



# 幼兒遊戲理論及其應用

## 學術研討會

2007.06.04-05

\*臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系\*



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# 幼兒遊戲理論及其應用學術研討會

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時 間：2007 年 6 月 4 日（一）、6 月 5 日（二）

地 點：臺北市立教育大學 公誠樓二樓 第一會議室（臺北市中正區愛國西路一號）

主辦單位：臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系

報名方式：即日起至 2007 年 5 月 31 日 上臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系網頁報名

<http://www.tmue.edu.tw/~kid>

參加人數：預計 100 人

注意事項：1.請自備午餐 2.請攜帶環保杯

## 講者簡介

### **Dr. James Ewald Johnson**

- 現職 ▪ 美國賓夕法尼亞州立大學(Pennsylvania State University)課程與教學系(Department of Curriculum and Instruction)教授(Professor)
- 學歷 ▪ 美國韋恩州立大學哲學博士 (Ph.D., Wayne State University)
- 經歷 ▪ 美國賓夕法尼亞州立大學(Pennsylvania State University)課程與教學系幼教課程副教授兼系主任  
美國威斯康辛大學麥迪遜分校(University of Wisconsin, Madison)兒童與家庭研究系助理教授  
美國密西根州聖克利蒙學校教師 (St. Clements School, Romeo, MI)  
獲選傅爾布來特(Fulbright)資深研究學者（國立新竹師範學院）  
擔任遊戲研究協會(The Association for the Study of Play)執行委員、賓州中心郡兒童發展委員  
Development Council)主席  
擔任重要學術期刊如 American Educational Research Journal, Child Development, Developmental Psychology, Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, Early Childhood Research Quarterly, Play and Culture 等之審查與編輯

### **Dr. Karen McChesney Johnson**

- 現職 ▪ 美國賓州中央郡西北人類服務中心(Northwestern Human Services of Pennsylvania for Centre County)和朱尼塔河中心(Juniata River Center)的心理諮詢師及遊戲治療師  
美國賓夕法尼亞州立大學(Pennsylvania State University)課程與教學系(Department of Curriculum and Instruction)兼任助理教授(Adjunct Assistant Professor)
- 學歷 ▪ 美國賓州州立大學哲學博士 (Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University)
- 經歷 ▪ Mental Health Consultant/ Play Therapist, Northwestern Human Services of Pennsylvania for Centre County, 2005-present.  
Mental Health Consultant/Play Therapist, Juniata River Center, 2001-present.  
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, The Pennsylvania State University, 1996-present.

### **陳正乾博士**

- 現職 ▪ 臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系副教授
- 學歷 ▪ 美國伊利諾大學香檳校區幼教博士
- 經歷 ▪ 臺北市立師範學院幼兒教育學系主任  
譯有「兒童心智」、「社會中的心智-高層次心理過程的發展」、「教學：一位老師的心路歷程」、「西方社會對兒童期的觀點：從洛克到史巴克醫生」等書

## 議程

2007年6月4日(星期一)		
時間	分鐘	主題
08:20 ~ 08:50	30	報到
08:50 ~ 09:00	10	開幕致詞 臺北市立教育大學 校長 劉源俊 臺北市立教育大學 教育學院院長 楊龍立 臺北市立教育大學 幼教系主任 幸曼玲
09:00 ~ 10:20	80	專題講演(一) 主 題：Play, Curriculum Models and Teaching in ECE 主講人：Dr. James E. Johnson (美國賓州大學課程與教學系) 主持人&翻譯人：鍾雅惠 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系)
10:20~10:40	20	茶敘時間
10:40~12:00	80	專題講演(二) 主 題：Promoting Children's Mental Health Using Play and Journaling 主講人：Dr. Karen M. Johnson (美國賓州大學課程與教學系) 主持人&翻譯人：陳銀瑩 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系)
12:00 ~ 13:30	90	午休時間
13:30 ~ 14:50	80	專題講演(三) 主 題：Finding gold in the play yard 主講人：Dr. James E. Johnson (美國賓州大學課程與教學系) 主持人&翻譯人：金瑞芝 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系)
14:50~15:10	20	茶敘時間
15:10~16:30	80	專題講演(四) 主 題：Play as constructed concept – It's role in ECE 主講人：陳正乾 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系) 主持人：幸曼玲 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系)
2007年6月5日(星期二)		
時間	分鐘	主題
08:20 ~ 08:50	30	報到
08:50 ~ 10:10	80	專題講演(五) 主 題：Play and Diverse Culture 主講人：Dr. James E. Johnson (美國賓州大學課程與教學系) 主持人&翻譯人：盧雯月 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系)
10:10 ~ 10:30	20	茶敘時間
10:30 ~ 11:50	80	專題講演(六) 主 題：Bibliotherapy with Young Children 主講人：Dr. Karen M. Johnson (美國賓州大學課程與教學系) 主持人&翻譯人：盧雯月 (臺北市立教育大學幼兒教育學系)
11:50 ~ 12:10	20	綜合討論

# VITA

James Ewald Johnson

## FORMAL EDUCATION

<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Major or Specialty</u>	<u>Degree/Year</u>
Wayne State University	9/65—9/68	Psychology	Ph.B. 1968
Wayne State University	9/68—9/69	Experimental Psychology	M.A. 1969
<u>Thesis</u>	<i>A Comparison of Developmental Trends in Articulation, Invariance, and Impulsivity as a Function of Sex and Social Class.</i>		
Wayne State University	9/70—9/74	Life-Span Developmental Psychology	Ph.D. 1974
<u>Dissertation</u>	<i>Studies on the Imaginative Behavior of Preschool Children: Construct Validation and Exploration of Maternal Behavior Correlates.</i>		

## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

<u>Title</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
Professor-In-Charge of ECE	Curriculum and Instruction	2003-present
Professor of Education, Curriculum & Instruction	The Pennsylvania State University	1993—present
Professor-In-Charge of Early Childhood Education and Associate Professor, Curriculum & Instruction	The Pennsylvania State University	1986—1993
Assistant Professor of Education, Curriculum & Instruction	The Pennsylvania State University	1983—1986
Assistant Professor of Child and Family Studies	University of Wisconsin, Madison	1976—1983
Coadjutant Assistant Professor	Rutgers University	1/76—8/76
Post-doctoral Fellow	Educational Testing Service	9/74—9/76
School Teacher (Grade 7)	St. Clements School Romeo, MI	9/69—6/70

## HONORS, AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, LEADERSHIP

Board of Governors' Scholarship Award, Wayne State University	1967—68
Summer Institute for the Advance Study in Gerontology University of Southern California, Student Fellowship	1971
University Graduate Fellowship Award, Wayne State University	1973—74
The Society of Sigma Xi (associate/full)	1974/1999
Boyd R. McCandless Young Scientist Award Nominee	1980
Distinguished Visiting Professor, New Mexico State University	1991
Volunteer of the Year, Centre County Council for Human Services	1992
Visiting Professor, Jönköping and Malardalen Universities, Sweden	1996,1999
Fulbright Senior Research Scholar, Hsin-Chu, Taiwan	2000
International Council for Children's Play Board	2001-present
President of The Association for the Study of Play	2003-04
Series Editor, <i>Play&amp;Cultural Studies</i>	2004-present
National Board of Directors, Playing for Keeps	2004-present

## Books

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (in preparation),. *Approaches to early childhood education* (5th ed.). Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall.

Johnson, J., Christie, J., & Wardle, F.(2005). *Play, development, and early education*  
Boston, MA: Longman

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J.(2005), ). *Approaches to early childhood education* (4th ed.).  
Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall. Trans & published in Chinese(2006).

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (2000). *Approaches to early childhood education* (3rd ed.).  
Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall. Trans & published in Chinese(2002).

Johnson, J. E., Christie, J. & Yawkey, T. D. (1999). *Play and early childhood development* (2nd  
edition). New York: Addison, Wesley, & Longman. Trans& published in Korean(2001).

Roopnarine, J. L., Johnson, J. E., & Hooper, F. H. (Eds.). (1994). *Children's play in diverse  
cultures*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (Eds.)(1993). *Approaches to early childhood education* (2nd ed.).  
Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Yawkey, T. D. & Johnson, J. E. (Eds.). (1988). *Integrative processes and socialization: Early to  
middle childhood*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.



Johnson, J. E., Christie, J. & Yawkey, T. D. (1987). *Play and early childhood development*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company. (Also translated into Chinese and published in Taiwan).

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. E. (Eds.). (1987). *Approaches to early childhood education*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.

### **Journal Articles and Reviews**

Johnson, J. (in press) Curricular models and the needs, challenges, and aspirations of early education. Pamukkale University, Denizli, Turkey

Johnson, J. (Guest Editor). *Play, policy, & practice CONNECTIONS: Newsletter of the Play, policy, & practice Interest Forum of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Volume IX, Issue 1, Spring 2005. Theme: Play and the family. 12pp.*

DeCusati, C. & Johnson, J. (2004). Parents as classroom volunteers and kindergarteners' emergent reading skills. *The Journal of Educational Research, 97(5), 235-246.*

Johnson, J. (2002). Finding gold in the play yard. Review of Jane Perry's *Outdoor Play: Teaching strategies with young children. Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 33(3).*

Ivrendi, A. & Johnson, J. (2002). Kindergarten teachers' certification status and participation in staff development activities in relation to their knowledge and perceived use of developmentally appropriate practices (DAP). *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, 23, 115-124.*

Johnson, J., Fiene, R., Keat, J., Darling, H., Pratt, D. & Iutovich, J. (2002). Mastering course content and learner satisfaction: A comparison of regular classroom instruction with three variations of internet delivery. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, 22, 4, 267-274.*

Iutovich, J., Fiene, R., Johnson, J., Kopple, R. & Langan, F. (2001). Professional development and quality of child care: An assessment of Pennsylvania's child care training system. *Advances in Early Education and Care, 11, 115-158.*

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (2001). Play and diverse cultures : Implications for early childhood education. *Advances in Early Education and Day Care, 11, 295-318.*

Johnson, J. & Christie, J. (2000). *Draft of the platform of the play, policy, and practice caucus. Play, policy, and practice connections: Newsletter of the play, policy, and practice caucus of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Vol. IV, Issue 2, 9-11.*

Liang, P. & Johnson, J. (1999). Using technology to enhance early literacy through play. *Computers in the Schools, 15(1), 55-64.*

