1991 Program Plans

TASP President George Eisen and Program Chair Rob Lavenda have been working diligently to put together an exciting program for the upcoming annual meetings to be held Thursday, March 14 through Saturday, March 16 in Charleston, South Carolina. The TASP meetings are being held in conjunction with the meetings of the American Ethnological Society and the Society for Applied Anthropology.

Program Highlights

The 1991 program is dedicated to the memory of Frank Manning, recent past-President of TASP who died unexpectedly over the Summer. I imagine news of Frank's death came as a shock to many of the membership, as it did to me. Not only was Frank's work on cricket festivals very important to my own work, Frank was one of the persons who went out of their way to make me feel comfortable and appreciated when I first began to participate in TASP. A special session on Saturday afternoon on celebration will be held in memory of Frank and his work, with presentations by Joyce Bishop, Beverly Stoeltje, Colleen Cohen, Jack Kugelmass, Rob Lavenda and James Peacock.

Two special addresses will be given. At a luncheon meeting on Friday, Roland Renson will speak on traditional games in Europe. Friday evening at 8, Don Handelman will deliver a keynote address. George Eisen's presidential address will be delivered on Thursday evening, to be followed by a festive Evening with Brian Sutton-Smith. On Saturday morning, Margaret Duncan, Garry Chick, Janet Harris, Jay Meehling and Brian Sutton-Smith will lead a panel discussion on writing and research in play studies.

Travel Details

The host hotel for the TASP and AES meetings is the Howard Johnson Charleston Riverfront. The convention room rate is $59 per room per night, single or double. Make reservations by phoning (803) 722-4000. The SAA hotel is the Sheraton Charleston, at a rate of $69 per room per night, single or double, phone (803) 723-3000.

Outbound Travel of Oklahoma City offers special arrangements for TASP members. Delta Airlines is offering 5% off the lowest applicable fare. Special rental car arrangements with Alamo are also available through Outbound. Rob Lavenda reports that no limousine service is available from the airport but that the convention hotels are relatively near the airport, so cab fare for those not renting cars should not be expensive.

Since the program continues through the day on Saturday, Rob encourages everyone to stay over Saturday night and book a Sunday return flight to qualify for supersaver fares.

For those not pre-registered, on site meeting registration is $50, or $20 for students.
Playfully Yours
By Brian Sutton-Smith

Two years ago I commented on my visit to the biennial conference of the International Council of Children’s Play in Europe. The subject then was toys. This year in April at Andreasburg, West Germany the subject was adults playing with children. The secretary Rimmert van der Kooij of Holland asked me to add some final remarks to the conference. My remarks follow.

In the beginning we were summoned by our President of ICCP Andre Michelet of France, to seek a new unity between the generations by having them play together. For those who might wonder why we might need such a new unity, several of our speakers spoke of the existence of a new and developing gap between adults and children.

Thus M. Maurrias-Bousquet of France said: children are now confined to their own age groups and intergenerational play no longer occurs. The consumer culture feeds this difference by providing a constant supply of toys which prevents real play even between children themselves.

Gilles Brougere of France added his support to the view that there is no longer a communality between generations and suggested that toys indeed have been substituted for real relationships, though he also seemed to believe, paradoxically, that they could be used wisely to restore such relationships. But the most pessimistic account of the present state of affairs between adults and children was a story told by Emil Kamenov of Yugoslavia who stressed the modern segregation of children; that children were prisoners of their own games; that there were no more traditional contacts between generations; that each age group was on its own; that the whole consumer world of childish stupidity had been created for children; that in that world they must play with toys without real life value or watch monsters on television and hear one-sided and invented stories from the mass media. Perhaps Emil had talked earlier with Andre and was trying to frighten us into paying attention. Emil is famous for his story about the Greek festival practise of having servants dressed as skeletons walk through the orgiastic group in order to make their excitement more piquant.

The New Relationships

On a more (or less) serious note it appeared from these introductory comments that we would need to discuss what we meant by the new relationship between generations; to discuss how it should be mediated (by toys, games, etc.) and finally to discuss whether we should really bother to attempt to create such a relationship at all.

We begin then with the question of what these new relationships would be like. The possibility was most sensitively sketched by Eva Balka of Norway, who saw the relationship as being a kind of friendship; a conversation amongst familiars with respect, responsiveness and inventiveness. There should be openness by both parties allowing a creative flow of ideas. This relationship is the child's right to play, it should not be required to be anything else, she said. (It is not to be about literacy, cognitive advancement, etc.) I was reminded of Rousseau's wish for a certain transparency in human relationships whereby the members would be perfectly known to each other without disguises or, paradoxically, without pretense. (See Jean Starobinski on "Jean Jacques Rousseau" 1971.)

It seemed that in this conference the nearest exemplification of this stated ideal was provided by Waltraut Hartmann of Vienna whose teachers became close to their school children simply by providing toys and games for them to play with in their classrooms whenever there was spare time and with no ulterior "learning" motives. The
teachers would sometimes participate in the play, and both teachers and children showed a much greater investment in the relationship between them as a result than did children in the "control" classrooms without the added facility.

Apart from Balka's ideal statement and Hartmann's partial fulfillment, I thought the therapists gave us the next best ideas about a positive play relationship between generations. There was Margarita Wood of England, playing Margaret Lowenfeld, and pointing out that in their own symbolic play children constantly represent child-adult relationships by weaving a tapestry of past confusions and anticipated anxieties. She provided a respect for the way the child both directly and indirectly seized all the pieces of its experience and wove them together into a playful philosophical anticipation. Here, of course, the typical therapist relationship was largely one of encouragement of the child's play with little interference other than a support relationship. The therapist is kept occupied with her own interpretations and too excited by these to interfere with the child and spoil the story she interprets the child as creating for her.

