IN HONOR OF FRANK MANNING

As most TASP members know by now, Frank Manning died on July 21, 1990 at the age of 46. The recent TASP meeting in Charleston was dedicated to Frank's memory and included a session in his honor.

James Peacock, one of the participants in that session and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, has announced the establishment of the Frank Manning Memorial Fund, which will be used to support an annual prize for superior dissertation research. Donations to the fund may be sent to: Frank Manning Memorial Fund, University of North Carolina, Department of Anthropology, 301 Alumni Bldg, CB #3115, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3115.

The highlights of Frank's distinguished academic career were well summarized in the obituary which appeared in the recent AAA Newsletter, authored by Jean-Marc Philibert. Probably every TASP member has recollections of Frank's contributions to the organization and to the study of play, games, sport and festival. I still find Frank's article "Celebrating Cricket" to be one of the very best pieces ever written on the meanings given to sport. I also shall never forget Frank's TASP Presidential Address on "Boxers and Jockeys" which used styles of men's underwear as metaphors for the academic enterprise.

It should be noted that, in addition to the fund established at UNC, the University of Western Ontario, where Frank had taught since 1979, has established a Frank Manning Memorial Bursary to provide a yearly award to a Carribean student enrolled in the Faculty of Social Science at the University. Contributions may be sent to University of Western Ontario- Frank Manning Memorial Bursary, Development Office, NCMRD Room 20, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, N6A 5K7, Canada.
PRESIDENTIAL REPORT
By George Eisen

(Editors Note: delivered at the Charleston meetings.)

However briefly, I would like to take this opportunity to report to you. Should we call it a "State of the Union" address? It is perhaps too presumptuous. However, report we must.... And, since this brief account is overwhelmingly positive, I am more than eager to share with you all the new developments within our organization. I will start with welcome greetings to all my fellow "TASP-IANS." Without dramatizing the historical moments of the past several weeks, it is nice to see an end to the Gulf conflict. Hopefully, this war, contrary to previous predictions, will lead to peace.

If you care to remember my first communication on the pages of our Newsletter, I admitted then of being an optimist by nature. And the past six months did not dampen my inclination to be one. Exactly the opposite is true. Among the priorities that have crystallized after the Las Vegas meeting was an intensive membership drive. The fact that we passed the two hundred number in our active membership is perhaps the best testimony for our success in this direction. If we look beyond the official tone of this note, you might see the strength of TASP -- the "personal touch" approach. I believe that beyond distributing flyers and sending out letters, it is healthy to talk to people, pick up the phone -- make everyone feel like an individual whose needs are answered by our organization. This is to the credit of the entire leadership. Communication lines between members of the TASP Council are always open. This is not to say that there is no room for improvements; speeding up the enrollment process, receiving prompt notification of membership, etc. etc. Of course, the fact that we are aware of these problems shows also that we are in the process of resolving these issues.

Another encouraging sign for the robust health of TASP is this conference. I was almost tempted to use the phrase "beyond expectations" in the previous sentence. However, without indulging in self-praise, I had the full confidence that this will be an exceptional conference. The two major factors for this unwavering optimism are: (1) the confluence of the three scholarly organizations, and (2) the dedication of our leadership. I must repeat myself again. Robert Lavenda's election and being the Program Director was a master stroke. Permit me to interject a personal observation; it is a pleasure to work with him. The election of Garry Chick to the position of Vice President will further strengthen the organization. He brings administrative expertise as well as innovative ideas to the Association.

As you can see in the conference program, paper presentations are doubled from last year. Yet not only the numbers increased -- so is the quality. TASP, a motley group of interdisciplinarians, can unite the best minds for play research. The major events scheduled for the conference -- the keynote address by Don Handelman from Israel, the evening session with Brian Sutton-Smith, and the luncheon presentation by Roland Renson from Belgium -- offer further evidence of this quality.

I do not want to burden you with statistical data ... Let's leave this to your scientific papers. Rather, I want to extend a warm greeting and a wish for a pleasant stay in Charleston. It is not one of those cliches or niceties that we dispense so carelessly, without meaning or consequences. I sincerely mean it!
Dr. Play's Quiz: Doing The Charleston
by Don Lytle

The newest exercise programs and aids from videos to rubber bands to electronic muscle stimulators have not been brought to us without controversy. New York magazine reported that Cher is worried about "rumors" circulating that she has benefitted from a variety of plastic surgery procedures. This may cast doubts as to the efficacy of the exercise regime she touts in her new book, Forever Fit. To renounce these rumors and media "misreporting," Cher had a British physician examine her under "strict scientific conditions." Dr. F. V. Nicolle then issued the following statement about Cher: "She has never had any surgery to her upper and lower eyelids (or) cheekbones (or chin).... All these areas represent her natural well-developed good looks and have never been touched by surgery." Two years ago Cher revealed to that very reliable periodical, People magazine, that she had her nose sculpted and her breasts, chin and cheeks (she didn't say which ones) lifted.

