Editor's Notes

Personally, I find it ironic and somewhat peculiar to be writing the summer edition of the TAASP Newsletter in the midst of a snowstorm. I am hoping that the ice on the lake will crack before I do. By the time of the October issue, I hope to have been radiated by some warm sunshine, especially now that I have accepted a new appointment at Brock University. As of July 1, 1983, I would ask that you send all contributions to: Dr. Ann Marie Guilmette, School of Physical Education and Recreation, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2S 3A1 Canada.

In the October issue, I am planning to focus on "The State of the Art in Play". To this end, I have already received a note on "Deep Play" from Anna K. Nardo. I am still awaiting contributions from Klaus Meier (University of Western Ontario) and Steven Fox (North Dakota State). Thus far, they have not sent their solicited manuscripts as they promised they would, so I am taking the liberty of making this note their first public notice of chastisement. Anyone else who may have recent theoretical or methodological contributions is also invited and encouraged to send their material to me. Another possibility, which I am considering, is a Newsletter directed toward ethnographic
contributions. I already have a paper by Ase Enerstvedt which will be featured in a forthcoming edition and Helen Schwartzman has agreed to send her recent ethnographic efforts. Other ethnographic contributions are also invited and encouraged. I would remind all TAASP members that any and all contributions are encouraged and welcomed.

Communications

The Tenth Annual TAASP Meetings, 1984

Barney Mergen (TAASP) and Joe Arbena (Clemson) are busy making plans for next year's TAASP meetings, to be held from Wednesday afternoon, March 28, through Saturday, March 31, 1984, in Clemson, South Carolina. The theme of the meeting is "The Cultural Dimensions of Play, Games, and Sport". Professor Arbena is building his annual "Sport and Society" Conference around the program theme and taking steps to develop several key symposia out of his budget that will be of great interest to TAASP members. He is also inviting several keynote speakers. Names and details will be available later in the Newsletter.

Details regarding arrangements have not been finalized, but TAASP and NASSS participants will be housed in one of two spacious motels near the Clemson campus. Negotiations are under way. A registration fee of $25 will be charged this year. This will include one Friday luncheon session, a subscription cocktail, a wine-and-cheese party, and shuttle service, in addition to all program materials.

Persons interested in presenting twenty minute papers at these meetings should submit a title and a 250 word abstract by November 1, 1983 to the program chairman: Bernard Mergen, American Studies Program, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., 20052 U.S.A. Don't forget to include your registration fee with your abstract. For local arrangements information, contact Joe Arbena, Department of History, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, 29631 U.S.A.

David Lancy (College of Education, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, 85281 U.S.A.) requests that any TAASP members, who are working with kids and microcomputers, contact him. David is especially interested in communicating with those individuals who classify (Conceptualize) the computer less as a tool and more as a toy.

The Merrill-Palmer Society met in Detroit Michigan, April, 1983. For program highlights, details, or interested future participants, write: Eli Saltz, Merrill Palmer Society, Wayne State University, 71 E. Ferry Ave., Detroit, Michigan, 48202 U.S.A.

Olympic Academy VII met May 30 to June 3, 1983 at Texas Tech University. Direct inquiries for additional information to USOA VII, P.O. Box 4070, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409 U.S.A.

From the IPA (International Association for the Child's Right to Play) Newsletter, a Play Resource Unit is interested in forging international links in order to continue and expand the work of co-ordinating and disseminating information on play; direct enquiries to: Vicky Hunter, Team Leader, Play Resource Unit, Moray House College of Education, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8AQ, Scotland.

Laughing Matters by Joel Goodman, a quarterly publication, can be purchased through "The Humor Project", 179 Spring St., Saratoga Springs, N.Y., 12866 U.S.A.

TAASP Fellows

In Volume 8, Number 3, Spring, 1982 of the Newsletter, Alyce Cheska provided a listing of TAASP Fellows. The procedures for application to Fellow Status are: According to the TAASP Constitution, "Fellows of the Association are those Members who are actively engaged in furthering the body of knowledge in the anthropology of play as evidenced by their current scholarly research". (Article III, Section 3.) If you wish to apply for
the status of Fellow in TAASP, please submit your professional vita with special emphasis on your research, publication, and service in the study of play to the President, Kendall Blanchard. This application must be in writing to the Executive Council. Election to Fellowship is based on a majority vote of the Council which convenes at each annual meeting; however, a special mail vote can be obtained when considered appropriate by the President. Why not submit your materials this summer?

The TAASP Executive welcomes two new Fellows to the association for 1983--Jay Beckwith and James H. Duthie. The diversity of TAASP is exemplified in the backgrounds of these two Fellows. Beckwith is a play environment designer, while Duthie is an experimental social psychologist.

Jay Beckwith offers the following for the Newsletter: Dear Colleagues:

A quick reading of the membership roster of TAASP reveals a surprising fact; many of the supporters are not anthropologists and a large percentage of the members are involved with physical education. Two questions emerge from this observation: what do these non-anthropologists find of value in membership; and, what does this large constituency mean to the organization, its meetings, newsletter and future?

In recent years there has been a significant movement toward alternatives to competitive sports in all areas of physical education. Part of this is an outgrowth of jogging and the other forms of cardiovascular exercise which have become a cornerstone of modern preventive medicine. In part, this is a reaction to the increasing commercialization of sports which turns an ever greater percentage of the population into consuming, passive, spectators. The emerging feminist consciousness has played a part both in bringing a non-macho interest to sports and games and also providing significant new funding for women's interest.