Similarly therapist Stefan Schmidtchen of Germany, playing Maslow, for his part stressed the key role of the child's own growth potential in the therapy process. What is clear about both of these therapists is that they focus on play as symbolic role playing, which is the play most typical of early childhood. Whereas with normal school aged children, according to Karheinz Otto and Sabine Riemann of Germany, adults prefer to focus on formal skill games (77%) and neglect such symbolic role playing (14%), the children in their study said they would rather role play with their parents (72%) and seldom preferred to play games of skill with them (9%). In short the present preference of the parents of this East German sample is almost exactly the inverse of the preference of the children, as well as the inverse of what is implied by Balka, Hartmann, Wood and Schmidtchen above. The perfect relationship is to be about symbolic role taking, and the children want adult participation, but apart from the professional and supportive role of the therapists and teacher above we have little other idea of how our parents are to meet children's wishes. In sum we cannot from the data provided in this conference spell out what the character of the new relationship which is to unify the generations should be.

Mediating the Relationship

Most of the speakers in this conference did not suggest a direct relationship between the adult and child participants in play. Given the very deep conflict between what parents want (games) and what the children want (role play) it is not surprising that most of the speakers recommended more indirect relationships. Thus we were offered an adult-child relationship through GAMES, as in Phillipe Ador of Switzerland's recommendations for the "Goose Game" from which he suggests children learn the realities of life and death while playing with the parents, thus saving the parents the difficulties of dealing with these matters themselves. Both Norman Pinet of Canada and Swetlana L. Novoseolova of USSR suggested that with COMPUTERS children could become co-researchers. As already noted, Gilles Brougere of France had advocated TOYS as the mediator. In that respect a presentation of older FOLKTOYS by Steffi Engelstader of East Germany showed that almost all of them required bodily movements as with ropes, stilts, hoops, etc.. Such toys were, one supposes, more fitted to the growth needs of an older agricultural, largely manual worker population. Today's toys, the computer in particular, seldom require such bodily involvement. They are perhaps more appropriate to the non-manual world of today's young parents, and because of this often seem alien to an older population, including some of ourselves. The notion that some of these modern toys should mediate between ourselves and children increases rather than decreases our adult anxiety.

Another mediator suggested to the group by Ekaferina Protassova of the USSR was FAIRY TALES. She saw them as an embodiment of child fantasy and as a useful form of guidance.

All of these techniques are ways of easing the burden of relating to children which is
apparently not an easy one. We need to remember that Rousseau said he was no more at ease with a child whom he must make babble than before a Monarch of Asia. It seems that we of Western Society have not historically related to children in any direct way. It has been easier to teach them, organize them, experiment on them, than to directly relate with them. There may be rewards as Hartmann shows and a blessedness in the relationship as Balka opines, but we should remember that those who are really the most expert, such as Wood and Schmidtchen, are trained professionals. Theirs is a lifetime commitment. Playing with children may not be a viable amateur pastime. It is not surprising, then, that our colleagues for one reason or another prefer to mask the relationship with games, computers, fairytales, or toys. None of these require the open transparency of relationships that Rousseau advocated but could not achieve in his own lifetime. So even if a gap between the children and us is bad as has been averred above, repairing that gap may not be very easy.

For example, it is a major function of toys, I believe, to help children be solitary; to be able to persist at their personal play activities, not to contribute to an ongoing immediate relationship with us. The toy is an anticipation of the professional or skilled worker’s solitary life with symbols or objects. The relationship is in the indirect form of being happy because the toy is a gift received, usually on a birthday or at Christmas. It is not generally a direct play relationship. Again, COMPUTERS seldom make children our equal though they do make them apprentices, and they can lead, as other research shows, to their own world of playful computerizing which usually excludes us. Again, FAIRY TALES may allow children to achieve the internal resolutions of which Bruno Bettelheim, American psychiatrist, has spoken so persuasively, or the more external characterological knowledge that Protassova implies, but this again is an educational relationship rather than a playful one. Our best hope would seem to lie in the GAMES that Ador describes and Otto and Riemann assess, except that again these games, like computers, toys, and fairytales are instruments of cultural conservation. They are about the values and norms and techniques that the adults wish the children to acquire. The children are not equal here. They are being seduced into buying the cultural designs. On the contrary when they play these games themselves without us, they have more cultural autonomy. They develop their own rules about gaming the games, not just about the games. My own student Linda Hughes who studied a group of children playing the same game for three years, found that as well as the game rules, they had their own etiquette rules (nasty versus nice) and their own secret rules (our group versus their group). This is the kind of thing that Gisela Wegener-Spiehrin of Germany reported to us about her observation of children playing VIDEO GAMES.

This is not to say that these various participations with children are not useful or legitimate. They just don’t meet the prescription for unity between generations enunciated by Michelet and Balka. The exception is in games with babies where we have no choice. Unless we or the siblings pursue the plays that Vera Misurcova of Hungary has described, funful interaction will not be initiated and may well be left out of our adult play relationships. What we don’t know is whether such playing of “faces” can be picked up later in development. Most probably it can, but “face play”, which is the basis of the strategies of self-presentation, probably comes easier for those who in complex societies like ours have had this early practise.

In general, the various teacher organized play activities in schools mentioned among
others by James Christie of the USA and Marion Kauke of East Germany, do not meet the bill either. As these researchers show, the play-oriented teachers help children with their schoolwork and that makes such activities most worthwhile in their own right. But they would certainly not claim that these school centered playforms are the sort that we need to pursue if we are to sew the generations back together again. (We are of course continuing to assume here, playfully at least, that Humpty Dumpty has indeed fallen.) One would say the same about the research manipulations of context described by Peter Johnsen of the USA. They provide useful knowledge beneficial to assisting children with their own play. In some ways this conference has been more successful in that respect than in its declared intent to facilitate adult-child play.