- Silva, D. & Johnson, J. (1999). Principals' preferences for the N-3 certificate. *Pennsylvania Educational Leadership*, 18(2), 71-81.
- Mariano, J., Welteroth, S., & Johnson, J. (1999). Teachers' understanding of the effects of Japanese culture on social play with young children. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 26, 189-194.
- Johnson, J. E. (1996). Playground revisited: Growing is not necessarily for noses only. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 11, 82-88.
- Johnson, J. E., & Johnson, K. M. (1994). The applicability of developmentally appropriate practice for children with diverse abilities. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 18 (4), 343-346.
- Johnson, J. E. (1994). The challenge of incorporating research on play into the practice of preschool teaching. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 15, 603-618.
- Johnson, K. M., & Johnson, J. E. (1993). Rejoinder to Carta, Atwater, Schwartz, & Miller. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 13 (3), 255-257
- Johnson, J. E., & McChesney-Johnson, K. (1992). Clarifying the developmental perspective in response to Carta, Schwartz, Atwater, and McConnell. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 12 (4), 439-457.
- Kontos, S. & Johnson, J. E. (1990). Beliefs and attitudes of child development and education majors in early childhood education. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 36, 3-6.
- Johnson, J. E. (1987). Do you think you might be wrong? Confirmation bias in problem solving. *Arithmetic Teacher*, 34, 13-16.
- Johnson, J. E. Precursors to Euclidean concepts. (1986). *Mathematics Teaching and Learning 1986 Yearbook of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of Mathematics*, 13-17.
- Johnson, J. E. & Ershler, J. (1985). Social and cognitive play forms and toy use by nonhandicapped and handicapped preschoolers. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education: Developmental Toys*, 5, 69-82.
- Dail, P. W. & Johnson, J. E. (1985). Measuring change in undergraduate students' perceptions about aging using the Palmore facts on aging quiz. *Gerontology and Geriatrics Education*, 5, 228-238.
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- Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. E. (1983). Kindergartner's interaction with preschoolers and school-aged children. *The Elementary School Journal, 83*, 578-586.
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- Johnson, J. E., Ershler, J., & Bell, C. (1980). Play behavior in a discovery-based and a formal education preschool program. *Child Development, 51*, 271-274.
- Johnson, J. E. & Newman, V. (1980). Imaginative play themes and the teachers' role. *Offspring, 21*, 25-31.
- Johnson, J. E. (1980). Parents preferred communication style and locus of control of preschool children. *Home Economics Research Journal, 8*, 269-273.
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### **Book Chapters**

- Johnson, J. & Chestnut, J. (in preparation). PK-3 initiative: A new systemic approach to early education. To be in J. Roopnarine & J. Johnson (Eds.). *Approaches to early childhood education*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.. Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Williams, C. & Johnson, J. (in preparation). Waldorf approach to early childhood education. To be in J. Roopnarine & J. Johnson (Eds.). *Approaches to early childhood education*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.. Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Johnson, J. (2006). Curriculum models, play and preparing teachers to foster school readiness. In J. van Kuyk (Ed.), *The quality of early childhood education*. pp.185-196. CITO Corporation, Arnhem, the Netherlands
- Johnson, J. (2006). The distancing theory. Curriculum models, play and preparing teachers to foster school readiness. . In J. van Kuyk (Ed.), *The quality of early childhood education*. pp. 131-136. CITO Corporation, Arnhem, the Netherlands
- Johnson, J. & Chang, P-Y (in press) Teachers' and parents' attitudes about play and learning. In D. Sluss & O. Jarret (Eds.) *Play & Cultural Studies, Investigating Play in the 21st Century* Landam, MD: University Press of America.
- Johnson, J. (in press). Commentary: Play, literacy and theories of Instruction. In K. Roskos and J. Christie (Eds.), *Play and literacy research from multiple perspective (Second edition)*. Pp. 133-146 Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Johnson, J. (2006). Play development from ages four to eight. In D. Fromberg and D. Bergen (Eds.), *Play from birth to twelve and beyond: Contexts, perspectives, and meanings (Second edition)*, New York: Garland.
- Johnson, J. (2006). Play and the development of the young child in USA today. In M. Takeuchi, S. Mori, & R. Scott (Eds.), *New directions in early childhood education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: The international perspectives*. Iowa City, Iowa: G&R Publishing.

- Williams, C. & Johnson, J. (2005). Waldorf approach to early childhood education. In J. Roopnarine & J. Johnson (Eds.), *Approaches to early childhood education, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, pp. 336-362. Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (2005). Preface. In J. Roopnarine & J. Johnson (Eds.), *Approaches to early childhood education, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.* pp. ix-xi. Columbus, OH: Merrill
- Lin, M. Johnson, J., & Johnson, K. (2004). Dramatic play in Montessori kindergartens in Taiwan and Mainland China. In R. Clements and L. Fiorentino (Eds.), *The child's right to play: A global approach*. Pp.99-109 Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishers.
- Johnson, J. E. (2002). Children's play as education and development. In M. Kielar-Turska (Ed.) *Children's receptive play*. Krakow: State Scientific Publishers, PWN.
- Chang, P., Johnson, J., & Lin, M. (2002). *Studies on play and toys in Taiwan: Images of toys created by kindergarten contexts and teacher and parent beliefs about play* International Council for Children's Play, Erfurt Proceedings.
- Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (2001). Play and diverse cultures: Implications for early childhood education. *Advances in Early Education and Day Care* Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Johnson, J., Welteroth, S., & Corl, S. (2001) Attitudes of parents and teachers about play aggression in young children. *Play & Cultural Studies, Volume 3*, 203-223, Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Iutovich, J., Fiene, R., Johnson, J., Koppel, R., & Langan, F. (2001). Professional development and quality of child care. *Advances in Early Education and Day Care* Stamford, CT: Ablex.
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- Johnson, J. E. (2000). Commentary on ecological variables. In K. Roskos & J. Christie (Eds.), *Literacy and play in the early years: Cognitive ecological, and sociocultural perspectives*, 139-150, Mahway, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Liang, P. & Johnson, J. (1999). Using technology to enhance early literacy through play. In J. Blanch (Ed.), *Educational computing in the schools: Technology, communication, and literacy*, 55-64, Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
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- Johnson, J. E. (1993). Evaluation in early childhood education. In J. L. Roopnarine & J. E. Johnson (Eds.), *Approaches to early childhood education* (pp. 317-335). Columbus, OH: Charles Merrill Publishing Co..
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- Johnson, J. E. (1988). Research and related issues: Cognitive development of the young child. In R. B. Woolner (Ed.), *The Lipman Papers: Research issues on appropriate programs for four year olds* (pp. 25-32). Memphis, TN.
- Johnson, J. E. (1987). Evaluation in early childhood education. In J. L. Roopnarine & J. E. Johnson (Eds.), *Approaches to early childhood education* (pp. 19-36). Columbus, OH: Charles Merrill Publishing Co.
- Johnson, J. E. (1988). Psychological theory and early education. In A. D. Pellegrini (Ed.), *Psychological bases of early education* (pp. 1-21). Chichester, England: John Wiley and Sons.

- Johnson, J. E. & Yawkey, T. D. (1988). Play and integration. In T. D. Yawkey and J. E. Johnson (Eds.), *Integrative processes and socialization: Early to middle childhood* (pp. 97-117). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.
- Johnson, J. E. (1986). Attitudes toward play and beliefs about development. In B. Mergen (Ed.), *Cultural dimensions of play, games, and sports* (pp. 89-101). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishers, Inc.
- Johnson, J. E. & Martin, C. (1984). Parents' beliefs and home learning environments: Effects on cognitive development. In I. Sigel (Ed.), *Parental belief system: The psychological consequences for children* (pp. 25-50). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Johnson, J. E. & Roopnarine, J. (1983). The preschool classroom and sex differences in children's play. In M. Liss (Ed.), *Socialization through play: Sex differences and the acquisition of social and cognitive skills* (pp. 193-218). New York: Academic Press.
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其他個人資料參見 <http://www.ed.psu.edu/ci/pdfs/johnson.pdf>





# VITA

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State College, PA 16801  
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## Education

Ph.D. The Pennsylvania State University, Curriculum and Instruction, Early Childhood Education, December 1994.

M.Ed. University of Pittsburgh, School of Health Related Professions, Child Development, 1986.

B.A. Carlow College, Pittsburgh, PA, Psychology; Minor: Speech Pathology, 1980.

## Dissertation

*Teacher Directiveness in the Free Play of Young Children with Diverse Abilities.* (Thesis Advisor: Judith Fueyo).

## Current Professional Experience

Mental Health Consultant/ Play Therapist, Northwestern Human Services of Pennsylvania for Centre County, 2005-present.

Mental Health Consultant/Play Therapist, Juniata River Center, 2001-present.

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, The Pennsylvania State University, 1996-present.

## Selections of National and International Presentations

*Play as a Medium for Helping Children with Social and Behavioral Problems in the Early Years.* Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, April 2005.

*The Use of Play and Literature in Therapy with Young Children with Behavioral Problems.* 23<sup>rd</sup> ICCP World Play Conference, "Play and Education," Krakow, Poland, September 2004.

*Teachers' Views about Play, Imagination, Creativity, and the Use of Multiple Symbol Systems for Learning in Taiwanese Kindergartens.* Toys, Games and Media Congress, London, UK, August 2002. (with J. Johnson and P. Chang)

*Multiple Images of Curriculum and Training Needs in Taiwanese ECE; Views of Parents, Teachers, Teacher Educators, and Program Administrators.* Symposium, European Early Childhood Education Research Association, London, UK, August 2000. (with J. Johnson)

*Curriculum Considerations in ECE in the United States.* Invited lecture at the National Hsinchu Teachers College, Hsinchu, Taiwan, April 2000.

*Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs in the United States.* Invited lecture at Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China, April 2000.

*Issues in leadership development in the Early Childhood Profession in the United States*  
Invited lecture at Kaohsiung University, Taichung, Taiwan, April 2000

*Educational Play in the Kindergarten Curriculum.* Invited Workshop, Taichung, Taiwan, March 2000. (with J. Johnson)

*Select Topics of Interest to ECE Professionals: Staff Development, Inclusion, and postmodernism.* Invited lecture at National Hsinchu Teachers College, Hsinchu, Taiwan, March 2000.