As the new games people have discovered, play is both more basic than sports and an alternative to it. Play is increasingly perceived as a "natural" form of exercise and development. The anthropological study of play offers the possibility of understanding this phenomenon on a profound level. Cross cultural comparisons not only elucidate the nature of play through comparison and contrast, but such studies often provide inspiration for new forms of games and sports in our own culture. If play is indeed important to social as well as physical development, then it can become a consciously employed educational resource.

Anthropological insights can be used by teachers to develop new types of physical education curricula. Designers can use the information to create more responsive and humane environments. College professors can use play theory to demonstrate the dynamics of acculturation, child development and methodology to students.

After a period of relative quiet during which it's lack of rigorous scientific methodology has been seen as a handicap, anthropological studies have become a major and reputable interest area. Part of this resurgence comes from a reaction to the quasi-scientific jargon and studies of the last decade. But a larger contributor has been the subsuming of ethology and ethological methods under anthropology. For awhile it appeared that ethology would swallow anthropology rather than vice versa. But, in any case, the investigatory techniques derived from animal studies has become an important tool for the anthropologist. Ethology has become a bridge between the physical educator and the anthropologist because it provides information on the physical as well as the cultural and symbolic aspects of behavior.

The TAASP Newsletter is an important link between people who are studying play behavior and those who are attempting to facilitate it. The relative informality of this connection is important because it allows for more personal and speculative communication. One of the weaknesses of both the organization and the newsletter is that this aspect of the non-anthropologist participant is sometimes lost in what can become academic esoterica. It would help if contributors added comments on their work which would amplify the data for those who are attempting application of theory and information. Even if the comments were only of a cautionary nature they would be useful.

Taking this process even a step further,
it would be interesting if more studies applied directly to the sorts of questions practitioners are asking. To illustrate how this process might work to the mutual benefit of the participants, I'd like to put forward some of the questions which, as a play environment designer, I am currently concerned.

1. What aspects of the playful interaction between parents and children are affected by environmental factors?
2. Under what circumstances do playgrounds become a setting for parental support groups? In such an environment do parents become models for each other?
3. How does crowding or lack of environmental diversity affect play patterns?
4. What is the difference between age harmonious and age different play groups and what variations occur among common ethnic groups?
5. What are the factors which lead a community to develop a feeling of identification with a public park?
6. What is the relationship between risk and play and what features of an environment can be made to effect the perception of risk/challenge?

These are just a few of the questions I have about children's play and its context. The search for relevant information is the main reason for my participation in TAASP. Through TAASP I can keep in touch with those who have access to the research capacity of the universities. Often, there are mutual benefits as when I am able to provide an experimental environment or design for a researcher. It also seems that study grants are more readily obtained when there are practical as well as theoretical outcomes. The professional diversity of TAASP is one of its main strengths. I hope that other non-anthropologists will begin to contribute to the newsletter with comments on their activities and questions which may stimulate further investigations. In particular, I want to express my thanks to Brian Sutton-Smith for his continued contribution to both TAASP and the study of play. His recent editorship of Play and Learning was especially meaningful for me as it presented the major theorists in dialogue. The text is a revelation in how far the study of play has come in the last ten years and how much has yet to be fully understood.

In his search for relevant information, I can recommend to Beckwith and other playground enthusiasts that they contact Mary Jeavons, PRAV (The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria)--Play for All, 570 Bourke St., Melbourne, Australia. Additionally, Beckwith has contributed to our TAASP meetings and has a previous contribution in the Newsletter, Volume 7, Number 1, Fall, 1980, entitled "The State of the Playground Industry".


In addition, Duthie continues to haunt and taunt the TAASP meetings, as well as the TAASP Newsletter editor.

Duthie has been keenly interested in identifying the play elements in sport. His recent article in ACTION, entitled "Minor Sport: A Major Social Institution" examines the functions of organized minor sport in today's society. Duthie questions the harmful as well as beneficial outcomes of adult regulated minor sport in the socialization of our children.

More recently, Duthie's experimental interests have taken him to the other end of the developmental spectrum--old age. (I could have predicted the inevitability of Duthie eventually doing a study with subjects more empathic to his own Weltanschauung.) Preliminary results from his life-style and expectancies study.
reveal that +65 yr. olds report greater life satisfaction than younger older adults; and males (a scarce commodity in the sample) are more likely than their female counterparts to distinguish between superfluous and motivated behaviours, a relationship consistent with their early life work or domestic patterns. Further, and perhaps most intriguing, those elders in society who remain socially independent, may continue to do so, by being playful.

Congratulations to the 1983 TAASP Fellows, Jay Beckwith and James H. Duthie.

Contribution -- Norbeck

The first in this series of contributions to this Newsletter comes from Edward Norbeck. His article represents a poignant and humorous account of his life-long interest in play. Norbeck is one of our "pioneers" in TAASP. He is Professor Emeritus at Rice University, Austin, Texas, where he organized and chaired the famous Rice University Seminar on the Anthropological Study of Play in 1973, from which the monograph developed and was published in 1974. Professor Norbeck has served on the TAASP Council (Member-at-Large) and is a TAASP Fellow (1977). Also, he presented TAASP's 1st Keynote Address (Detroit, Michigan) entitled, "Johan Huizinga and the Study of Play". I attended this Keynote Address and was impressed that a Canadian Swede living in Texas could provide a relatively unchallenged pronunciation of a Dutch historian—Huizinga. (I trust my written pronunciation would meet with his approval.) Additionally, I attended the Notre Dame, Indiana TAASP meetings, where Professor Norbeck amusingly related part of his story which follows:

PLAYFUL REASONS FOR STUDYING PLAY—A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