Can We Really Unify the Generations?

I conclude that the new unity of the generations through play does not seem to have been persuasively demonstrated in this conference. What would it be like if the normal adult really did play with a normal child in an open-ended kind of a way, that is, avoiding didactic opportunities, and following and contributing to the child’s fantasy in an appropriate way throughout? This was done by one of my students Diana Kelly-Byrne of Australia and is written up in her book A Child’s Play Life (Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1989). She played with her 7 year old female partner for 3-5 hours at a time, about once a month for a year, tape recording most of the occasions. For the first three months the child’s fantasy was of being a tyrant (just as Rousseau implied) to whom Kelly-Byrne was to play slave. These role plays were extremely fatiguing for the adult. In the second three months she was given more active roles. In the next three months, she was placed on equal terms, but now the play was less a matter of acting out than of discussing the proposed scenarios. In the final period they discussed the real life concerns and wishes of the girl. It appeared to be a remarkable and fast developmental intervention into the life of this girl, and it does suggest that if we knew how to do this and had the manpower for it, myriads of children could be beneficially affected. Michelet’s dream is not a false one.

But what we see here is that to begin with the child demanded a radical inversion of power, which is an experience which most of us are not fitted to make. Kelly-Byrne was subject to the kind of magical powers that children regularly adopt for themselves in their own games, as we have demonstrated in The Folkgames of Children (University of Texas Press, 1972). In some respects the real life low power position of children is like that of the lower classes in hierarchical societies where on festival occasions the poor and forgotten are given the chance to parade and march and dance as in the Mardi Gras, taking on themselves the airs of the mighty. One could admire a society where the adults and teachers were able through training to participate with children in the way Kelly-Byrne did. It would seem reasonable that theatrical training would put more of us in touch with such possibilities. But one fears that in the meantime it is better to encourage children to play amongst themselves than to infect them with our own didactic ludic bumbling. Seeing that so many American schools are eliminating children’s playtime during the school day, we have in the meantime to worry about their opportunities to play together before we reach for the more difficult possibility of our being taught how to play with them. At least, that is my quite personal reading of this most interesting conference.
Dr. Play's Quiz: The Language of Sport

Many common words are found in the world of play, game and sport; and the same words may refer to similar or dissimilar aspects of different sports. For example there are "boards" in basketball, diving, ice hockey, skiing, surfing, windsailing and 'sidewalk surfing' (skateboarding). Your task is to match each numbered term in the left-hand column with the most appropriate group of games and sports in the right-hand column, without duplication.

And in case you’re not familiar with some usage, it may be understandable. Cited references were gleaned from the early 20th century through the present. For example, in 1937 the "Committee on Terminology" from The College Physical Education Association published a report, *Glossary of Physical Education Terms* (David K. Brace, Chairman. Part 1. The Rice Institute: Houston, Texas), and Robert A. Palmatier and Harold L. Ray wrote *Sports Talk: A Dictionary of Sports Metaphors* in 1989 (Greenwood Press: New York).

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<tr>
<td>1. HOME</td>
<td>__ cricket, baseball, golf</td>
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<td>2. FLY</td>
<td>__ golf, archery, boxing</td>
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<td>3. HIKE</td>
<td>__ billiards, football</td>
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<td>4. SAFETY</td>
<td>__ baseball, bowling, fishing</td>
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<td>5. SACK</td>
<td>__ volleyball, basketball, water polo, soccer</td>
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<td>6. SPAR</td>
<td>__ boxing, sailing</td>
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<td>7. PITCH</td>
<td>__ wrestling, golf, bowling</td>
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<td>8. ACE</td>
<td>__ billiards, bowling, track &amp; field, football</td>
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<td>9. CARRYING</td>
<td>__ baseball, football</td>
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<td>10. POST</td>
<td>__ baseball, fishing, football, wrestling</td>
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<td>11. SCRATCH</td>
<td>__ squash racquets, handball, badminton, bridge, tennis, baseball</td>
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<td>12. POCKET</td>
<td>__ basketball, soccer, volleyball, football</td>
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<td>13. TACK</td>
<td>__ basketball, football, hockey, horse racing, track &amp; field</td>
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<td>14. STRIKE</td>
<td>__ sailing, football</td>
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<td>15. FORE</td>
<td>__ baseball, horse racing, billiards, golf cycling, gambling</td>
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<td>16. PIN</td>
<td>__ golf, sailing</td>
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<td>17. BREAK</td>
<td>__ boxing, billiards, basketball</td>
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<td>18. TACKLE</td>
<td>__ sailing, horse racing</td>
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<td>19. DRIVE</td>
<td>__ golf, baseball, football, basketball, soccer, badminton</td>
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<td>20. Dribble</td>
<td>__ archery, baseball</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. DRAW</td>
<td>__ football, fishing, baseball</td>
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Preliminary Program
Annual Meetings
14-16 March 1991
Charleston, SC

The 1991 Meetings are dedicated to the memory of
Frank Manning
1944-1990
TASP AT A GLANCE

Thursday, March 14:
Sessions:
Express Yourself: Images, Identities, and Ironwomen
Play and Ethnicity
The Semiotics of Sport and Play
Cross-Cultural Studies of Children's Play
Adults at Play
Play at the Limits
Special Event: TASP Business Meeting and Presidential Address
Extra-Special Event!: An Evening with Brian Sutton-Smith

Friday, March 15:
Sessions:
Men, Women and Power at Play
Studies in Play Theory
Americans at Play at Home and Abroad
Animal Play Behavior Round Table
Play and Nationalism
Adult Play
Play, Classification, and Predictability
Myth, Language, and Play
Special Event: Luncheon talk by Roland Renson
Special Event: TASP Distinguished Lecture: Don Handelman