*Teacher Perspectives of Play in Inclusive Settings.* Second International Conference on Play, Krakow, Poland, October 1998.

*Play in Inclusive Settings and Developmentally Appropriate Practices.* ICCP World Play Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, October 1997.

*Comprehensive Early Childhood Education : A teacher preparation program at Penn State.* Paper presented for the symposium Developmental approaches to special education of young children at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, March 1989.

#### **Selections of State and Local Presentations**

*Play as a Therapeutic Tool in the Mental Health Setting.* Workshop presented at Juniata River Center, May 2003.

*Working with Parents in the Mental Health Setting.* Workshop presented at Juniata River Center, May 2002.

*Teacher strategies with young children with special needs.* Pennsylvania Educational Research Association annual meetings, Harrisburg. April 1997.

*Eenie, meenie, minie, moe: Promoting decision-making in young children.* Workshop presented at the 1995 Early Childhood Education Conference at Edinboro, PA, May 1995

*The role of play in early special education.* Workshop presented at the Pennsylvania Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children, Harrisburg, PA, October 1988.

*Beliefs, belief sources, and belief rationales of special elementary, and early education majors.* Workshop presented at the Pennsylvania Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children, Harrisburg, PA, October 1987.

## **Publications**

McChesney Johnson, K. (1998). A look at play in inclusive settings through the lens of developmentally appropriate practices. *Proceedings of the Play and Society 20<sup>th</sup> World Play Conference*, Lisbon, Portugal, October 1997.

Johnson, J.E., & McChesney Johnson, K. (1994). The applicability of developmentally appropriate practice for children with diverse abilities. An invited response to Wolery and Bredekamp. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 18(4), 343-346.

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Johnson, J.E., & McChesney Johnson. (1992). Clarifying the developmental perspective in response to Carta, Schwartz, Atwater, and McConnell. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 12(4), 439-457.

## **Pennsylvania State University Teaching Experience**

ECE 452 "Approaches to Early Childhood Education"

ECE 454 "Administration of Child Service Programs"

ECE 453 "Parent Involvement in Early Schooling"

ECE 497 "Teaching to Individual Differences"

Field Supervisor for Final Student Training

ECE 497 "Teaching to Diversity in Early Childhood Education"

ECE 479 "Play and Early Childhood Education"

ECE 597 "Social Policy Issues and Early Childhood Special Education"

ECE 597 "Inclusive Education and Early Literacy for Young Children"

ECE 497 "Integrative Seminar in Early Childhood Special Education"

Supervisor for Final Student Teaching at the Undergraduate Level for combined certification in Special Education and Early Childhood Education.

"The Teacher-as-Decision-Maker" seminar and "Integrative Seminar in Early Childhood Special Education."

Supervisor for Early Childhood Special Education Undergraduate Teaching Practicum.

## **University of Pittsburgh Teaching Experience**

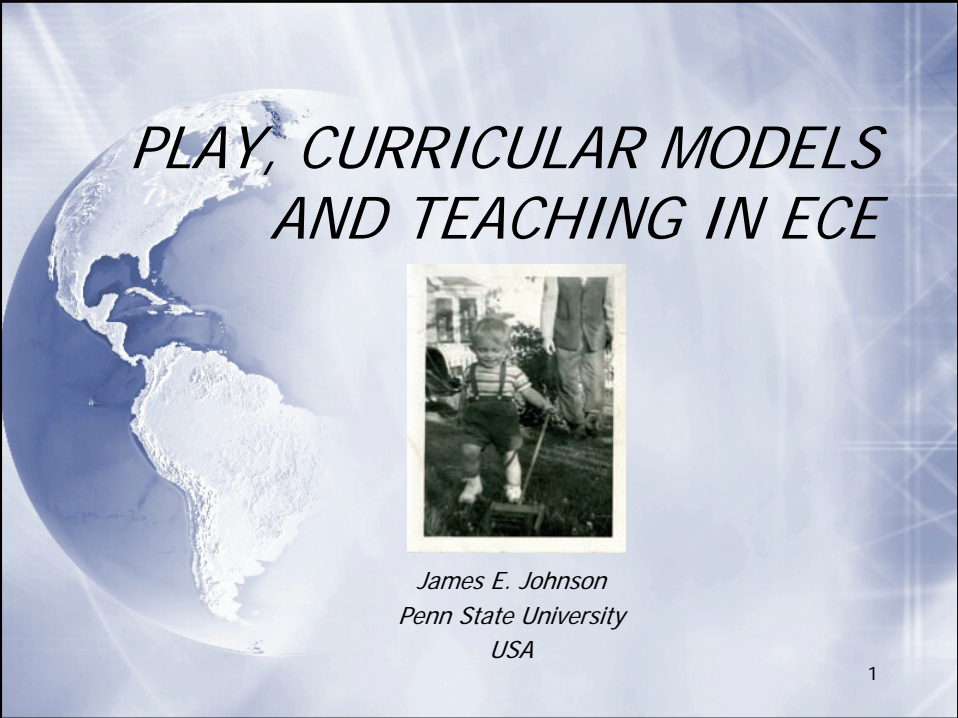
"Child's Play: A Developmental Perspective of Young Children's Play." Co-Teacher, 1986.

## **Professional Affiliations**

International Council for Children's Play

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development





# *PLAY, CURRICULAR MODELS AND TEACHING IN ECE*



*James E. Johnson  
Penn State University  
USA*

1

## **Play is only one means of learning and socialization**

- ◆ Exploration
- ◆ Imitation
- ◆ Activity
- ◆ Appropriation
- ◆ Play

2

## Some play is more preferred than other types of play

- ◆ Transformative versus imitative (D. Levin)
- ◆ Mature versus immature play

3

## Mature versus immature play

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ◆ Mature Play                      | ◆ Immature Play               |
| ◆ Positive peer social interaction | ◆ Presence of peer conflicts  |
| ◆ Explicit roles                   | ◆ Repetitive                  |
| ◆ Implicit rules                   | ◆ Dependent on concrete props |
| ◆ Not dependent on realistic props | ◆ Lack of explicit roles      |
| ◆ Elaborate multi-layered scripts  | ◆ Implicit rule violation     |
| ◆ Persistence over time            | ◆ Unelaborated content        |
|                                    | ◆ Short duration              |

4

## Types of Educational Play: Reception and Physical



5

## Constructive Play



6

## Dramatic Play



7

## Outdoor Educational Play in Norway



8



## Educational play is only one type of play that is important



- ◆ Restorative Play
- ◆ Recreational Play
- ◆ Therapeutic Play
- ◆ Expressive Play
- ◆ Entertainment Play

9

## Four Approaches to Curriculum and Play

Jeff Trawick-Smith(2001)

- ◆ Hands-off play orientation:
  - ◆ Children benefit most from self-guided play.
  - ◆ Adult intervention interferes with self expression.
- ◆ Nonplay approach:
  - ◆ Play is distinct from and less important than learning or work.
  - ◆ Play can serve as a reward for working hard at school.
- ◆ Narrowly focused play intervention:
  - ◆ Certain types of play are most useful, such as socio-dramatic play, block play, games.
  - ◆ Adults intervene to foster specific play skills in these areas.
- ◆ Broad-based developmental approach:
  - ◆ All types of play can be useful.
  - ◆ Teachers seek to promote all areas of development.

10

## Two connections: Curriculum and play

(Van Hoorn, Nourot, Scales, & Alward, 1993)

### ◆ Curriculum-Generated Play:

- ◆ Teachers provide play experiences that enable children to learn concepts and skills from curriculum areas such as literacy, mathematics, and science.
- ◆ Play before instruction allows teacher to assess target skills and provide instruction to children who did not master the skill through play.
- ◆ Play following instruction gives children enjoyable, meaningful opportunities to practice and consolidate skills taught.

### ◆ Play-Generated Curriculum:

- ◆ Teachers organize learning experiences around themes and interests that children demonstrate in their play.
- ◆ Teachers frame space, time and materials to invite children's active participation in learn-full play.
- ◆ Quality of play as curriculum depends on Deweyan concepts of "continuum of a child's experiences" and balanced "interaction" between internal subjective factors and external reality constraints.

11

## Building Quality ECE Programs with Play Blocks



12

## Research in Support of Play in ECE Curriculum

- ◆ Language and Literacy
- ◆ Imagination
- ◆ Mental States
- ◆ Creativity
- ◆ Social competence
- ◆ Learning Dispositions
- ◆ Self regulation:  
Physical, emotional, social  
and cognitive
- ◆ Coping and Resiliency

13

## Play Practices and ECE Goals

- ◆ Concepts
- ◆ Skills
- ◆ Affect
- ◆ Dispositions

14

## School Readiness and Value of Play

### ◆ Social-emotional readiness:

- ◆ Self regulation
- ◆ Emotional regulation
- ◆ Social skills: Sharing, turn-taking, helping, cooperating

### ◆ Cognitive-academic readiness:

- ◆ Language development
- ◆ Emergent literacy
- ◆ General knowledge
- ◆ Number and space concepts

15

## Curriculum Models and Play

- ◆ High/Scope
- ◆ Creative Curriculum
- ◆ Bank Street
- ◆ Tools of Mind
- ◆ Pyramid
- ◆ Montessori
- ◆ Reggio Emilia
- ◆ Waldorf

16

## Waldorf Schools

◆ Weiner, Germany



◆ Vienna, Austria



17

## Examples from Waldorf ECE

◆ Cozy spaces for pretend play



18

## Playing Indoors and Outside Play Spaces



19

## Waldorf Teacher and Picture



- ◆ Construction of play materials
- ◆ Modeling
- ◆ Imitation
- ◆ Stewardship
- ◆ Lack of scaffolding during complex play

20

## Waldorf Materials



21

## Waldorf(Steiner) and Play

- ◆ Open space
- ◆ No Ready-Made Toys
- ◆ Screens
- ◆ No Pre-formed Play Environments
- ◆ Blocks, Tables
- ◆ Lengths of Cloth

22

## **Vivian Paley and Narrative Curriculum: Story Telling and Story Drama Process**

- ◆ Storytelling Table
  - ◆ “would you like to tell me a story”
  - ◆ “I will write down what you say”
- ◆ Process
  - ◆ Starting, Topics, Echoing, Finishing
- ◆ Choosing the cast
- ◆ Drama (at group time)
  - ◆ Reread story
  - ◆ Enactment and Dialogue
  - ◆ Finishing and Audience Claps

23

## **Blended Programs: Doors to Discovery Jim Christie--Arizona State University**

- ◆ Large Group Instruction
  - ◆ Song & Poem Charts
  - ◆ Big Books (story, concept, informational)
- ◆ Small Group Instruction
  - ◆ Interactive Books (wordless big books)
  - ◆ Big scrapbook (blank big book)
- ◆ Discovery Centers
  - ◆ Literacy-enriched play centers
  - ◆ Other theme-related center activities

24



## Functions of Play in Doors to Discovery

- ◆ Oral vocabulary: use of theme related words
- ◆ Print recognition: ex-- read signs in play area
- ◆ Concepts about print: practical functions of reading and writing
- ◆ Emergent reading and writing
- ◆ Positive affect and attitudes about literacy
- ◆ Create "zone of proximal development" in which adults and more capable peers help children engage in literacy activities that they cannot do on their own.