I have been asked to state the reasons for my interest in the study of human play. Presumably such "reasons" or stimuli exist, but they are hard to identify with certainty. Surely, part of the stimulus arose in early childhood, continuing through adolescence, adulthood and, largely unabated, into my present stage of life, which may frankly be described as old age. In short, my personal history is a long chronicle of minor problems connected with my proclivity to play, all in contexts that have nothing to do with scholarly or scientific interests in the nature of play. In adult life, scholarly interest in play did indeed arise, as must be obvious from my record of professional activities. Specific stimuli for my scientific interest in play might reasonably be described as intellectual, curiosity about a matter largely ignored by the scientific world but which seemed to me of vital importance to understand if the goal of research in anthropology and the social sciences in general as well as various branches of biology were in fact to understand human nature. However, these stimuli to study play appear to be related to my non-scholarly problems with play. I shall describe some of the incidents of childhood and adolescence as well as specific events of later life that piqued a scholarly interest in human play.

I love to play but, as might be expected, my forms of play are not those of everyone else. Moreover, my love of play is tempered by my being a victim of the psychiatric syndrome we have long called the Protestant ethic. Despite being irreligious, I suffer from diffuse anxiety whenever my play—even a coffee break—continues for "too long" a period. This circumstance I regard as the doings of my parents. As Swedish immigrants to Canada, where I was born, their lives had brought them into intimate contact with the strictures on play in the teachings of John Calvin and Martin Luther. Neither of my parents could play without subsequently paying a toll in psychological dis-ease, something akin to guilt. I noted early in life that on the uncommon occasions when my mother escaped her bonds and truly played, enjoyed herself, she visibly suffered for several days afterward for her unseemly behavior. I learned early, too, that the Christian God was stern and unplayful. Whenever my many sisters and brothers and I made sounds of merriment
on Sunday, there was always a strong admonition, "Shhh! It's Sunday". My private decision was that it was time to get another God.

My first year in public school was a trial, for my teacher as well as myself. I played in class in many ways and seemed to have thought it quite permissible to roam about the room, joining other children at their seats from time to time. In retrospect, it seems that daily I was subjected to the form of physical punishment current at the time. Called before the class to the teacher's desk, I was made to hold out both hands, palms up, which the teacher then struck sharply several times with a ruler. I don't think I ever truly understood what my offenses were, and my teacher, Miss Webster, came to represent for me a large, dark, hairy--that wisp of dark mustache--and malignant spider waiting to pounce upon me.

Similar problems continued. My world seemed to contain many people who were not simply non-players but strong opponents of play. When I was fourteen, one of these opponents was a Swiss farmer, a member of a fundamentalist religious sect, who engaged my elder brother and me to aid with farm tasks for a period of a few weeks. Silent and unsmiling, Mr. Jacot would periodically come to inspect the quality of our work, and would often find me doing such things as pretending I was a rooster by standing atop a haystack, flapping my arms, and doing a raucous parody of a rooster crowing. When Mr. Jacot took us back to our home at the end of the work, he helpfully told my mother, "I think the younger one is a little crazy".

I had just turned sixteen when I finished high school, eager to go on to college. The year was 1931, the depth of the great depression, and no money for college was available. I made a visit to the college I had decided upon, with the hope that I could find employment there enabling me to attend the school. I was told, in those days before "custodians" existed, that the only employment for which I qualified was as a janitor on the university premises, that the pay was 25 cents per hour, and that a waiting list of 200 students was ahead of me. Realizing that I had to develop some marketable capability, I enrolled in a business college in Spokane, Washington in a year's course that I completed in five months, supporting myself by odd jobs of various kinds but still finding much time to play. Upon graduation, I knew bookkeeping, could typewrite well over 80 words per minute, and took shorthand at court reporter's speed. It seemed that I was eminently employable except for the fact that I was still sixteen years of age. On the advice of one of my instructors, my age was advanced to 22 or 23--I have forgotten which--and my clothing became the conservative garb of a young lawyer or banker, replete with a hat at all times. A few days before my seventeenth birthday I was engaged as secretary to an officer of the Federal Land Bank of a four-state district and, after a few months, promoted to headship of a department of about 50 clerks and stenographers, the youngest of whom was two or three years older than I. I had aged visibly, but not in all ways. For the most part, I was able to control or mask my impulses to play during working hours--but not always.

My friend Alice, 20 years of age, worked in another department. Alice had her own form of play, which she was able quite successfully to combine with her working day. Alice the Mad Hatter, as she came to be called by her fellow employees with a tone of amused fondness rather than derision, received a monthly salary of $70, of which she allocated about one-half each month for the purchase of a new hat. The buying power of $35 was then great and her hats were magnificent creations that gave pleasure to many people. Some of her monthly editions were great aviaries of the plumage of most of the presently endangered species of birds and many others were herbaria of tropical flowers, English garden flowers, or immodest panoramas of violets and other seemingly modest blossoms. In addition to costume, Alice liked other forms of play and soon joined me in addiction to the leapfrog syndrome. When boredom overtook me, I sometimes telephoned Alice for
a round of leapfrog, which we performed in
a giant filing room to which only a few
persons had keys. Alice and I played in
the wide aisles between rows of tall filing
cases, out of sight from the doorway in
case anyone should enter. We did nothing
but play leapfrog, but no such explanation
could be given to Mr. Becker, the treasurer
of the bank and one of the few people in
addition to myself with a key to the room,
when he silently entered and came upon
Alice and me in full flight. His face a
display of baffled astonishment, he asked
me to come to his office. Knowing that no
explanation was possible, I offered none,
and I was told sternly to behave in a way
appropriate to my position.

