activation and Levels of Cognitive Activity During Play"

2:00 — Roger D. Phillips (Delaware) "A Developmental Study of Emotion
       Expressions During Solitary Play"

1:00p — Disordering and Re-ordering through Play (GSE C-11)
   Symposium organized and chaired by Phyllis Gorfain (Oberlin)

1:00 — Mark Workman (Oakland) "Foreplay"

1:20 — Daniel Barnes (Ohio State) "Playing for Keeps: The Confidence Game
       as Traditional Performance"

1:40 — Lee Haring (Brooklyn) "Playing in Pairs"

2:00 — Phyllis Gorfain (Oberlin) "Noting Nothing: Violence in the Naughty
       Wordplay of Hamlet"

2:20 — John Stewart (Ohio State) "Playful Violence in the Trinidad Carnival"

3:00p — TASP Business Meeting (GSE D-9&10)
5:00p — Presidential Address: "Exalted Play" by Ann Marie Guilmette

6:00p — Trip to Atlantic City for players and observers (requires
        registration, reservation advised)