Saturday, March 16
Sessions:
Circus Play
Play and Development in Education Theory
Play and the Life-Worlds of Children
The Celebration of Society, A Celebration of Frank: In Memory of Frank Manning
Play and Language in Early Childhood
Children at Play, Alone and Together
Special Event: Panel on Writing and Research in Play Studies
Thursday, March 14

Session 1: Express Yourself: Images, Identities, and Ironwomen
Chairperson: Jane Granskog
8:30 Milady Khoury-Murphy (Shelton State C.C.)
Weight Training for Older Southern Women: Overcoming Cultural Obstacles to
Physical and Psychological Benefits.
8:50 Anne Bolin (Elon C)
Competitive Women Bodybuilders: Bodies Talking Tradition and Treason.
9:10 Harpreet Shergill (G.N.D.U.)
Physical Fitness and Performance in Hockey
9:30 Jane Granskog (CSU Bakersfield)
How Much to Tri Without Tri-ing Too Much: Levels of Female Involvement in the
Triathlon/Duathlon Sport Culture.
9:50 Discussion

Session 2: Play and Ethnicity
Chairperson: Carmelo Bazzano
8:30 Carmelo Bazzano (U Massachusetts, Boston)
Bocce: The Game of the Italian Immigrants
8:50 JoAnne Koltyn (St. Cloud State U)
Hmong Home Videos: New Story Cloths (Pa Ndau) for the Self.
9:10 Roland Baumann (Tulane U)
Mischiefous Maskers, Masked Killers: Masquerade and Violence in Eastern
Andalucia (Spain)
9:30 Celeste Lasater (Penn State)
9:50 Discussion

10:10 BREAK

Session 3: The Semiotics of Sport and Play
Chairperson: John McClelland
10:30 Bouissac, Paul (U Toronto)
The Bio-semiotics of the Bicycle: Its Role in Sport and Circus Performance
10:50 Brownell, Susan (Middlebury C)
Sport as a Ritual of Modernization in China's Economic Reforms
11:10 McClelland, John (U Toronto)
11:30 Discussion

Session 4: Cross-Cultural Studies of Children's Play
Chairperson: Frank Salamone
10:30 Leah Zaner (Cal State Polytechnic U)
Play Behavior in Nepali Children: An Oberserational Study
10:50 Elizabeth Olsen (Cal Poly Pomona)
Intercultural Youth Involvement in Israeli Tennis Camps
11:10 Frank Salamone (Iona C)
Nigerian Children's Games Redux (With Apologies to John Updike)
11:30 Discussion

12:00-1:30 LUNCH BREAK
Session 5: Adults at Play
Chairperson: Dan Hilliard
1:30 Sparks, Sylvia (Purdue University)
   Objects and the Dream: Material Culture in the Society for Creative
   Anachronism
1:50 Schwerdtfeger, Dale (St. Cloud State University)
   Playing at Death: Martial Arts Training in Japan
2:10 Cash, John (Indiana University)
   The Reenactment of History as a Tool in the Quest for a More Authentic
   Self
2:30 Chitiguel, Olga (New York University)
   Games as Metaphors of War: The Persian Gulf 1991
2:50 Hilliard, Dan (Southwestern University)
   Pain as Play: The Experience and Expression of Emotion in
   Ultramarathon Running
3:10 Discussion

Session 6: Play at the Limits
Chairperson: Sandra Frick
1:30 Sandra Frick (U South Carolina)
   Play Therapy With Children in Battered Women's Shelters
1:50 David Wiggins (George Mason U)
   "Learning to Survive the Peculiar Institution:" The Play of Slave Children on
   Southern Plantations, 1820-1860.
2:10 Harriet Jakobsson (U Örebro)
   Play Against All Odds.
2:30 Sandra Frick (U South Carolina)
   Play Therapy Following Hurricane Hugo
2:50 Verna Schmidt (St. Mary's Hill Hospital)
   Structured Play Therapy for Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse and Neglect
3:10 Discussion

3:30 BREAK

- 4:00-5:30 TASP Business Meeting and Presidential Address
  George Eisen (Cal Poly Pomona)

- 8:00 SPECIAL EVENT: An Evening With Brian Sutton-Smith
  Brian Sutton-Smith (U Pennsylvania)

Friday, March 15

Session 7: Men, Women and Power at Play
Chairperson: Alan Ehrlich
8:30 Thomas Henricks (Elon C)
   Sporting Events as Identity Ceremonies: A Study of Gender Differences.
8:50 Allen Ehrlich (Eastern Michigan University)
   Males, Females, and Mother-in-Law Humor: It's No Joke the Way Men Control
   Women
9:10 Gerd von der Lippe (Telemark distriktshøgskole)
   The Contradiction of Maleness: Socialization to Masculinity Through Games
9:30 Joyce Bishop (CSU, Sacramento)*
   "But Not for Your Pistol": A Sociolinguistic Interpretation of the Piropo.
9:50 Discussion
Session 8: Studies in Play Theory  
Chairperson: Andrew Miracle  
8:30   David Myers (Loyola New Orleans)  
       Computer Game Semiotics  
8:50   George Eisen (Cal Poly, Pomona)  
       The Serious Business of Play  
9:10   Michael Salter (U Windsor) and Floris J.G. van der Merwe (U of Stellenbosch)  
       Field Work Frustrations: A Clash of Academic and Real World Values.  
9:30   Andrew Miracle (Texas Christian University)  
       Attempts to Define Play: Past, Present, and Future  
9:50   Discussion  