Soon afterward, the leapfrog syndrome
again struck, when I went dinner-dancing
at the city's largest hotel with a girl of
my age, she in a long, formal gown and high-
heeled dancing slippers and I in a tuxedo.
We dined and danced until closing time at
1:00 a.m. and then sought a taxi, which we
were told would require a wait of a half-
hour. To pass the time we decided, at my
suggestion, to play leapfrog on the street
by the entrance to the hotel. To my admira-
tion, my partner dexterously grasped her
long skirt with one hand, leaped by placing
the other hand on my back, and, on landing,
skillfully balanced herself on her high heels.
Our pleasure ended when a police car with
two officers drove up. We were ordered into
the car, one of the officers adding, "Ah,
somebody slapped them in the face with a
wet bar towel". Taken to the police station,
we were interrogated in puzzlement about
our behavior. When it became clear that
we had had nothing alcoholic to drink and
no statute prohibiting leapfrog could be
found, the officers drove us to our homes
with the parting message, "Now remember,
no leapfrog on the streets in the early
hours of the morning." I think that by
this time I had begun to learn the forms
of play that were acceptable.

Acting now on the assumption, with which
most readers will agree, that the most
influential factors in our lives are often
our early experiences, I shall here dismiss
the topic of such events and my social
problems with play. Impulses to play
unconventionally continue but they have
now long been primarily cerebral, vicarious
experiences of my imagination.

A number of incidents arising in the
course of my work as an anthropologist I
see clearly stimulating my interest in
play as a phenomenon worthy of investigation.
Various of these incidents have to do with
inversions of behavior, acts that I have
called rites of reversal, and their signi-
ficance. Long ago I attended in a back-
woods community of Japan the mid-summer
Buddhist festival of Bon, during which
dancing is traditional. As time passed in
my observation of the dancing by the towns-
people, I became aware that nearly all of
the hundreds of participants, young and
old, were wearing the clothing of the
opposite sex, a custom which I learned had
once been common but had become nearly
extinct in the nation. Naively, I asked
the people why they dressed in this way.
Their replies were either, "That's the
way we do it" or "I don't know, but it's
fun". Later inquiry of noted Japanese
scholars yielded smaller results; they had
no answers. Similarly, inquiry of noted
scholars brought no explanation of an
episode of reversal in one of the Shinto
myths of Japan. The sun goddess, Amaterasu-
o-Mikami, becomes gravely offended when
her mischievous youngest brother, Susanoo-
no-Mikoto, throws into her living quarters
the skin of a horse "flayed with a back-
ward flaying". In anger, she retires to
the depths of a cave and light leaves the
world until she is finally lured out by
other gods.

Later research in the course of my
study of religion revealed a worldwide
abundance of institutionalized practices
of reversal and also the realization that
although, as in the Shinto myth, reversals
might mean heinous sacrilege they also
often had other meaning. Many of these
rites were seen to be preeminently forms
of play, periods in the normal routine of
life when everyday conventions were set
aside, turned upside down, so that the
otherwise forbidden became temporary norms,
performed with impunity as forms of play
with a make-believe quality. I also
became well aware that the forms of play prevailing in Japan and in every other society were fundamentally alike but nevertheless differed markedly from each other in particulars, such as in types of games and sports, and that these differences related to other aspects of the cultures of the societies. Observable inter-societal differences in modes of play evoked many questions, as did similarities. The fundamental unity of human play in all societies led to curiosity and speculation about its biological significance or adaptive value to both human beings and all other forms of life that play. This large question led to a veritable skein of questions that often formed a network of related topics.

A non-playful experience of adulthood further aroused my interest in the adaptive value of play and in its temporal relationships to other behavior, a subject with many facets that, among other things, had taken modern researchers into split-brain research. Critically ill with internal hemorrhaging, I received emergency surgery and was hospitalized for three weeks. During that period I was fed intravenously, received several dozen transfusions of blood, and was effectively immobilized in bed by a catheter and tubes in my mouth, nose, and both arms. The three weeks remain in my memory as the most grueling experience of my life, an endless session of almost sleepless, torturing monotony. I respond poorly to sedatives, so that I slept little, and I could scarcely change the position of my body because of the many tubes. I came to envision myself as being on an endless plain, entirely devoid of vegetation, unrelievably flat as plate glass, and totally unvaried in color or any other feature. In this arena of horrid monotony I was forced to plod endlessly toward an ever-changing horizon. During the three weeks I received no food or drink orally, of course, and I began to have fantasies about food. I grew to want most of all a simple bowl of chicken soup. "Want" is an inadequate word; I yearned for the soup. Just before my discharge from the hospital I received my first food by mouth, a cup of chicken broth made with a bouillon cube. Relieved of my tubes, I sat on the edge of my bed savoring the cup of broth, horrible tasting but at the same time symbolically glorious and thereby delicious. To scholars of play I think the relevance of this tale is not cryptic. I learned by personal experience something about sensory deprivation and the importance to human well-being of varied behavior, including the variations brought by meals, coffee breaks, and, of course, the breaks in pace afforded by play.

As with my tale of hospitalization, the scholarly implications of other matters related in the preceding paragraphs are doubtless clear to anyone familiar with research on the subject of human play. One topic has led to another; that is, curiosity about one matter led to investigation which, in turn, led to other topics in a sequence that, for me at least, has no foreseeable end. Beginning my interest in play as a cultural-social anthropologist, I long ago went into other realms of study, to questions properly within the fields of biology, neurophysiology, linguistics, psychiatry, aesthetics, and still other scholarly and scientific disciplines—all in connection with the study of play. Metaphorically, I can say that it is astonishing what a little leapfrog may do.