Never mind that many so-called fitness experts and authors have resorted to the surgeon's scalpel and wonders of 20th century medical technology for body molding, folding, tucking, sucking, pleating, lifting, separating and sculpting, the participants at this year's TASP conference exercised in far more creative and healthy ways. Here are some examples: To find a good restaurant Gary Alan Fine dragged around many, including Jay Mechling, Margaret Duncan, Alan Aycock, and Michael Salter; Roland Reston, Dale Schwerdtfeger, and others clapped their hands and tapped their feet at the Jazz Club; Jane Granskog, Anne Bolin and Milady Khoury-Murphy ran and lifted weights at The Citadel; Dan Hillyard ran along the Ashley River; and Program chair, Rob Lavenda, ran all over the Howard Johnson; Linda Hughes, Pete Johnson, Jim Johnson and others climbed the stairs at Himans fish restaurant; Walter Podlichak, Roland Baumann, and others walked from the meeting site to town; Victoria Paraschak went swimming; Marvin Ching fought crime; Frank Salamone walked around trying to find his rental car; George Eisen, John Loy and many others flexed their elbows and lifted heavy wine and martini glasses; Don Handelman, Yoram Carmeli, Harriet Jakobsson, Gerd von der Lippe, Kurt Weiss, Harpreet Shergill and others presumably exercised their arms by flying over the Atlantic; Carmelo Bazzano hoisted bocce balls; Celeste Lasater pinned down Super Mario; Elizabeth Olsen reported on authentic tennis, while Don Lytle, Brian Sutton-Smith and Garry Chick played slip and slide on muddy tennis courts. Participants actively exercised their hand, wrist, arm and shoulder muscles for hand shaking, facial muscles for smiling, and their vocal chords for presenting, conversing
and laughing. However of all the exercisers at the 1991 TASP meetings, Brian Sutton-Smith was the most active! He played tennis, ran his mouth off, jumped to conclusions, wrestled with theoretical play constructs, grasped slippery rhetoric, hit the nail on the head, but pushed his luck when making waves and mountains out of molehills; for having climbed the ladder of success, pulled himself together and hung in there during the surprise announcement of his well deserved festschrift. For all that can be said of Brian he hasn’t skated through life or jumped on the bandwagon; he doesn’t beat around the bush, throw his weight around, side step issues, run scared, hit below the belt or throw in the towel.

A fitness quiz is in order given the excitement of this topic for individuals around the world, the exercise frenzy exhibited by this year’s TASP participants, and for Brian Sutton-Smith. The first place winner will either receive a six month subscription to Arnold’s, Bonnie’s, Cher’s, Jane’s, Linda’s, Madonna’s, Slyvester’s, Victoria’s or Brian’s Fitness Magazine or a new healthy body, whichever comes first. Of the following literary works, listed by title and publisher, identify those that are authentic and have been published.

1. Sexy Legs in 20 Days (Pergee)
2. Thin Thighs in 30 Days (Bantam)
3. The Joy of Pigging Out (Warner Books)
4. How to Get Rid of Your Double Chin in Six Weeks (Delilah)
5. Bunnetics (Doubleday/Dolphin)
6. Toughen Up: The Chuck Norris Fitness System (Bantam)
7. Staying Hard (Simon & Schuster)
8. Will Jane Fonda and Ted Turner Workout? (CNN)
9. The Incredibly Lazy Person’s Guide to a Much Better Body (Linden)
10. Surviving Exercise (Houghton Mifflin)
11. Run for the Roundhouse, Nelly-They Can’t Corner You There (Poseidon)
12. Legs ( Fireside)
13. The Ultimate Workout (Bantam)
14. Spot Reducing Program (Workman)
PLAYFULLY YOURS
By Brian Sutton-Smith
April 1991

Later today I fly to Leuven, Belgium, to spend a month with Roland Renson in order that he and I can work on a book on traditional games. He and his coworkers at the Sports School of the Flemish University of Leuven have spent much of the past twenty years making sense out of the famous 1560 painting of Flemish Children’s Games by Bruegel. Recently they have come together with other members of the European Community to form an organization focused on traditional sports of which Renson currently is President.