10:10    BREAK  

Session 9: Americans at Play at Home and Abroad  
Chairperson: Don Lytle  
10:30   Ching, Marvin (Memphis State U)  
       The U.S. in Games and Play: Pervasive Metaphors in American Life  
10:50   Don Lytle (Cal State U, Chico)  
       Recreation Redux: Contemporary American Play Patterns  
11:10   Frank Salamone (Iona C)  
       The Social and Cultural Reproduction of Main Street: Sinclair Lewis Among the  
       Diplomatic Corps in Nigeria  
11:30   Wilhelm, Kelly (Storyfest Productions)  
       A Qualitative Study concerning Journeys with Application for Recreational Travel  
       Programs  
11:50   Discussion  

Session 10: Animal Play Behavior Round Table  
Chairperson: Larry Goldman  
10:30-12:00  Participants to be announced  

12:15    Luncheon and Presentation  
Roland Renson (K. U. Leuven, Belgium): Traditional Games in Europe: Sport  
Heritage or Nationalist Folklore. [begins at 12:45]  

Session 11: Play and Nationalism  
Chairperson: Frank Salamone  
1:30    Regina Bendix (Lewis and Clark C)  
       Enacting the Past--Creating a Nation: The Role of Theater and Sports in Swiss  
       Nationalism  
1:50    Frank Salamone (Iona C)  
       Playing at Nationalism: Nigeria, a Nation of "Ringers"  
2:10    Katherine Platt (Harvard U/Boston U)  
       Nationalist Rituals and the Folklorization of Culture in Tunisia  
2:30    Anthony Buckley (Ulster Folk and Transport Museum)  
       Play and Ethnicity in Northern Ireland.  
2:50    Discussion  

Session 12: Adult Play  
Chairperson: Gus Gerson  
1:30    Craig Finney (CSU, Northridge)  
       Play in an Industrial Setting and Its Effects on Production  
1:50    Sam Lollar (Cal Poly Pomona)  
       Adult Play and Travel and Tourism.  
2:10    Walter Podilchak (U Toronto, Mississauga)
Fun and Play.

- 2:30 Hilmi Ibrahim (Whittier C)
  [TBA]
- 2:50 Synthia Slowikowski (U Illinois)
  Traveling and Collecting: A Consideration in Light of the Ancient and Post-
  Modern Olympic Festivals

3:10 BREAK

Session 13: Play, Classification, and Predictability
Chairperson: Bernard Mergen
- 3:30 Mary Ann Glynn (Yale U)
  Framing Tasks: Effects of Work and Play Labels on Task Attitudes, Behavior, and
  Information Processing
- 3:50 Bernard Mergen and Robert Humphreys, Jr. (George Washington U)
  Rain, Rain, Go Away: Play and the Weather: The Forecasting of Two
  Unpredictable Phenomena
- 4:10 Michael Heine, Harvey Scott, and Valerie Kennedy (U Alberta)
  Elements of Symbolic Classification in Northern Athapaskan Games.
- 4:30 Keith Parry and Alan Aycock (U Lethbridge)
  When Bobby Fischer Meets Minnesota Fats: Rules and Style in Chess and
  Billiards
- 5:10 Discussion

Session 14: Myth, Language, and Play
Chairperson: Steven Klepetar
- 3:30 Steven Klepetar (St. Cloud State U)
  Play in Norse Mythology.
- 3:50 Joan Weatherly (Memphis State U)
  Playos: Metaphor, Play, and Chaos.
- 4:10 Joanne Saltz (St. Cloud State U)
  [TBA]
- 4:30 Discussion

8:00 TASP Distinguished Lecture
Don Handelman (Hebrew University)

Saturday, March 16

Session 15: Circus Play
Chairperson: Yoram Carmeli
- 8:30 Yoram Carmeli (U Haifa)
  Circus Play
- 8:50 Paul Bouissac (U Toronto)
  The Lion’s Anger: The Performance of Emotions in Circus Dramaturgy
- 9:10 Kenneth Little (York U)
  A Mutual Parody of Meaning in Circus Clown and Ethnographic Discourse.
- 9:30 Discussion

Session 16: Play and Development in Education Theory
Chairperson: Donna Varga
- 8:30 Sandra Weber (Concordia U)
  Playing School, Becoming a Teacher?
- 8:50 James Johnson (Penn State U)
  Play, Practice, and Policy in Early Childhood Education
- 9:10 Edward Fisher (Yeshiva U)
The Impact of Play on Development: A Meta-Analysis
9:30 Donna Varga (Concordia U)
The Developmental Task of Children's Play in Early Education Settings
9:50 Discussion

10:10 BREAK

Session 17: Pub Crawling Through Play and Culture: Panel on Writing and Research in Play Studies
Chairperson: Margaret Duncan (U Wisconsin-Milwaukee)
1:30-3:10
Panelists:
Garry Chick (U Illinois)
Janet Harris (U North Carolina, Greensboro)
Jay Mechling (U California, Davis)
Brian Sutton-Smith (U Pennsylvania)

Session 18: Play and the Life-Worlds of Children
Chairperson: James Christie
10:30 Christie, James (Arizona State U)
Instructional Play
10:50 Georgianna Cornelius (New Mexico State U)
The Multicultural Classroom: Issues of Self Esteem
11:10 Peter Williamson and Steven Silvern (Auburn U)
Metaplay and the Construction of Story/ Meaning
11:30 Larry Goldman (Cal Poly Pomona)
The Effects of Competitive vs. Cooperative Games on Children.
11:50 Break