Contribution -- Sutton-Smith

Rather than his presidential address, The Masks of Play, Brian Sutton-Smith has submitted a synopsis from the eighth TAASP proceedings, appropriately titled, The Masks of Play, which is to be published through Leisure Press.

Synopsis

THE MASKS OF PLAY

BY Brian Sutton-Smith and Diana Kelly-Byrne

University of Pennsylvania

This work, based on the 1983 Proceedings of the Anthropological Association for the Study of Play, reviews various studies of play in festivals, adult games, child play, and animal play. It comes to the conclusion that play is an archaic language, through which animals and humans communicate with each other in such a way as to express the
non-adaptive, non-normative side of their natures. By this expression they integrate it with their more adaptive or proper selves. This more total communication both within themselves and between players, results in a great communality of meaning amongst those who play. This theory unites the view of Bateson that play is a paradox with the theory of Freud that it is a disguise. The authors suggest that it might help to call this a theory of play as paraguise, in order to hold in the one theoretical grasp the view that play is both a form of metacommunication and a form of disguised expression. It is neither good nor bad in itself, it is a mediator. Unfortunately in this century the character of this function has itself been disguised by a cultural need to idealize and socialize the character of most childhood activities, at the same time as they have been trivialized and regarded as disjunctive with adult activities of a similar sort. It is argued that adults, like children, express and communicate themselves in the same archaic way.

The Cover

The cover should show two Greek Theatre Masks in outline intersecting with the title MASKS OF PLAY, which should stand out saliently from the more slender outlines of the masks.

Contribution -- AALR

The mission statement and goal statements from the AALR (American Association for Leisure and Recreation) were submitted by Edsel Buchanan, Chair, AALR, Committee on Play. This Committee met during AALR Minneapolis-St. Paul, April 8-11, 1983.

Mission Statement for the AALR Committee on Play

The purposes of the AALR Committee on Play are:

(a) To investigate the role of play in American society and human culture

(b) To seek deeper understanding of play in the development of the individual both physiologically and psychologically

(c) To determine the environmental conditions which best support play and to provide suggested improvements for existing conditions

(d) To share the knowledge of play with others with a special focus on those who can best effect change

(e) To advocate for the child's right and activities needed to play

While addressing ourselves most specifically to the continued improvement of play experiences available to children and youth, the Committee on Play will continue to maintain professional liaisons with the AALR and AAHPERD as a whole.

Goal Statements for the Committee on Play

A. Role of Play

1. The multiple purposes of play and its role in development and learning will be discussed.

2. The role of play as a system of social integration will be described.

3. The role of play as a situationally based phenomenon that brings the player to the edge of unitary or wholistic function will be discussed.

4. The role of play as a therapeutic tool will be discussed.

B. Developmental Ramifications

1. The manner in which players process and organize information during play will be described.

2. The potential for the play setting to provide improved motor (physiological), social, emotional...
functioning through emerging play patterns will be described.

C. Environmental Conditions

1. Suggested improvements for upgrading the quality of play setting experiences will be documented.

2. The design requirements for play spaces and play structures will be documented.

3. The function and purpose of equipment, apparatus and toys, for use in educational and recreational play settings will be addressed.

4. The utilization of durable, economical and safe materials in play equipment apparatus and toys will be investigated.

D. Communication of Issues

1. Regular opportunities to produce, distribute and present educational materials concerning the importance and function of quality play experiences and their settings will be sought.

2. Communication techniques and procedures designed to uphold the goals and objectives of play will be designated for possible use.

E. Advocacy and Adult Roles

1. The appropriate leadership function in education and recreational play settings will be discussed.

2. Adult expectations for play and their effect on children will be defined.

Contribution -- Program Chair

This program evaluation was submitted by Kendall Blanchard, President of TAASP.

Confessions of a Program Chair

TAASP's 1983 annual meetings were destined to be great. When you are meeting in Louisiana at Mardi Gras time it is hard to lose. Ed Bruner and the American Ethnological Society, Miles Richardson and the Southern Anthropological Society, and our own Anna Nardo made significant contributions to those odds. Despite resistance from the forces of winter in the Northeast, which resulted in 60 "no-shows," over 300 persons participated in the combined sessions. The end result was a success.

As program chair, I was particularly interested in the issue of session quality and attendance. With this in mind, I developed a one-page evaluation form and enlisted the help of several not-so-willing volunteers who assumed the responsibility for evaluating the 18 sessions. Ten (10) of the evaluation forms were returned to me. The ten sessions covered included 43(55%) of the 80 TAASP papers scheduled. Attendance during each of the individual papers varied from as few as three to as many as 30 with an average of 19.2. Time of presentation ranged from 11 to 45 minutes (average, 20.7). The evaluators were generous in their appraisal of individual presentations; only one "D" was awarded for "style" (the presenter read the paper, smoked, mumbled into his beard, braided his ponytail, and never looked up at the audience during the 45 minute presentation). The average style grade was 3.29; content, 3.10. In other words, most were adjudged solid "B" presentations. In their evaluation of total sessions, the critics ranked the ten sessions between "average" and "good" in each of the four categories: cohesiveness, timing, audience participation, and overall quality.