In 1949 when I was first hitch hiking around New Zealand collecting the traditional games of New Zealand children, I was told by the headmaster of an elementary school in the Scottish derived town of Dunedin that “chaps like you who come around wasting our time are a bloody nuisance.” I remember feeling oddly privileged by the indictment, so certain I was that my quarry far superceded my attention or his trivialization. But still it was good if early training for my years as a TASP member where such mutual impalements are one of the masochisms we use for our own survival in the bloated world of the work ethic. Good training also for the playful massacres of Debates and Roasts with which we have “studded” our years. But still hardly enough training for the evening that I was asked to fill at this last TASP meeting on the “Life of Brian” in which he was himself to become the traditional game.

I spent some anxious weeks before the occasion telephoning colleagues to get even a slight hint of what was in store for him. Was this to be the traditional medieval game of “Butt the Cat” where the cat is tied to a post and he must kill it by butting his head into it, while it scratches his face off? Or was it to be: “He’s hanging, he’s hanging?” where at a signal the group kicks his chair away and he must cut the rope around his neck with the knife in his hand ... If he should succeed in doing so he would collect the wagers on the ground beneath. If he failed, the group would recoup its wagers and dance around his dangling body merrily chorusing the above verse.

What I found wherever I inquired was a massive silence on the question of an evening with Brian. In general it was shrugged off as if giving a member an hour and a half to kill himself was worth no more notice than giving him the usual twenty minutes to summarize his mortal existence. What I supposed was that this was to be a masked repeat of the famous Baton Rouge Roast where those four famous vilifiers -- Guilmette, Dunleavy, Loy and Blanchard -- carried on with such a disgusting impact that they lost half the membership and were forever shunned by the various Southeastern anthropological, ethnological, and ethnographic Mummers societies with which we were conjoined at that moment. Sufficient to say that two of the group left forever, one being dragged away from the great urban centre of Murfreesboro, Tennessee to the outer bastion of Emporia, Kansas and the other completely disappearing. The other two, incoherent on the occasion, began their alcoholic downward careers at that point.

By way of preparation I thought I might perhaps fill the occasion with a Presidential type speech; but what would that be? Would it be the "Life Is a Game of Chance" type speech such as we were given appropriately last year in Las Vegas; or the summoning of the missionaries for play, given appropriately in California, now known as the famous "Jay Walking to Heaven" speech? Or would it be on play as massive existential crisis of Love such
as we had appropriately in Philadelphia? On the other hand perhaps as "Insulting Editor" of the journal Play & Culture I could fill the evening announcing a new reward structure for the journal hoping to bring in so many articles we would suck the scholarly life out of the thousands of journals now dedicated to life as a form of serious adaptation.

I had in mind such as the Mechling Award in which for an accepted article you get to go to the Pigeon Shoot at Higgins Valley, PA and have a blood bath as long as you do not forget the slogan, "Shoot pigeons, not drugs." Or there is the Fagen-Eisen Award in which you get to play Blindman's Buff with a chimpanzee. Or the Miracle Award which is a playground peer shoot award in which you are allowed to bully Texas children. Or the Mergen Award in which you get to climb over the playground fence and join the demi monde that the fence was meant to keep out. Or the Loy Award where you get to make punning gags for several hours while he sits strapped in a chair with a gag in his mouth. Or the Chick Award where you get to play 8-Ball with Minnesota Fats. And so on and so on.

But when we got there at the appointed hour and a half they were all fussing around about introducing the speaker. "Thing me Bob" or "What you m- call it," until finally one of them came to the front of the assembly with a very poorly wrapped object in brown paper. This undoubtedly being the traditional game of wrap the parcel, where layer after layer being peeled off one finally arrives at some loathsome object. I remember when we got these at Fort Worth, there was the good taste to have the final surprise wrapped odorlessly in plastic. Could I hope for as much on this occasion?

At that point and quite suddenly there appeared the spectral presence of the Calvinist Dunedin Headmaster; rushing past me and shouting about shriveling festering festivals of fools, he grasped the Festschrift in his hands and threw it on the floor. "Bloody Nonsense!" he cried. It was indeed a great tribute.

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD
By Dan Hilliard

The annual meetings in Charleston seemed to me to live up to the very high expectations that President George Eisen and Program Chair Rob Lavenda had for them. Attendance was high and the number of papers presented significantly larger than the year before. The staff at the Charleston Howard Johnson went out of their way to accommodate our needs. The special sessions were very lively, with each being quite distinctive and reflecting the personality and interests of the invited presenter.