12:10-1:30 LUNCH BREAK

Session 19: The Celebration of Society, A Celebration of Frank: In Memory of Frank Manning
Chairperson: Robert Lavenda
1:30 Joyce Bishop (CSU, Sacramento)
Joining Together: Traditional Tarascan Initiative and Modern Migrant Men
1:50 Beverly Stoeltje (Indiana U) Creative Authority in Ritual, Festival, Play
2:10 Colleen Cohen (Vassar C)
[TBA]
2:30 Jack Kugelmass (U Wisconsin)
Halloween in the Village.
2:50 Robert Lavenda (St. Cloud State U)
Tears at the Coronation: The Limits of Play in a Playful Public Ritual
3:10 James Peacock (U North Carolina)
From Structure to Performance in the Evolution of Symbolic Anthropology:
Reflections on the Work of Frank Manning
3:30 Discussant: Don Handelman (Hebrew University)
3:50 Discussion

Session 20: Play and Language in Early Childhood
Chairperson: Stuart Reifel
1:30 Theresa Escobedo (U Texas, Austin)
Play in a New Medium: Children's Talk and Computer Drawings
1:50 Sandra Miller, Rebecca Kantor, and David Fernie (Ohio State U)
Locating Literacy in Two Play Contexts within a Preschool
2:10  Kathleen Pinkett (Ohio State U)
      Object-Oriented Play and Verbal Interaction in Three Types of Social Interaction
2:30  June Yeatman and Stuart Reifel (U Texas, Austin)
      The Language of Learning from Siblings at Play
2:50  Discussion

Session 21: Children at Play, Alone and Together
Chairperson: Linda Hughes
3:50  Roger Phillips (Lehigh U)
      The Expression of Emotions in Children's Solitary Play
4:10  Linda Hughes (Millersville U)
      Games and the Construction of Social Order
4:30  Discussion

TASP Preliminary Program: 1991

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1990 Meetings Abstracts

Editor's Note: The following are the abstracts of all of the papers presented at the 1990 TASP meetings in Las Vegas which were made available by the authors to program Chair Andy Miracle. Abstracts are listed alphabetically by the last name of the principal author.


As both a children's hobby and as a recently popular source of pleasure and speculation among a large population of adults, baseball card collecting highlights the powerful ways that artifacts of a modern commercial culture link mass media texts to the intimate memories of diverse audience members. This paper examines the practice of collecting and trading baseball cards among adults as a window into understanding the people's sense of historical time, life course within post-industrial contexts. Using ethnographic inquiry, tied to historic, social and economic analysis, my paper focuses on adult collectors, most of whom are men, who attempt to reassemble the baseball cards they collected when they were children. Often, they link their hobby images of boyhood nostalgia and an uncomplicated understanding of the past. This practice raises questions of why individuals return to the commodities they once owned to reconstruct their memories, and of how individual's gendered understanding of collecting resonates with their present positions within a patriarchal culture. It also suggests the power of images within popular culture to enlist the memories of individuals within the context of post World War II America defined by increasingly fragmented social experience.


After a long period of neglect, researchers are finally beginning to focus on the relationship between play and children's early literacy development. A growing body of evidence suggests that play can make several important contributions to the growth of reading and writing. First, play can build a base for literacy by promoting children's oral language development, representational skills, and sense of story. Second, functional and dramatic play with literacy materials can provide an opportunity for children to learn about the structure of written language. Third, dramatic play in "literate" play centers can enable children to demonstrate and expand their growing conceptions of the real-life functions of reading and writing. This paper will review these research areas and discuss the potential role of play in early childhood language arts programs.

Chitaguel, Olga F.. Revolution as a Game.

The dramatic changes in Czechoslovakia which took place in November 1989 are called "joyful Revolution" by Czechs. My paper focuses on how this revolution reflected the playfulness of its designers and participants in their actions on the streets. Using several examples, I shall link this "playful" approach with the artistic programs and historical events in Communist post-war Czechoslovakia. The de-Stalinization process of the late 1950s, for example, introduced onstage a concept of "theatre as a game."

Clarke, David W.. UCLA. From the Kingdom of Didd to Whoville: The Development of Dr. Seuss's Architecture

According to Dr. Seuss, "all fantasy is an extension of reality ... a fun-house mirror." Many of his stories are journeys to strange times and exotic places. Through that distance in time and space, Seuss takes advantage of his audience's lack of certain knowledge and their accepting imaginations to extend into a perceptual realm. The unconventional and humorous results provide eccentric interpretations for what could be reality. This paper examines the inspirations for Seuss's playful interpretations of buildings and landscapes. Through this examination, one gains a better understanding of his graphic intent and the evolution of his playfulness in architecture.
Cliff, Janet M.. UCLA. To Cheat or Not to Cheat: Always an Option.

Based on actual cases of cheating documented through fieldwork and in print, this paper explores the intriguing issue of cheating in folk games. After defining cheating, the options available to all players are examined. A flow chart representing the decisions of both cheater and cheated illustrates the complexities of the options available to the players. Through such an examination, this paper proposes an understanding of cheating in folk games.

Cornellus, Georgiana. New Mexico State University. Play and the Social Studies Curriculum.

Concepts related to the area of social studies must have their beginnings and foundations with the child. The emphasis of the area should begin with the child’s self-esteem. Unfortunately, although concrete thinking continues into the elementary school years, most schools have carefully engineered abstract lessons in a passive and not in an active environment, with much learning lost in abstract teacher-directed lessons. The present paper explores how play can be integrated into the social studies curriculum of the elementary classroom. Specific concepts to be developed are: (1) the teacher’s own self-acceptance; (2) the integration of social studies activities; and (3) the abuses of the social studies curriculum and the remedy.


Although scholars have called for more research in the area of mediated sport and play, very few investigations have been conducted to date. Recently, two researchers (Duncan & Brummett, 1989; Brummett & Duncan, under review) proposed a theory accounting for the pleasures of televised sports spectating. This theory identifies three types of specular pleasure: fetishism, narcissism, and voyeurism deriving from the technological, discursive, and social dimensions of the experience of televised sports. Our study will focus on one of these sources of specular pleasure: the social practices of television sports spectating. Our overarching research question is how do people act when they are watching televised sports in the presence of others? More specifically, what kinds of social practices increase viewing pleasure for the fans? Using a qualitative methodology, we examine the verbal and non-verbal messages produced by a group of sport fans.