The evaluations, in addition to the written comments regarding perceived strengths and weaknesses, provide some insight into the mechanics of professional meetings in general and the TAASP sessions in particular. There are several problem areas:

1. Sessions attendance.

Very seldom does one present a paper at a professional meeting and not feel
disappointed at the size of the audience. Invariably, the empty chairs outnumber those occupied. This is especially hard on the first-time presenter who walks into the conference room and sees more water pitchers than people. Then, the three empty faces sitting there get up and leave, one of them muttering, "We thought Marvin Harris was in here." But, how does one keep this from happening? Attendance may have something to do with scheduling. The best attended sessions seem to be those on the morning of the first day; the worst, those late on the last day. However, the figures from the evaluation forms do not suggest a direct correlation. They do suggest that organized sessions are better attended than the volunteered paper sessions, but this also may be a function of scheduling; organized sessions are frequently the only TAASP event during a particular time. Suggestions? I think it would be fun to experiment with novel paper-presenting arrangements. Increase informality, develop new forms of audience involvement, or keep the bars closed until six o'clock.

2. Program Cohesiveness.

The difference between the organized and volunteered paper sessions is obvious here. The evaluators often expressed concern over the diversity of papers that were presented in the same sessions, even though imaginative discussants usually find a common thread.

3. Audience Participation.

Most of the sessions were crowded with the presentations themselves. There were often questions, but no time to ask them, much less address them. In one case, a successful discussion was reported, but it only happened when the discussant allowed the session to spill over into the next hour.

4. Participant Commitment.

It was noted that some of the presenters were not members of the organization and that such membership should be a prerequisite for annual meeting participation. Perhaps, steps should be taken to insure that this is minimized in future meetings.

The annual meeting is one of TAASP's primary means of communication. I think we have to take it seriously and continue to look for ways to increase the effectiveness of the idea exchange that is supposed to go on in such circles. If you have suggestions for next year's meetings, contact Barney Mergen.

Contribution -- Mergen

The following verse was submitted by Barney Mergen, President-Elect for TAASP:

Speculations on the Origin of a Proverb

Pony stew among the Sioux
was never served to guests.
For them the chiefs reserved the flesh
of several kinds of pests.
When white men came the tribe turned out,
the children lit the log.
They always knew the squaws would be putting on the dog.

Girls I know
go out in snow
in fox and mink and ermine,
while others choose to wrap themselves in cheaper kinds of vermin.
My date was dressed in muffs and furs,
we stepped into the fog,
little did I know that she was putting on the dog.

Clever cats
their canine friend
would sometimes gently tease,
about the imminent invasion of super killer fleas.
When Rover died of simple fright,
his master was agog,
he never knew the cats has been putting on the dog.
Contribution -- Cheska

The following submission from Alyce Taylor Cheska appeared in the Illiniweek, February 10, 1983. The poem, reprinted with permission, is written by Leslie Lipson, Professor of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley:

Oh give me your pity!
I'm on a committee,
Which means that from morning to night

We attend and amend
And contend and defend
Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur,
We defer and demur,
And reiterate all of our thoughts.

We revise the agenda
With frequent addenda
And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose,
We suppose and oppose,
And the points of procedure are fun;

But though various notions
Are brought up as motions,
There's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve;
But we never dissolve,
Since it's out of the question for us

To bring our committee
To end like this ditty,
Which stops with a period - thus.

TAASP Newsletter Index

Jan Rosenberg (Ithaca, New York) provided us (TAASP Newsletter, Summer, 1981) with an index of TAASP Newsletters, Volume 1 to 6. Here again is Jan's valiant and arduous efforts, in which you'll see an update for Volumes 7 to 9:2 (Winter, 1982). In this index, Jan has prepared a more detailed table of contents, and the abstracts have been separated from the rest of the Newsletter material. As editor, I greatly appreciate this enormous undertaking by Jan, as such an index helps to guide the direction of future editions.

7:1 (FALL), 1980


Farrer, Claire, "Secretary's Notes," 22-25, Secretary's Notes.


Rosenberg, Jan, "Excerpts from "From Piles of Sand to Monkey-bars," 9-12, Article.

Sutton-Smith, Brian, "The Playground as a Zoo," 4-7, Article.


TAASP, "Annual Conference Information, 1-3.


7:2 (WINTER), 1980

Preliminary Program, TAASP Seventh Annual Conference, 3-8.

ABSTRACTS for MEETING

Abt, Vicki, "The Appeal of Race Track
Gambling: The Track as a Social System for Play," 14.


Allison, Maria T. "The Content of Navajo Basketball: Sources of Control by Navajo and Anglo Social Systems," 16.


Beran, Jan, "Play in Nigeria: A Pictorial and Descriptive Analysis," 17.

Blanchard, Kendall, "Anthropology as a Perspective on Sport Evolution," 17-18.


Clark, Mark W. "Social Learning and Ritualized Play in Two Cultures (Japan and the United States)," 18-19.


Cordes, Kathleen A., "Sport of the Aztec and Maya Indians," 20.


Duda, Joan L. and Allison, Maria T. "Variation in Achievement Values: Race, Sex and Situational Influences," 21-22.


Eisen, George, "Games and Pastimes on the Western Frontier: 'Unlimitation' of Possibilities," 22.

Farrer, Claire, "Playing With Tradition," 22-23.

Fiscella, Joan, "Daydreams as Interpretation," 23.


Gustafson, Marilyn, "Anti-School Parodies of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "On Top of Old Smokey" as Speech Play and

Harris, Janet C., "Pride and Fever: Interpretive Analyses of Two University Sport Promotion Themes," 26-27.


Kelly-Byrne, Diana, "Play and Intimacy," 29.


Lempka, Grzegorz, "The Influences of Selected Personality Traits on Leisure Models of Elderly and Geriatric Persons," 29.