These meetings marked my first opportunity to hear Don Handelman, whom I recognized as an intellectual presence before his keynote address when he asked some very penetrating questions during the first session of the conference. His address on play and systems of cosmology was a welcome reminder that much of my own thinking about play is contained within Western systems of thought. His distinction between the "topside down" play associated with Hindu cosmology and the "bottomside up" play associated with Western monotheism was, to me, original and extremely useful.
Roland Renson gave a very different type of presentation in a very different setting. The innovative luncheon presentation featured a buffet meal, a full bar, and a marvelous slide presentation on the variety of traditional games that have been documented and classified by Roland and his students. The slides represented for me the first opportunity to actually visualize a number of games I had heard or read about, but never seen.

Finally, we come to "An Evening with Brian Sutton-Smith." (See Brian's "Playfully Yours" column for his own perspective on this event.) To me the highlight of the occasion was the "millisecond of speechlessness" Brian suffered when the festschrift volume was unveiled for him. Congratulations to Garry Chick for putting the collection together and to all the contributors and co-conspirators for keeping the secret. Brian was genuinely surprised and, I think, moved. But he wasn't speechless for long. He provided an appreciative audience with an insightful mixture of autobiography and theorizing. I've always associated Brian with the sport of rugby (because I was a rugby player myself), but his comments on his years as a top-class boxer were quite revealing. Among other things, he indicated that there is a perverse kind of character building associated with the sport; as he put it, "after you've been in the ring and survived, you know the worst is over and you can deal with anything else that comes along."

Beyond the special presentations and the numerous high quality papers delivered, Charleston offered its own pleasures. Among my favorites were inexpensive seafood at Hyman's and coffee and dessert at the coffee shop just down the street, people watching in the Old City (which included hearing a construction worker throw a wonderful Deep South style piroppo only an hour after I had heard Joyce Bishop's great paper on the piroppo as a performance genre), and the First Scots Presbyterian Church (founded in 1671).

The only low point of the conference for me was suffered early. I had to fly through both Dallas and Atlanta to get to Charleston, my luggage didn't keep up with me, and I got out of the Charleston airport just as they were locking it up after midnight. But, as Brian said about boxing, if you can survive Dallas and Atlanta ...

One of the most exciting announcements of the meetings was provided by President-Elect Garry Chick, who is working toward holding the 1992 meetings in Paris in late April in conjunction with the International Council on Children's Play. Garry is working to arrange a travel package that will make the conference affordable to our North American majority. The prospect of meeting in Paris with the ICCP, which holds a truly international conference with all delivered papers translated into four languages, is truly exciting. I must confess that some delay in the production of this issue of the Newsletter has been occasioned by ESPN's daily coverage of the French Open tennis tournament, which I must watch before I start my work day and which makes me itch to return to Paris. Garry will be providing details as they become available.
ANSWER to Dr. Play's Quiz: Doing The Charleston

All the exercise books and the one anti-exercise book (The Joy of Pigging Out) are authentic with correct publishers listed, EXCEPT for number seven (7) and eleven (11). (These numbers may be significant in that one should not gamble with their personal health and fitness can't be bought at 7/11.) Most of the books in the quiz were published between 1980 and 1983. The books, with publisher's name, and most of the authors are listed below:

1. Sexy Legs in 20 Days (Pergee)
2. Thin Thighs in 30 Days (Bantam) by Wendy Stehling
3. The Joy of Pigging Out (Warner Books) by David Hoffman
4. How to Get Rid of Your Double Chin in Six Weeks (Delilah) by William L. Hintermister
5. Bunnetics (Doubleday/Dolphin)
6. Toughen Up: The Chuck Norris Fitness System (Bantam)
7. Jane and Ted don't have a joint fitness book, but CNN would probably make much money if they created a book called The Peter Arnett and Saddam Hussein Dance Book.
8. Staying Hard (Simon & Schuster) by Charles Gaines
9. The Incredibly Lazy Person's Guide to a Much Better Body (Linden)
10. Surviving Exercise (Houghton Mifflin) by Judy Alter
11. "Run for the Roundhouse, Nelly . . . " is a fake song or book title my father has been fond of saying for years; along with "I'll See You In The Spring, If I Can Get Through The Mattress;" or "He Went Through the Screen Door, And Strained Himself."
12. Legs (Fireside) by Gayle Olinekova
13. The Ultimate Workout (Bantam) by Kathy Smith
14. Spot Reducing Program (Workman) by Suzy Prudden