This presentation addresses the new ethnological findings, in the wild and in zoos, of higher forms of animal play -- activities of chimpanzee, rhesus monkey, macaque and bonobo societies will be discussed. The differences between young and adult primate play, compared also with human play, will be given some attention.


Leisure in American society is structured within tight limits. As has been well described for children’s play, but surely applies to adult leisure as well, leisure for its own sake (as an autotelic experience) is deeply mistrusted. Leisure participants are continually searching for accounts (justifications and excuses) for the activity -- in terms of personal growth, educational training, development of social skills, or benefit to the community. Through an examination of fantasy gaming, preadolescent sport, and nature activities, I explore the dimensions of this accounting, and speculate on the conditions under which “pure” leisure is possible.

Gerson, Gus. Play Throughout the Adult Life Cycle.

Dr. Eisen has a theory that adaptations in play are triggered by changes in the limbic system through the reptilian complex. These physiological signals change not only during the growth cycle between childhood and maturity, but also continue throughout the adult’s life. Thus, adult
play needs differ from children's play needs, but, like a child's needs, these needs change in predictable patterns throughout the adult life cycle.

My research has identified six specific adult play periods: an "identity period" (19-22), an "intimacy period" (23-30), "establishment play (30-38), "adjustment play (38-55), and "acceptance" (55-65) and the lack of play as a major force in physical and mental erosion, "senior" (65+).


Since the late 1970's, there has been a significant increase in the participation of older women in athletic activities. Many who began in their thirties and forties had little or no athletic background when they started and, as a result of their participation, experienced major changes in their sense of identity as women and athletes. One arena wherein this transformation has taken place is the emergent sport of triathlons. Based on five years of participant-observation research, this paper focuses on the transformations in gender identity that have taken place among four women over forty who completed the Hawaiian Ironman triathlon.


This "lady" presenter will share her "luck" in the wonderful world of horse-race wagering. Specifically, participants will discover how to interpret "The Racing Form", so that your potential for a "gambling encounter" (Goffman, 1981) will afford you the ability to relocate from the "fortunist" realm (Roberts, as cited in Chick, 1987) into the category of a "potent gambler." Theoretically, potents are superior players (Guilmette and Duthie, 1980), or at least better prepared to be players (Guilmette, 1989) than fortunists. A 30-race card will be reviewed and participants will have an opportunity to test their newly acquired skills prior to participating in some real "Risky Business."

Hartle, Lynn. East Stroudsburg University. Playing at Scienicing.

"Good" playing and "good" scienicing are actions with direct involvement with objects and people. These actions include using the skills of predicting, negotiating, experimenting, evaluating, and recasting. Children can be playing at scienicing in a stimulating environment that allows them to discover and create, yet meaningful learning may be lost if not for guidance of skilled adults. Children need assistance in realizing the importance of information learned in their discoveries so they can extend their social and cognitive skills as well as their knowledge base.

Hilliard, Dan C. and Julie M. Hilliard. Southwestern University. Positive Deviance and Participant Sport.

Hughes and Coakley (1989) have recently suggested that the concept of positive deviance previously applied to sport by Ewald and Jobu (1985) may be useful in explaining a wide range of behaviors among both elite and recreational athletes. This paper seeks to explore the role of positive deviance in two participant sport subcultures: triathlon and weight training. Data were obtained through a combined eight years of participant observation of the triathlon scene by both authors and by daily participant observation of a gym frequented by bodybuilders and competitive power lifters for a three month period by the second author.

Positive deviance refers to overcommitment to norms generally supported by a given cultural group. Hughes and Coakley focus especially upon the shared sense of "specialness" of athletes and the need to overcommit to norms supporting self-discipline, endurance of pain, etc. to prove that one belongs to the "special" group. We first consider how this interest in "specialness" is expressed outside the world of sport. We then discuss the implications of this aspect of positive deviance for adherence to participation in recreational sport scenes.

In the traditional cultures of the Sudanese Nuba, wrestling was closely linked with the social structure, the life cycle and agricultural rituals. After the increase of rural-urban migration in the Sudan in the 1970s, attempts were made at reviving Nuba wrestling as part of the urban culture. This became successful in 1986 when a permanent system of clubs and tournaments evolved. In this paper the development is described and the amalgamation of elements of traditional and modern sport are analysed from the point of view of anthropology and sport history.


The year 1988 was described by many as a "year of crisis" in Canadian identity. Central to this so-called crisis was the 1988 Canadian federal election in which the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement became the major debate. However, while the election and the free trade agreement certainly represent the political and economic realms respectively, one must not overlook their influence upon and their relations to the cultural realm. There were at least two sport events which may have contributed to the characterization of a crisis in Canadian identity in 1988. First, there was the trade of Wayne Gretsky from the Edmonton Oilers, and second there was the disqualification of sprinter Ben Johnson for the use of steroids in the 1988 Seoul Olympics. This paper focuses on the former event: the trade of Wayne Gretsky. The media coverage and debate surrounding the trade of Gretsky appears to be unprecedented in sports history. Never has there been so much discussion and political furore over the trade of one athlete. The story which the trade produced encompasses political, economic, and cultural struggles all of which may have impacted on the so-called "crisis" of Canadian identity." Analysis of media coverage of the trade and its relationship to Canadian identity are examined.


It is a well-known fact that under certain circumstances teachers can use math games to good advantage in the classroom. Games can be used not only to introduce interest and excitement into the child's learning program, but also to help the child attain a wide range of competencies -- from basic intellectual skills to problem solving. Both the rationale for game strategies and particular examples of playing in the math class will be discussed to illuminate the distinct value or the utter worthlessness of working play into the math curriculum.