25

## Literacy-Enriched Dramatic Play

◆ Camping



◆ Construction site



26

## Literacy-Enhanced Dramatic Play

### ◆ Taking orders



### ◆ The staff



27

## Literacy Enhanced Play

### ◆ Constructive play



### ◆ Dramatic Play



28

## Other Play Activities

- ◆ Big Scrap Book
- ◆ Miniature Toy Play
- ◆ Games
- ◆ Constructive Play

29

## Examples of Themes and Props

- ◆ Boat
  - ◆ Life vests, crew name tags, compass, signs
  - ◆ Large cardboard box for boat
- ◆ Restaurant
  - ◆ Menus, play money, discount coupons
  - ◆ Bags for take-home
- ◆ Post Office
  - ◆ Pretend stamps(stickers)
  - ◆ Stationary, envelopes
- ◆ School
  - ◆ Easel, pointer, name tags
  - ◆ Chalkboard & Chalk
- ◆ Health Clinic
  - ◆ Clipboard, patient folders
  - ◆ Wall signs, insurance cards, health charts
- ◆ Camping
  - ◆ Compass, maps
  - ◆ Signs, food containers
  - ◆ Tent, cardboard stove

30

## **REDI Head Start Model :Research-Based,Developmentally Informed Karen Bierman, Penn State University**

- ◆ Educational and Preventive Interventions
- ◆ Universal and Indicated Programs Targeting Protective Domains
- ◆ Integrated Model of ECE Programs
- ◆ Enrich, not replace, curriculum for language and literacy and social emotional and self-regulatory skills.
- ◆ Build on existing infrastructure; teacher ownership
- ◆ Links to parent-focused programs

31

## **Program Design**

- ◆ Packaged and Scaled Up
- ◆ Impact can favor some groups, some settings more than others
- ◆ Play as context
- ◆ Play as medium

32

## Research and Evaluation

- ◆ What works?
- ◆ Short-term impact
- ◆ What works best with whom, in which contexts, using which specific methods?
- ◆ Long-term impact
- ◆ Assessment development
- ◆ Teacher action research

33

## Teacher Preparation

- ◆ Educational Philosophy: Weikart (1972)

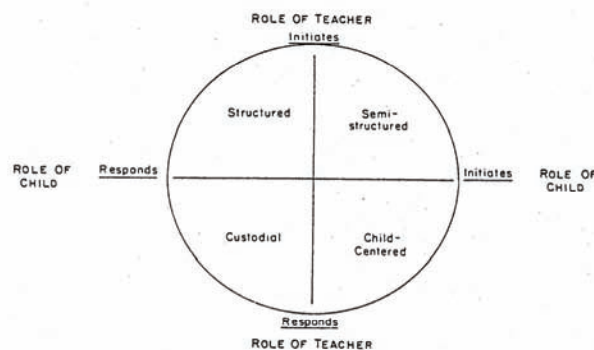


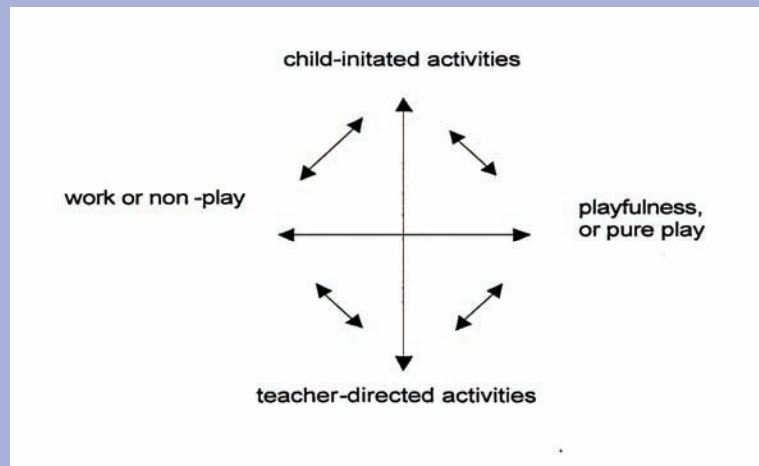
FIGURE 4.1 Types of preschool program

82

34

## Teacher Preparation (Cont.)

### ◆ Integrated Pedagogical Model (Wood, 2006)



35

## School Readiness, Life Readiness, and Being Ready for Children

- ◆ Diminution of Play
- ◆ Child's Right to Play
- ◆ Play as Leading Activity
  - ◆ Underlying universal competence
  - ◆ Not specific skills

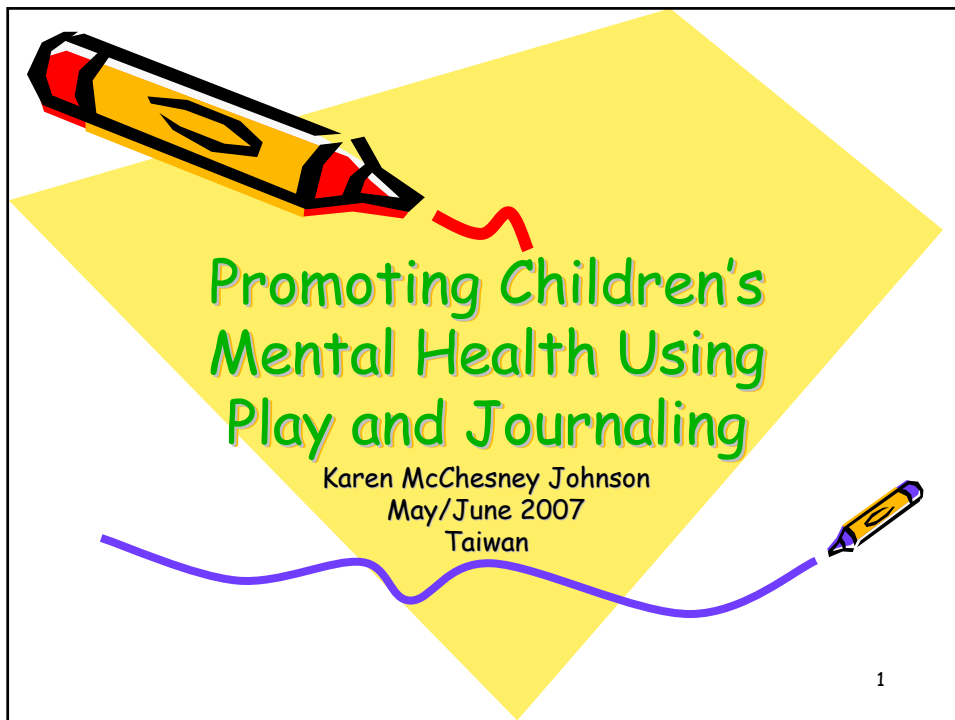
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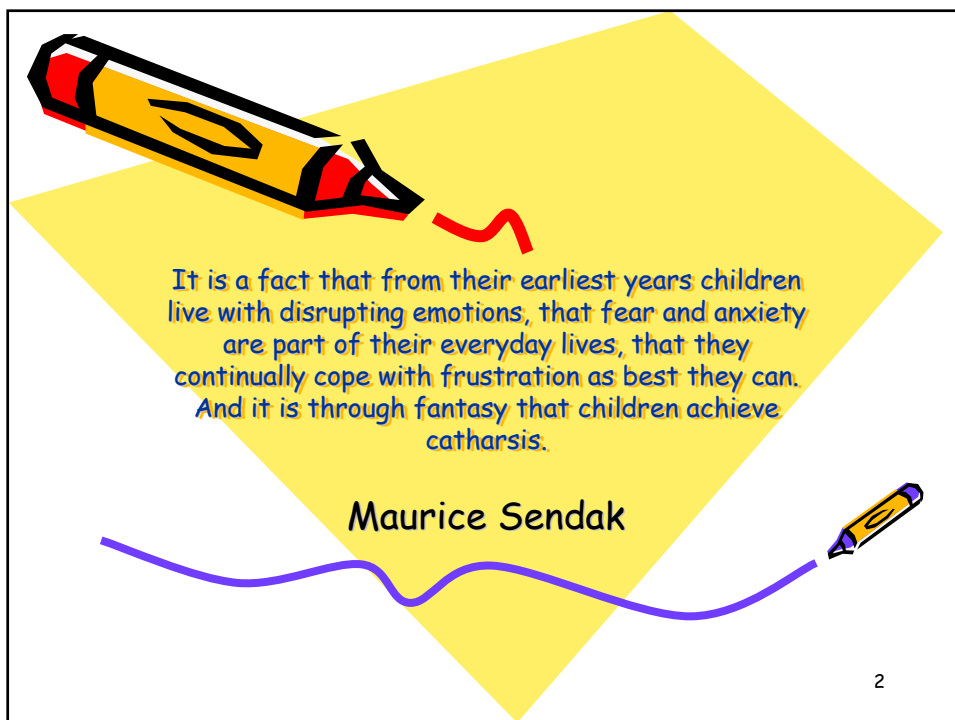




Promoting Children's  
Mental Health Using  
Play and Journaling

Karen McChesney Johnson  
May/June 2007  
Taiwan

1



It is a fact that from their earliest years children live with disrupting emotions, that fear and anxiety are part of their everyday lives, that they continually cope with frustration as best they can. And it is through fantasy that children achieve catharsis.