Patterson, Patrick, "Design Consideration for Adapting Existing Playgrounds For Use by Handicapped Children," 32.

Rinzler, Kate, "Child-Advocate-Change Agent: Two Rules for Researcher into Children's Culture," 32.


Salter, Michael A., "Ball Games and Ball Courts of the Pre-Columbian Maya," 33-34.

Schwartzman, Helen B., "Child Structured Play," 34.

Sedgwick, Rae and Hildebrand, Susan, "Play Behaviors of the Hospitalized Child as Indices of Wellness," 34.


Smith, Michael and Canino, James, "Competition in Senior League Baseball: An Umpire's Viewpoint," 35.


7:2 (WINTER), 1980--Continued
Sutton-Smith, Brian, "Notice" on Robert Fagen, Animal Play Behavior, 2.
Sutton-Smith, Brian, "Notice" on Robert D. Strom, Growing Through Play: Readings for Parents and Teachers, 2.

7:3 (SPRING), 1981
Farrer, Claire, "TAASP Minutes, Seventh Annual Business Meeting," 9-10.
Howard, Dorothy, "Response to TAASP Recognition Award", 6-9.
Sutton-Smith, Brian, "TAASP Recognition Award Presentation to Dorothy Howard", 2-6.

7:4 (SUMMER), 1981
Griffin, Penelope, "Notice" on The Relationship Between Status and Sociodramatic Play Among Black Kindergarten Children, Genetic Psychological Monographs, 16.
Rosenberg, Jan, "TAASP Newsletter Index, Volumes 1-6," 6-16.

8:1 (FALL), 1981
Department of Kinesiological Studies, "Announcement of Master of Science in Kinesiological Studies," Texas Christian University, Announcement, 4.
Sutton-Smith, Brian, "A Meeting by Any Other Name," Points of View, 5-7.

8:2 (WINTER), 1982
Reprint of 8:1 without the extract from the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Newsletter.

8:3 (SPRING), 1982
Abstracts: TAASP Annual Conference
Allison, Maria T., "Sport, Socialization, and Inter-Ethnic Dynamics," 15.

Apprey, Maurice, "Vicissitudes of Play in Child Analysis: A Seven Year Old Boy Tells His Unique Story," 15-16.


Biersack, Aletta, "On Pollution and Games," 16-17.


Dinnewell, Norma, "Children at Play in Canadian Art: Is This Basic Training for Survival in Canada?", 19.


Duncan, Margaret C., "Women and Leisure in Feminist Fiction," 20.


Fox, Steven, "Play as a Mechanism for Ethnic Group Identification and Boundary Maintenance," 23.


Harris, Janet C., "It's Fun--At Least Most of the Time: Making Sense of Youth Baseball With Players from Two Teams," 23-24.


Kelly-Byrne, Diana, "Play as Trivial," 25.


Lavenda, Robert, "Festival as Text: Introduction to Community Festivals," 27.


Michelson, Karin, "Two Feminine Prefixes in Oneida Stories, 28."


Park, Roberta J., "Boys Into Men--State into Nation Rites de Passage in College Football, 1890-1905," 29-30.


Renson, Roland, and Smulders, H., "Folk Games and Ethnic Identity: How Flemish are the Folk Games of Flanders?", 31.


Tait, Pearl E., "Visually Impaired Children's Competent Performance on Verbal Humor Tasks Raise Questions as to Reported Lags in Cognitive Development," 32.

Tsang, Sarah Y.W., "Playful Judgments as a Function of Superiority and Incongruity Humor," 32.


Watson, Malcom, and Stubbs, Margaret, "A Scale for Assessing Components of High Fantasy Play Level in Preschoolers," 33.

Weilbacher, Regina, "The Kindergarten: Roots of Play in Education," 33-34.


8:3 (SPRING), 1982--Continued


Sutton-Smith, Brian, "Obituary for Peter Opie," 2.

8:4 (SUMMER), 1982


9:1 (FALL), 1982

TAASP, "Note" on Roger Abrahams, "Play and Games", 5.


Cheska, Alyce Taylor, "TAASP--A Playful Narrative of an Eight Year Old", Presidential Address, 6-12.


9:2 (WINTER), 1983


Sutton-Smith, Brian, "One Hundred Years of Change in Play Research," Article, 13-17.


Upcoming Conferences

June 26-29 CAHPER (Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation) '83 Conference, Write: C/O Department of Athletics and Recreation, University of Toronto, 55 Harbord St., Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2W6 Canada.

June 29-July 2 International Conference on Play and Play Environments, Austin, Texas. For information: Joe L. Frost, Department of Curriculum, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712 U.S.A.

July 2-4 HISPA (International Association for the History of Physical Education and Sport) Annual Conference held during World University Games, July 1-11, 1983, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. For information: Gerry Redmond, Department of Physical Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2H9 Canada.

July 2-4 CESU--Commission for University Sport (in conjunction with FISU, World University Games, July 1-11, 1983). Direct inquiries to: FISU-CESU Conference, University '83, P. O. Box 1983, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 5J5 Canada.


Aug. 26-30 APA (American Psychological Association), Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, California, U.S.A.

September 29-30 ICSPE (International Council of Sport and Physical Education), "Sport and Free Time", Piešťany, Czechoslovakia.

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

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


1984 Fourth International Conference on Humor, Tel Aviv University, Israel.

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

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

Book Announcements

If you have a review of any of these books, or would like to do a review for the Newsletter, send me your contribution. Also, if you know of other recent worthy publications that haven't been receiving the 'play' they deserve, drop me a note.

If you haven't paid your dues, why not do so today? There's a convenient form for you on the next page. If you have paid your dues, Jan Beran and TAASP thank you.