Since it opened on April 15, 1983, Tokyo Disneyland has attempted to provide an "American experience" for Japanese and other Asian visitors. With few exceptions, the amusement park has been militantly modeled after the original in Anaheim and its over 40 million visitors have been forced to play in an environment without rain shelters (in a very rainy country, especially during Summer vacation) and interact with Japanese personnel wearing blonde and red wigs so that they will look "authentically American." The gradual accommodation to Japanese styles of play will be explored. (Slides included.)
Kline, Joann P. "Joey". Make a Skydive? At My Age?

The activity of skydiving is often thought of for the young and foolish, but with the advent of tandem jumping, many who thought jumping was something for others to do could now experience the thrill of freefall and the serenity of a parachute ride. Tandem Jumping involves an experienced Tandem Master taking a non-jumper on a skydive using a dual harness system with 360 square foot (or larger) ram air parachute. This method has allowed thousands of people up to age 98, and many handicapped individuals, who otherwise never could have jumped, to make a skydive in a very safe and controlled environment.

This paper will examine how these people decide to make a skydive and what they experience on their jump. Another aspect to be investigated will be the Tandem Master: who is this person and why is he/willing to risk his life to introduce someone else to skydiving? What are the feelings and emotions felt before, during and after the jump? Vertigo? Fear? Acrophobia? How does the passenger feel about the Tandem Master, into whose hands they are putting their life? Is skydiving an activity for everyone? Probably not, but Tandem Jumping can fulfill the dreams of many people to join the eagles in the freedom of flight.

Lurker, Ernst. What Is Play Art?

This slide presentation based on a traveling exhibition of play art being organized under the auspices of the Association of Science-Technology Centers in Washington, DC will explain and illustrate the new concept of play art.


Labyrinths derive from mythological roots and are confirmed within rituals and celebrations. The somatic-psychic appeal of labyrinth icons continues to capture the human imagination. They involve aesthetic, creative, and enjoyable pleasures while confronting the lived body with danger, torment, rejuvenation, freedom and power.

This paper investigates the historical, philosophical, literary and liminal elements of labyrinths from unicursal to multicursal, from mythic to commercial, and from ancient and obscure to recent and predominant. The labyrinth's potent symbology, psychological and cultural significance is discussed in view of a post-modern revival and entrepreneurial cynosure of human mazes in the British Isles, Japan, and most recently the United States. (Slides included.)


The twentieth century secular black music, blues, evolved through the creolization of African, American, and European elements. The use of the word "blues" to indicate depression, rejection, or despondency can be traced to Chaucer's The Complaint of Mars, written about 1385. Moreover, the traditional eight- or twelve-bar blues harmonic pattern was consistently used in the 16th century court dance, the passamezzo moderno. This pattern, used in countless European and American folk songs through the centuries, continued to dominate much of the music of the 19th century, including the harmonizations of spirituals and the compositions of minstrel writers such as Dan Emmett, Stephen Foster, and James Bland, before providing the harmonic foundation for the blues songs of the 20th century.

Scholars studying play tend to romanticize or otherwise privilege play as a universal, healthy, necessary impulse in human beings, and play researchers sometimes have come close to declaring that the right to play is a human and civil right. This laissez-faire attitude usually extends to organized play, as well. But there are instances in American culture wherein the rights of the individual and the rights of the community collide, or when two groups within a community conflict over one's customary play. This paper examines one such collision -- that between blood sports and their opposition -- in order to understand how human nature, human rights, and community rights come together on this issue. Examples come from hunting, cock fighting and other blood sports.

Minten, Hedy A. G. York University. A Symbolic Analysis of "Mourning Mantra."

This paper explores the inherent symbolism which permeates choreographer Kathleen Graham's modern dance "Mourning Mantra." The choreography is based on the North American Hopi Indian Creation - Emergence Myth. My paper discusses how the symbolic movement can become an act of personal empowerment for the performer as well as serve as a healing agent for a diseased world and a facilitator of world peace. It examines Hopi philosophy and culture as revealed through the symbols, and attempts to lead us to a better understanding of Graham's work and mission for peace.

Reifel, Stuart and June Yeatman. University of Texas - Austin. Curricular Influences on Early Play.

The purpose of this study was to identify and track the play themes of preschool children. A model is presented for relating free play activities to classroom topics (in this case "pet animals.") The block play of 10 children is documented, with emphasis given to structural and conversational indicators that reflect curricular topics. Findings indicate a significant tendency for free play to draw on and elaborate classroom topics, with related topics reflecting the commercial media. Individual differences exist in the degree to which topics are elaborated. Findings are related to work by Vygotsky and Dewey.

Sparkis, Sylvia Traska. Purdue University. Clothing and Leisure.

The relationship between clothing, bodily adornment and adult play is strong and complex. In different contexts, clothing may communicate a variety of messages concerning a culture's, group's, or individual's norms, social roles and affiliations, socioeconomic status, personal traits, skills and attitudes. The use of clothing during adult play activities in historical fantasy play, ethnic minority activities, and Brazilian Carnival are used to illustrate what may be learned about both participants and the meaning of an activity within culture.


The argument is presented that 20th century psychology's concern with play as having to do with children rather than with adults, with rational activities rather than irrational ones, with solitary behaviors rather than group behaviors and with separate play forms rather than with the interconnectedness among forms, all legitimate foci in their own right, have contributed nevertheless to a Foucaultian like domestication of the phenomenon itself. This rationalized psychology of play has resulted, in consequence, in the increasing stultification of play in schools and the eradication of play in school playgrounds. By omitting consideration of what adults