Maurice Sendak

2

## Research

- LeBlanc & Ritchie, 1999 (meta-analysis of 42 experimental studies from 1947-1997, average age 7.9 years)
- Ray, Bratton, Rhine, & Jones, 2001 (meta-analysis of 94 experimental studies from 1940-2000, average age 7.1)
- Reddy, Files-Hall, & Schaefer, 2005 (clinical reference to evidenced-based play interventions)



3

## Foundations

- Social Constructivist
- Systems Approach
- Nel Noddings: Ethic of Caring & Partner as Mirror
- Emergent Personhood
- Cindy Dell Clark: Imaginal Coping



4

## Common Adult Reactions to Children's Play: Positive

- Encourage
- Facilitate
- Co-Player



5

## Common Adult Reactions to Children's Play: Negative

- Ignore
- Interfere
- Discourage



6

## Benefits to be Derived from the Play of Young Children

- Communication (children can naturally express conscious and unconscious thoughts/feelings better through play than words alone)
- Teaching ( children attend and learn better with play as a medium)
- Abreaction (children can relive past stressful events and release the associated negative emotions in a safe environment)
- Rapport-building (children are more likely to trust a playful, fun-loving adult)



7

## Why should we care?

- Play is important to children.
- Play is a natural part of childhood.
- Play promotes development in many domains.



8

Play is important to children.



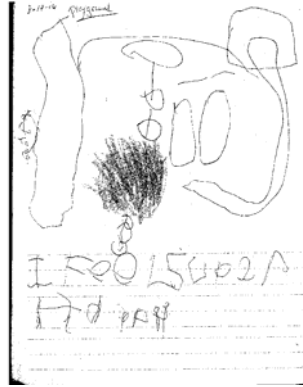
9

Play is a natural part of childhood.



10

Play promotes development  
in many domains.



11

## Principles of Play Therapy

- Prepare environment
- Unconditional regard for child
- Follow child's lead
- Prepare to take on a variety of roles
- Comment/Narrate action to gain clarification of child's thoughts/feelings
- Journaling



12

## Setting

- Office
- Home
- Playground



13

## Play Materials

- manipulatives (e.g., clay, crayons, painting supplies)
- water and sand play containers
- toy kitchen appliances, utensils, and pans
- baby items (e.g., bottles, bibs, rattles, etc.)
- dolls and figures of various sizes and ages
- toy guns, rubber knives
- toy cars, boats, soldiers, and animals
- blocks, erector sets
- stuffed animals
- puppets



14

## Play Therapy Session

- Allow child to choose materials from those that have been set out
- Allow child to choose theme of play
- Follow child's lead
- (Add new objects/themes in later sessions) to help child come up with alternate views
- Narrate/comment
- Have child make an entry in journal to summarize key points of session as a concluding activity



15

## School Play Observation: Therapist

- Note themes, conversation, body language
- Who does child play with?
- Show child you are interested in her/his play
- If a harmful action occurs, get staff to intervene or intervene yourself
- Use information gleaned from observation to inform your play therapy sessions with the child



16



## School Play Observation: Teacher

- Note child's theme, conversation, and body language
- Who are the child's play partners?
- Allow child to see your interest in his/her play
- Intervene if child is being hurt or is hurting another
- Use information gleaned from observation to inform your work with the child in the classroom



17

## Example 1

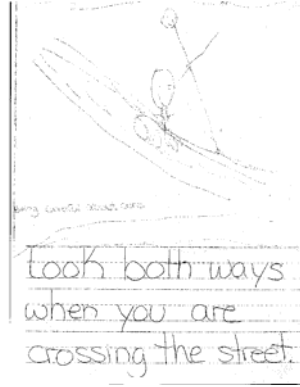
- Six year old male
- Primary Diagnosis:  
Oppositional Defiant



18

## Example 2

- Five year old male
- Primary Diagnosis:  
Attention Deficit  
Hyperactivity  
Disorder



19

## Book Suggestions

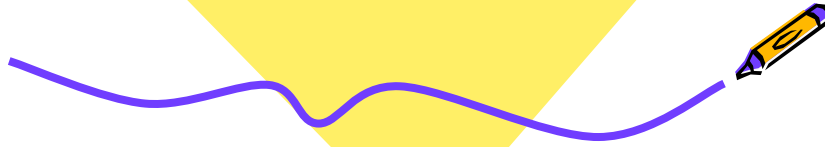
- Contemporary Play Therapy Charles Schaefer (2006)
- Helping Abused and Traumatized Children Eliana Gil (2006)
- Empirically Based Play Interventions for Children Eds. Linda A. Reddy, et al (2005)
- In Sickness and in Play Cindy Dell Clark (2003)

20



The soul would have no  
rainbow if the eyes had  
no tears.

Native American Proverb



21



# Finding Gold in the Play Yard: Review of Jane Perry's Book "Outdoor Play"

James E. Johnson  
The Pennsylvania State University  
USA

1

## Creative Play Yards

- Well-designed and skillfully managed
- Imaginative do-it-yourself play structures
- Exciting linkages between indoor and outdoor play
- Storage and Loose parts
- Natural materials
  - Sand, dirt, vegetation, fire for cook-outs

2

## Natural Play Yard



3

## Outdoor natural



## Outdoor natural



## Who is Jane Perry?

- Research Coordinator and Teacher
- Berkeley's Harold E. Jones Child Study Center at the Institute of Human Development, University of California
- Studies Peer Culture in Outdoor Play
  - Ethnographer; value of teacher researcher and storytelling; naturalistic settings
- Interactive Play Episode Assessment
  - Teacher observations and actions to enhance play
  - Advocate for Outdoor Play and Childhood

6

## What is Play ?

- Johan Huizinga *Homo Ludens*
  - Free
  - Separate
  - Absorbing
  - Orderly
  - Own Sake
  - Uncertain
  - Promotes social grouping

7

## Fun versus Play

- Patrick Biesty's Principle of Reciprocity
  - Fun doesn't have principle of reciprocity as does play.
  - Example Joe Frost's play memory from his boyhood in Arkansas "Dog Pile R & T play"

8



## Outdoor Play is Threatened

- Restrictions caused by traffic
- Pollution
- Age segregation in group settings
- Safety
- Media entertainment
- Academic Pressure

9

## Teacher Roles

- Stage manager
- Mediator
- Player
- Scribe
- Assessor
- Communicator
- Planner

10

## Teacher Roles: Observation

- Take the perspective of the children
  - What is happening for this child in play?
  - What is the child's agenda?
  - Does child have skills needed to accomplish his or her intentions?
  - Does the child have the materials necessary for reaching child's goals?
  - How can I support the child's play?

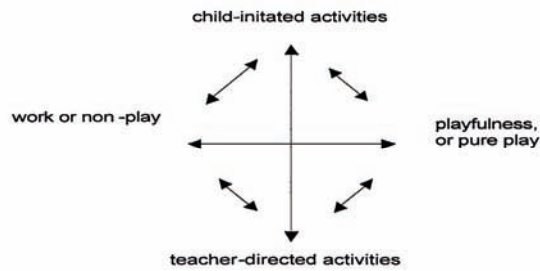
11

## Vygotskian Perspective

- Adults have indirect influences on children's play
  - Provide experiences that can become play themes
  - Modeling how to play with a toy
  - Taking turns
  - Settling disputes
  - Describing consequences
  - Organizing activities
  - Planning and expanding play
- Adult interventions should change and decline as children grow more mature

12

## Teacher-Child Play



13

## Value of Play for Child

- George Herbert Mead
  - “ Looking glass self”
  - Spontaneous self in action
  - Through playing develop self concept
  - “I” versus “me”
- Jean Piaget
  - Child-initiated group fantasy play provides opportunities for conflicts in roles and rules for peer play
  - Negotiate perspectives

14

## Social Competence

- Social skills  
Sharing, turn-taking, successful social bids, social problem solving
- Social Cognition: Theory of Mind
  - Empathy
  - Perspective-taking
  - Communicative efficacy
- Self regulation
  - Emotional regulation
  - Impulse control
  - Strategic planning

15

## Peer Culture Functioning

- Teacher Culture versus Peer Culture
- Group Entry Skills
- Peer Rejection
- Peer Status and Reputation
- Challenges of allegiances

16

## Peer Play Routines

- Mutuality
- Highly Ritualized
- Repetitive
- Functioning in peer culture is to secure or confirm social bonding

17

## Rough Play and Aggression

- Teachers must help the children encode and decode messages to distinguish fantasy and reality
- R & T Play versus real aggression

18

## Play Categories

- Roger Caillois(1961) *Man, play, and games*
  - Competition *agon*
  - Chance *alea*
  - Imitation *mimicry*
  - Dizziness *ilinx*

19

## Play Episode

- Initiation
- Negotiation
- Enactment

20

## Goals of Play Yard Pretend Play

- Autonomous Peer Play
- Focused Pretending
- Sustained Peer Play

21

## Teacher Pretending

- Help extend play
- Help settle conflicts between children
  - Do it in the pretend mode
    - Teacher validates and accepts children's perspectives and actions
    - Less intrusive
    - Called "Conferring indirect acknowledgement"

22

## Other Teacher Roles

- Blending academic content with outdoor play
- Nature Study
- Motor skill development
- Inclusion
- Peer rejection

23

## Inclusion

- Boundless Playgrounds
  - [Boundlessplaygrounds.org](http://Boundlessplaygrounds.org)

24



# Outdoor play grounds

LA



CA



25

# Boundless Playgrounds

Norwalk CT



Hollywood FL



26

# Boundless playground



27

# Playgrounds

Lakeworth FL



BurrRidge IL



28

# Playgrounds

Villa Rica GA



Chicago IL



29

# Boundless Playgrounds

Baltimore MD



Gaithersburg MD



30

# Playgrounds

Hagerstown MD



Lexington park MD



31

# Playgrounds

WingsMills MD



Flint MI



32

# Playgrounds

BattleCreek MI



Hillman MI



33

# Peer Rejection

- Tramontana's Model
  - Enhancing group harmony
  - Use of confederate

34

## Baby picture



35

## The End

- Question and Answers

– Thank You [jej4@psu.edu](mailto:jej4@psu.edu)

36

## **Outdoor Play: Teaching Strategies with Young Children.**

Jane P. Perry. Teachers College Press, 2001. 128 pp.