1984 Olympic Scientific Congress
Eugene, Oregon July 19-26, 1984

In July, 1984, TAASP will hold a meeting in Eugene, Oregon in conjunction with the Olympic Scientific Congress. It is expected that this Congress will attract over 4,000 participants from around the world. The theme of the meeting is Sport, Health and Well-Being.

Fifteen professional associations, including TAASP, have agreed to sponsor sessions at the Congress. In addition, there will be plenary lectures and interdisciplinary sessions, keynote addresses, social gatherings, opening and closing ceremonies commensurate with the Olympic status of the meetings, tours and recreational opportunities, and a cultural festival.

TAASP will sponsor symposia and sessions of volunteered papers at the Congress, and invite some internationally recognized scholars to give keynote and plenary lectures. In addition, there will be a TAASP business meeting, and probably more than one social event.

The Congress offers TAASP an opportunity to achieve additional international recognition for the organization and to promote the anthropological study of play. The Congress is also an exceptional opportunity for individual scholars to further their own research programs and to gain access to scholars from around
the world who may be involved in similar lines of research.

All TAASP members are encouraged to submit an abstract for the program. Please do not be misled by the title of the Congress, nor by its theme. Papers on any topic within the broadly defined field of anthropology and play are appropriate. Papers need not address the Olympics, sport, health nor well-being. Of course papers on these topics are welcome, but no more so than topics traditionally addressed at regular TAASP meetings.

TAASP members may submit abstracts for the disciplinary TAASP program and/or for one of the interdisciplinary sessions. The interdisciplinary sessions are:
- Aggression and Violence in Sport
- Competitive Sport for Children and Youth
- Environmental Factors and Sport
- Human Genetics and Sport
- Sport and Aesthetics
- Sport and Aging
- Sport and Disabled Individuals
- Sport and Elite Performers
- Sport and Gender
- Sport, Health and Nutrition
- Sport and Politics
- Sport as Recreation and Leisure

The dates for the Congress are July 19-26, 1984. Individuals wishing to organize a TAASP symposium should contact Andy Miracle by September 1, 1983. Please include a title, list of speakers, and an abstract of the symposium. Abstracts for each speaker in a symposium are due October 15, 1983. Abstracts for volunteered papers also are due October 15.

The advance registration fee of $165 is due March 15. All, participants must be registered by this date. While the registration fee is higher than that for a regular TAASP meeting, it is not excessive for an international congress of this scale. In addition to registration, the fee includes a social hour, a banquet, proceedings, and admission to high quality cultural, social and professional events.

TAASP members should receive a copy of the comprehensive brochure which includes all details on the program, the format, procedures for submitting abstracts, and forms for registration. If you have not yet received a copy, you may obtain one by writing the Olympic Scientific Congress, 1479 Moss Street, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

All TAASP sessions will be held on the campus of the University of Oregon. Lodging for TAASP delegates may be obtained in the University dormitories at a rate of $35 per day. This rate includes three meals per day. This rate is appealing and will help to offset the higher than usual registration fee.

Other housing arrangements are available for those preferring not to stay in a dorm. Barry McPherson and I are recommending that TAASP, NASSS, and ICSS delegates try to obtain rooms in the same motels. This will not only promote collegiality but if sufficient numbers register at the motels we shall be able to obtain complimentary suites to use as hospitality rooms and executive meeting rooms. Therefore, we are recommending that TAASP delegates select, in order, 1) the Holiday Inn ($29-44), with Holidrome facilities), and 2) New Oregon Motel ($45-53). Both are less than one mile from campus. If you register at one of these motels, please be sure to indicate that you are a TAASP delegate so that we can qualify for complimentary rooms.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Andy Miracle. Office: Department of Sociology, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas 76129 (819) 921-7470. Home: 2120 Edwin, Fort Worth, Texas 76129 (819) 923-3546.
Conference Schedule:

July 19  Registration, Opening Ceremonies, Banquet
July 20-21, 24-25 Disciplinary (TAASP) Meetings, Interdisciplinary Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Cultural Festival
July 23 p.m. Keynote Addresses, Cultural Festival
July 26  Disciplinary Meetings, Social, Closing Ceremony

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

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

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

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

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

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

Key Dates: October 15, 1983 - Deadline for submitting abstracts
January 15, 1984 - Notification of acceptance
March 15, 1984 - Final registration without late fee
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# 3 PLAY: ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES (Michael Salter, editor), 1978

# 4 PLAY AND CULTURE (Helen Schwartzman, editor), 1980

# 5 PLAY AS CONTEXT (Alyce Cheska), 1981

# 6 PARADOXES OF PLAY (John Loy), 1982

# 7 THE WORLD OF PLAY (Frank Manning), in press (Leisure Press offers a 40% price reduction for orders of ten or more copies of the books) Price of Postage and Handling is $1.05 per book.

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NEW TAASP T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE

TAASP T-shirts with a design apropos Mardi Gras were prepared for the February meeting in Baton Rouge. The shirts are blue and come in an assorted assortment of sizes for adults and children. The adult sizes are: small (34-36), medium (38-40), large (42-44), and extra large (46-48). The youth sizes are: small (6-8), medium (10-12), and large (14-16). The shirts cost U.S. $7.50 each. This includes postage for North American destinations. For overseas destinations, please add an additional U.S. $1.00 for surface delivery or an additional U.S. $4.00 for air mail. Send a cheque or money order to: Andy Miracle, Dept. of Sociology, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas 76129, USA. Please remit in U.S. dollars or the equivalent Canadian dollars.