**Reviewed by JAMES E. JOHNSON**

*The Pennsylvania State University*

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## **Finding Gold in the Play Yard**

To date much attention has focused on teachers' roles when young children are behaving and playing indoors, within classrooms and child care settings. Perry's book is timely and welcome, as it seeks to show the importance of outdoor play and to provide a way to understand teachers' roles. Not only helping to fill a gap in the literature, this valuable scholarly volume comes at a time when recess and playground activities are widely misunderstood, unappreciated, and sometimes threatened with elimination. Perry successfully generates useful concepts and terms as she explains the strengths of outdoor play, and elucidates some important teaching roles and strategies.

Perry's work emanates from her years of teaching and researching at the Harold E. Jones Child Study Center at Berkeley, California. Her disciplined inquiry entailed close collaboration with teachers, children, and early childhood teacher educators/researchers. Part enjoyable and insightful ethnography, and part thoughtful analysis, the book succeeds in its mission of developing a framework and language for teachers to better grasp the goings-on in the play yard, here occupied by a group of four and five year olds attended to by their teachers Karen and Ken. The play yard, according to Perry, is developmentally a very important place: here, youngsters' personal needs and desires often collide with the interpersonal constraints of peer and teacher cultures. How much turbulence occurs, and how it affects ontogenetic trajectories, depends to an important degree on teacher planning, observation, and intervention.

Sandwiched between an introductory chapter on outdoor play and two concluding chapters on teacher strategies and the social-cultural organization of the play yard, four chapters are devoted to conveying the qualitative evidence that serves as "grist for the mill" of higher-order reflection and analysis. Videotaped and field-note observations of four distinct play episodes are organized into initiation, negotiation, and enactment phases, followed by an interpretive review section. Teacher interviews represent the voices of Karen and Ken, as well. These chapters include engaging

portrayals of the observed play yard events, keen analytic commentary, and useful cross-reference within the book as well as to relevant citations in the extant literature. Particularly edifying are Perry's apt use of contributions from classical scholars such as Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, George Herbert Mead, and the Opies, in addition to concepts from contemporary research. These four chapters set up the fruitful closing discussion and synthesis within chapters six and seven.

Perry asserts that in the play yard teachers should seek to promote: (1) autonomous peer play (which, fortunately, is not a problem for many young children); (2) focused pretend play; and (3) autonomous peer play of long duration that uses cognitive and social skills to keep the game going. The second goal uncritically assumes a Western perspective on the value of pretense over reality-oriented activity. The sixth chapter discusses teacher strategies that support these goals--both indirect coordination of the ecology of the play yard, and direct behavioral intervention. Perry presents and explains a flow chart depicting teachers' decision-making processes during self-directed play. These schemes are cogent, tie together diverse ideas, and are well connected to the play episode data presented in the earlier chapters. Perry uses the episodes well to illustrate how teachers can facilitate the three goals listed above. For example, Ken's organizing behavior in setting up the play ecology of the sandpit in chapter four "The Dam is Breaking" invited the children to enter an imaginary place. His restoration of the dam walls prolonged the episode, and his use of the play tutor role followed by the spectator role further sustained the children's rich social pretense.

The final chapter on the social and cultural organization of the play yard frames the data by analyzing events from the perspectives of the peer culture and of the teacher culture. Perry concludes, among other claims, that her study illustrates how teachers and children continually negotiate meaning within the context of peer play. One specific recommendation for teachers is how to mediate peer conflicts. If possible, teachers should intervene in an indirect, pretense mode compatible with the children's play episode, and not overtly express teacher culture concerns (such as concern for children's physical and psychological safety). The teacher should address the children in their transformed play state (through children's make-believe roles, objects, themes, and situations) without qualification or reference to reality. By keeping the discourse at the pretend level, the teacher validates and accepts the children's perspectives and actions. This less intrusive manner, termed *conferring indirect acknowledgement*, was seen to work well in the study when there was a breakdown in play, usually because of a violation of peer culture norms.

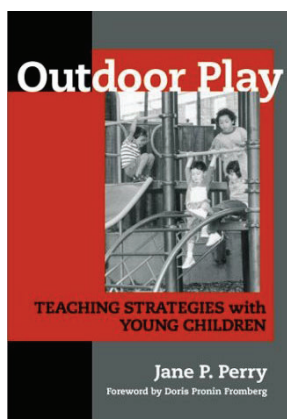


The audience for this book is primarily teacher educators and researchers in child development and early childhood education. There are several arenas this book does not address: comprehensive coverage of teacher roles relating to children's play outdoors; treatment of gender differences, ethnicity, or the play of children over a wider age range; motor skills; special needs children; or how to incorporate math lessons on measurement in the play yard. This book is devoted to how outdoor play with teacher involvement can serve peer culture and the development of social competence during the early years. This sharp focus is one of the book's strengths, but some might say it is also a limitation. Certainly more work on teaching strategies and the roles of the teacher with respect to young children and the outdoors is needed and can be expected in the years ahead. This book sets a gold standard for high quality writing, research, and scholarship.

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# Outdoor Play: Teaching Strategies With Young Children

Jane P. Perry

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# 1 Outdoor Play



Credit: Bob Devaney

I am quietly moving amongst different play groups in the yard, informing the children that it is time for snack. As children and teachers both return from washing their hands, I hear a group of boys already gathered at an outside snack table: "It's teacher time! It's teacher time! Teacher time!" they call out, laughing at their joke.

**W**HAT IS "TEACHER" in the play yard when children's play is so absorbingly self-directed? Imaginative play with friends includes running from danger and collecting dirt, water, and carefully plucked leaf ingredients for complex baking recipes. Vivid negotiations over turf occur during ball and vehicle play. Shrill oscillating-toned cries signal entrance to the yard and availability for play. Feigned swoons leave children motionless amidst the fast-moving agenda. Some watch the play of others, sometimes from the height of a climbing structure, while

others plunge deeply into the fray of frenzied fantasy. Some taunt relentlessly. Some are often taunted when they inadvertently challenge the peer protocol of the yard.

This book is about how a teacher supports children in self-directed outdoor fantasy play with peers. National accreditation resources (see, for example, Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Bronson, 1995; Dodge & Colker, 1992) are clear that developmentally appropriate practice involves the teacher's use of play as the medium through which the young child learns best. This book shows what it looks like for a teacher to support learning through outdoor play.

I focus on children interacting with each other. While individual children emerge in the book as interesting characters, I look at the progress of children-in-interaction. I expect that preschool children will be able to initiate an interaction with another child independent of the teacher. I expect that the children will be able to negotiate not only a theme to the interaction, but related roles once the theme is established. I also expect that the children will elaborate on the theme as the interaction is enacted in play. I use the experiences and reflections of two teachers, Karen and Ken, to exemplify how a teacher can consciously prepare, encourage, and coordinate children's outdoor pretend play with each other. I believe that self-directed fantasy play in the yard is an essential feature in the social and emotional development of young children. I use the perspective of children and teachers in one classroom to tell stories about life in the play yard. The children can tell their stories of outdoor play by themselves. This first chapter can be read either prior to the storied Chapters 2 through 5, or after, as a way to highlight the rich complexity of play in the yard.

What *are* children intending when they play so vigorously outside? Clearly children are doing more than exhausting energy. They have focused attention to very specific and usually recurring actions and themes. Their play themes are generally self-generated, since the yard has less thematic suggestions than, for example, the inside playhouse. Children seek out the yard to create fantasies amongst themselves. As Diane Levin (1998) astutely notices, children may even be directed out of doors by us teachers who see their behavior as being an "outside game" (p. 353). The flexibility of play cues allows for a distinct expression and manifestation of the world of young children from their own cultural play perspective. As any teacher in a play yard will attest, it is outside that the most vivid cultural manifestations of the peer group can appear: in hierarchical rankings of members, in possession of stationary and non-stationary objects, and in the claiming and relinquishing of friendships, to name a few. The play yard is a learn-

ing environment where teaching strategies occur alongside the spontaneous strategies of the peer culture.

The educator Barbara Scales (1984) describes how teachers guide children in a play-based program:

Features [of the setting] are designed to interest, stimulate and challenge the children's spontaneous play, exploration and discovery. A consequence of this emphasis is that ecological variables are stressed. In this way, peer play can be maintained indirectly, thereby preserving the child's autonomous choice of pace and mode of involvement with peers, adults, or activities and materials of the program. (p. 43)

The boys' joke in calling snack time "teacher time" is evidence that they, too, are aware of when they experience autonomy in the classroom and when they do not. "Teacher time" demonstrates a playful sense of creativity and rebellion in renaming, while also establishing "teacher" as an authority figure. Scales offers a clue to understanding what the term *teacher* means. She looks at the teacher as one in a cluster of features in the classroom environment that guide children's autonomous activities. Scales highlights the interaction that children have with their classroom environment, which in the play yard includes interaction with climbing apparatus, a sand area, space for fast-paced movement, as well as other children and at least one adult. It is children-in-interaction that is observed. Doris Fromberg (1999), after reviewing current research on play, concurs. According to Fromberg, looking at children's play involves studying "a relational phenomena" where what is observed is dynamic, nonlinear, and episodic. Sounds like an accurate description of the play yard in action! Teacher supervision of outdoor play means looking at the interaction between children and the features of their play setting.

### A PLAY AREA AS AN ECOLOGY

Scales (1987) has another clue for understanding supervision in the play yard. She defines the environment of the classroom as a series of ecologies. An ecology is an area that suggests certain kinds of activities. In the early childhood classroom, an ecology is an activity area. Preschool and early elementary education programs have traditionally used defined areas to support children's active, independent involvement with learning materials: the block corner, the playhouse, writing tables, the reading corner, the large climber, the sand area, the swings, and manipulative areas. Areas are set up to communicate expected behavior clearly. Materials are

easily accessible. The materials have a defined use. Each area is protected or delineated in some fashion to focus and protect the activity. Usually each area has a name, making reference to and negotiations about the area possible. In addition to materials, an ecology also includes the children and teachers and how they use the play area. The teacher coaches beginning players in the appropriate use of materials or apparatus, often modeling behavior and language that can be successfully used in times of negotiation and turn-taking. The children interpret ecological cues, oftentimes in innovative ways. Such interpretive innovation gives an ecology its dynamic quality.

A play ecology presents teacher goals by communicating expectations about intended behavior. Researchers in a variety of early childhood classrooms have described how ecologies support children's active involvement (see, for instance, Cazden, 1983; Cook-Gumperz & Corsaro, 1977; DeVries, Haney, & Zan, 1991; King, 1992; Paley, 1992; Pelligrini, Huberty, & Jones, 1995; Scales, 1987; Trawick-Smith, 1994). As Scales aptly identifies, expectations for learning are communicated in ecologies through three types of cues:

1. The suggestive features of the objects, materials, and available areas
2. What children naturally enjoy doing with certain materials in certain areas
3. The shared history of play by children in an area

All three cues communicate a message to children regarding what is intended or expected in a particular area as they coordinate their different perspectives. Some areas have quite explicit cues. The suggestive features leave little to negotiate, and children are familiar with the themes and what roles accompany those themes. The inside playhouse, for example, in a very explicit manner, cues for cooking activity with its small dishes, cups, pots, pans, stove, tables, and chairs. The explicitness of the cues also signals kitchen roles and themes. Most children, in other words, are familiar with what people do in a kitchen, especially if there are props like plates, a few pots, and stirring spoons. These highly familiar objects easily cue for standard familial repertoires of cooking, eating, and feeding without much need for explanation. A child can move quickly into such a play area and begin stirring from a pot. Another child can sit at the table and be served. Further, the child stirring the pot will probably assume a caretaker role. The context of these two children's play has been established from the explicit cues of the ecology without any spoken words. Their play interaction also becomes a vivid piece of information to be recalled when they are next in the playhouse.



The familiarity of the ecology as a play setting appears to facilitate more creative and competent play (Aureli & Coecchia, 1996; Ramsey & Lasquade, 1996). The ecology, by providing suggestive features of daily life, capitalizing on the routine of what children enjoy doing with materials, and defining a structured area where children have a shared history, creates a "script" that helps organize children's knowledge (see, for instance, Fein & Wiltz, 1998).

Various play areas in the preschool make differing demands on the child's communication and socialization skills based on the degree of explicitness of the play area cues. The explicit cues of the playhouse present less of a demand on children to communicate and negotiate play roles and themes. The playhouse can therefore be an opportunity to promote play in children with less communicative and socialization skills, because they can rely on the conventional nature of such cues. However, argues Trawick-Smith (1998), when props are too realistic, the realism tends to limit interpersonal interaction:

The uses of realistic props do not require as much explanation or justification, do not demand the same level of agreement among players. The forms and functions of a shopping list or a grocery cart are obvious; no ongoing negotiations are needed about what these represent. In contrast, transforming a wooded rod into a fire hose requires some debate, since so many alternative symbolizations can be imagined. (p. 245)

When cues are open-ended and children are involved in negotiating idiosyncratic personal symbols, interactions by necessity become more complex.

### THE PLAY YARD AS A COMPLEX LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

With less explicit cues than those inside the classroom, outdoor play challenges children's abilities to interpret (Scales, 1987). The suggestive features of the objects and materials are flexible and can be adopted for a number of roles in a number of themes. With less explicit ecological areas, the shared history of play in the area is a prominent cue. In my classroom, I have certainly observed that what was played yesterday in the sand area is on children's minds when next they enter the area. When children move outside to the sandbox or the climbing apparatus where behaviors like digging or climbing are apparent but the themes and roles are not as explicit, the challenge to communicative abilities increases. Without explicit thematic structure, the play yard is ripe for imaginative interpretation. Making a new road in the sand area one day can trigger repeat play

amongst playmates on successive days. According to Scales, when children playing together are given the opportunity to autonomously make sense of the environment, play interactions are more cohesive.

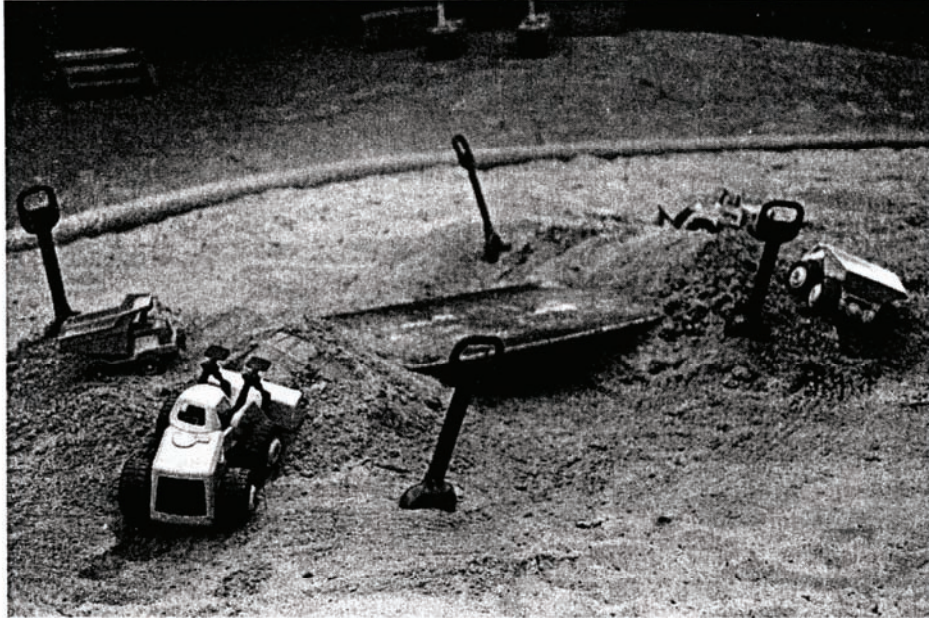
Teachers in my classroom would concur with Fromberg (1999), who finds that when children play with low-specificity toys, their play is more interactive, includes more mutually shared play themes, and includes less interruption than when children play with high-specificity props. Hartup, French, Laursen, Johnston, and Ogawa (1993) observe that in "open-field" play contexts, characterized by open-ended free choice play outside of the classroom, children seek to "manage their conflicts in ways that minimize risk to their interactions" (p. 446). Children are motivated to play for longer duration. Trawick-Smith (1998) suggests that in open-field ecologies, children are "more likely to be persuasive rather than demanding, to compromise, and to resolve disputes without aggression" (p. 242). The flexibility of ecological cues allows preschool children to interpret. In making sense of their play area during pretend play, children's interactions are more cohesive.

Outdoor play by its very nature involves children making complex distinctions between pretend and real as group running, chasing, fleeing, and wrestling erupt in both playful fun and primitive expressions of emotion. Teachers in the play yard will be regularly helping children to encode and decode the social signals that distinguish rough-and-tumble play and aggression (Pelligrini & Smith, 1998). Teachers support children's social competence in the play yard by focusing on how children are using and interpreting play ecologies. Two ecologies from my own classroom play yard are a sand pit and a climbing structure, both of which are under one teacher's supervision.

The sand pit is located in the middle of the yard and marked by a cement lip around its outer rim (see Figure 1.1). Attached to the far end of the sand pit is a small deck structure, in the center of which is a large oak tree. Adjacent to one side of the sand pit is the major entrance and exit corridor for the yard from the inside classroom. The children in the sand pit play with various props such as toy cars and trucks, rakes, buckets, and shovels, and also use water available from a spigot. The children develop hand-eye coordination while manipulating and organizing props, sand, and water. They engage in pretend play based on themes suggested by the objects in the sand area. As they invent and develop games, they interact with playmates to arrive at consensual rules about how the game is to be played.

The climbing structure, pictured in the opening of this chapter, is located along the back periphery of the yard. It is marked by a ground covering of tan bark, which separates it from a cement portion of the yard.

**FIGURE 1.1: The Sand Pit Ecology: An Area That Suggests Certain Kinds of Activities.**



Credit: Lynn Bradley

The climbing structure includes a 7-foot high, two-tiered deck supported by brightly painted poles from which attach a number of slides, chutes, sliding poles, and ladders. There is a fair amount of traffic flow past this area. Activity centers around large muscle movement, usually in the context of pretend play with others. Due to its height, the deck provides a degree of privacy, which allows a variety of familial/house themes to develop. Other role play themes include superhero and animal play. This area can comfortably accommodate four to eight children. This was a very active and generally noisy area. By observing children in self-directed play in ecologies such as the sand pit or large climber, teachers can assess whether area cues are presenting learning goals for the classroom in complement with the abilities and interests of the children.

Implicit in the discussion of the play yard ecologies is the notion that the indoor classroom and the play yard present a continuum between the more quiet, focused activities of the inside and the more noisy and self-defined features of the play yard. Table 1.1 contrasts the play yard with the inside classroom, in a rudimentary way. While vigorous noisy play will certainly erupt inside, and focused, task-oriented play will occur outdoors

**TABLE 1.1: Contrast Between the Inside Classroom and the Play Yard**

CATEGORY	INSIDE CLASSROOM	PLAY YARD
Suggestive features of the ecology	Explicit cues	Flexible cues
Physical space in ecologies	Confined	Spacious
Quality of play	Quieter, task-oriented, teacher-generated as well as self-directed	Noisier, physically vigorous, self-generated
Children's ability to interpret	Children rely on explicit cues to guide themes and roles	Children invent themes and roles in open-ended, flexible ecologies
Demand on communication and socialization skills	Less demand	More demand

as well as indoors, conceptually the inside classroom and the yard create a continuum that offers children available options for their self-generated play.

### **PRETEND PLAY WITH PEERS**

Between the ages of 3 and 5 years old, children engage in more pretend play with each other than in any other form of play (Rubin, Fein, & Vandenburg, 1983). One way teachers support learning and development is through encouraging such group fantasy play. Pretend play with peers provides the opportunity for complex cognitive and social development.

The researcher and teacher trainer Sara Smilansky (1968) studied group fantasy play in the classroom. She finds that competence in pretend play with others is linked to children's language skills; their skills in thinking comparatively about people, objects, and information about their world; and skills in problem solving. Smilansky (1968) defines six features of pretend play with peers that mark its sophistication:

1. Children match play behavior with adopted pretend role.
2. Children use make-believe objects to substitute for real objects and use verbal utterances to represent action.
3. Children describe make-believe action in the course of coordinating their game.
4. Children persist in a play episode for at least 10 minutes.
5. The play involves at least two children engaged in pretending.
6. Children verbally interact in the course of the play, usually to clarify or to negotiate.

Smilansky's work demonstrates that the structure of pretend play with peers can become increasingly complex during the preschool years when children take on fantasy roles that coordinate their actions with others. Children shift between reality and fantasy. They need language skills to communicate and negotiate theme development, roles, materials, play partners, and play space. The ability to take turns in pretend play is a landmark feature in children's developmental progression. Whereas in toddler play, turn taking tends to be the simple repetitive duplication of ideas and actions of the other player, in the preschool years turn taking allows children to elaborate on play themes and practice taking the perspectives of others.

Language skills clearly play an increasingly important role in play when children are attempting to negotiate different perspectives. Children's awareness and use of specific language is a prerequisite for decision making and negotiations involved in group problem solving. "But I want to be the squirrel," protests one child after roles have already been picked. "Well, there can be two," offers the first squirrel. "O.K.!" Psycholinguist Susan Ervin-Tripp (1983) points out the importance of language learning in peer interactions:

These activities not only make possible the child's display of language knowledge, but create some conditions for the child to learn to understand new words and new constructions, to imitate, to recall, and to extend what is known. Learning derives not just from speaking but from hearing language used in a context where the meaning is obvious and where the learner is interested enough in what is going on to pay close attention. That is why play contexts are so much more efficient than traditional classrooms. (p. 12)

Pretend play with peers not only reflects the child's current level of functioning, but also can frame continued development through consolidation

and practice of newly emerging skills. Particularly in the play yard, where ecologies are more flexible to innovative thematic interpretation, pretend play with peers offers significant linguistic and cognitive challenges.

Pretend play with peers requires sophisticated social skills. Children juggle playmates, toys, and space. Children are challenged to communicate the progress of the play theme as it transforms from reality to fantasy. Children hold notions of fantasy and reality in mind at the same time. Children in group-fantasy play must make mutual agreements about what to pretend to be, what to pretend to do, where to pretend to be, what to pretend that various objects are, as well as manage the various disagreements along the way. The Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1967) argued that it was just such social challenges, prompted by the children's desire to maintain peer interaction, that stretched cognitive functioning beyond usual levels. In fact, according to Vygotsky (1978), it is at this social level where development first appears, manifesting itself individually in the child following the social gain.

Pretend play with peers in the yard is important because it allows for complex learning involving language skills, perspective taking (understanding another's point of view), representational thinking, problem solving, turn taking, and the ability to interpret environmental cues, while at the same time retaining an autonomous, child-directed focus. Especially in light of the entry into the culture of elementary school, exhaustive opportunities for pretend play with peers during the preschool years is preparative. Pretend play with peers provides children with experience in directing their own learning, gives children the background needed to know what it means to be a friend, and provides them with repeated experience in how to read ecological cues. The best way for teachers to create a supportive environment that encourages the complexity of learning inherent in outdoor play with peers is to notice how children independently organize socially and then to complement children's natural capacity to establish social relations.

### **Children's Play as Peer Culture**

Children acquire skills and knowledge from the world they share with their peers and with adults. Upon examining play in the yard, it is clear that acquisition of skills and knowledge occurs when children actively participate in exploring, constructing, and thereby making sense of their world. Children organize and interpret information from their world as they play, often in each other's company. Children's intellectual understanding progresses through stages of ability. While adults can guide,

nurture, protect, and challenge children in their developmental progress, children will perceive and organize their world in ways that are qualitatively different from adults.

The sociologist William Corsaro (1985, 1997) sheds light on the idiosyncratic way that children relate to each other as they learn, especially in the play yard. According to Corsaro, children's social development cannot be explained merely as internalizing adult skills and knowledge. As children construct meaning from their everyday lives, they actively create a series of unique peer cultures that address their concerns. Corsaro believes that social development in young children is a process of both interpreting the adult world and producing a peer culture uniquely suited to the world of play with each other. The peer culture of young children includes common activities, rules, rituals, and themes based on their sense of their everyday lives as well as incorporating their representation of the adult world as they understand it. Outdoor play provides ample evidence of children's early peer culture. Inclusion in play is often based on imagined roles: "You have to be a dinosaur to be in this hole." Adult authority is challenged: "It's nap time! Let's hide!" Past episodes of play together figure prominently in negotiations: "Hey guys! I got it! Let's play horsies. 'Member that time we did that?" Territory is righteously claimed: "You can't come up here!" Games of flee and chase frequently erupt, and rough-and-tumble wrestling, cuffing, and feigned fear are like waves wafting over the yard.

Based on his own work and the work of others, Corsaro finds two consistent themes in the initial peer cultures of young children. The first he calls *communal sharing* or *social participation*, which is the strong desire to be affiliated with other playmates. The second theme he calls *control*, which is the persistent attempt by children to challenge and gain control over their lives. Corsaro (1985) sees the peer culture as a "joint or communal attempt by the children to acquire control over their lives through the establishment of a collective identity" (p. 75). Together, these two themes of the peer culture offer children social allegiance in the context of living in the powerful world of adult authority.

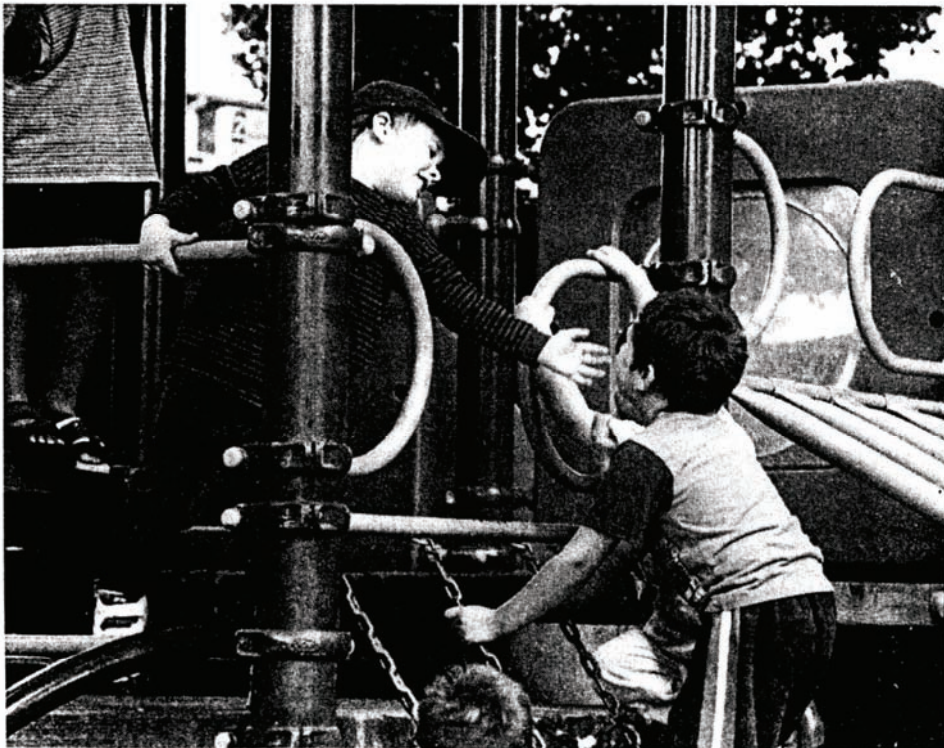
### Peer-Culture Rituals and Routines

Peer-culture rituals and routines are easy to notice. Corsaro (1979) found that interactions are regulated by appeals to friendship. Play interactions often begin by a request to acknowledge affiliation: "We're friends, right?" Asking for an acknowledgment of friendship also occurred when children wanted access into an ongoing game: "Let's say we're twins,

O.K.?" Corsaro (1985) found, however, that 75% of such appeals were met by resistance: "No, I don't need a twin!" This resistance establishes a precedent for vigilance if play with others is desired. Termination of a play episode can occur without warning or recognition, leaving a playmate unpredictably without a partner. Such vigilance and unpredictability together create a quality of fragility to peer interactions.

Children respond to the feeling of fragility with play routines intended to assure participation and some measure of control. Friendship is the integrative glue that helps to preserve the play interaction. Appeals to friendship are a device both to gain access to and protect peer play (see Figure 1.2). Children's peer play routines, such as the various forms of flee and chase so common in the play yard, provide an integrative function by coalescing the peer group. Allegiance and a desire for affiliation is revealed as children make their often primitive attempts at negotiating as independent players. Wild running games are the children's way of feeling connected.

**FIGURE 1.2: The Desire to Be Affiliated Is One of Two Themes of the Preschool Peer Group.**



Credit: Bob Devaney



Games that create alliance can also have an exclusionary function in children not yet ready to imagine a theme beyond being chased by an unwitting "bad guy" (see, for example, Paley, 1992; Trawick-Smith, 1988, 1992, 1994; Van Hoorn et al., 1999). The teacher Karen Gallas (1998) reflects on the vividness of the children's social agenda in her own classroom, noting that their struggles to make sense of control and power dominate:

As the years progressed, my concept of "teaching well" altered and good teaching became more than believing that I was covering important curricula and that children were mastering subject matter. The social and political began to loom large as driving concerns. Children's desires for affiliation, their need to play and create new worlds, pressed in. Issues of power and entitlement, of alienation and failure, of silent or silenced complicated the process. (p. 2)

So strong are children's efforts to make sense of the issues of power and control that their themes create a pervasive "subtext" in her classroom.

Gregory Bateson (1976), looking at the play of both animals and humans, sheds light on how players communicate the message or signal for "this is play." An exaggerated stance or pose, a play voice, a change in voice tone, or a verbal request are some of the ways children signal their intention to play. The vocal quality to play yard games is therefore due in part to children cueing each other that "this is play." The way in which playmates understand and respond to such "this is play" overtures can be an area of negotiation during peer play. Teachers in the yard will often find themselves clarifying children's intentions. "I think Mark wants to play with you. He keeps running after you."

Observing nursery school play, Jenny Cook-Gumperz (1978) has found that once involved in a play interaction, affiliation continues to be a powerful chip in the peer culture. Introducing a new play idea into an ongoing event, for example, requires children to secure a "warrant" or agreement from companions. "Pretend this is my road, O.K.? O.K.?" "O.K." Children use a change of voice tone to signal or mark a shift in theme (see Cook-Gumperz, 1981), and they use register differences during pretend play to indicate different roles (see, for example, Anderson, 1977). Teachers in the play yard will notice highly ritualized and repetitive behavior like screaming, accompanied by running and feigned aggression and fear emerging when language skills are not accessible or available, under new circumstances, or when a playmate is shy or feeling threatened by a challenge like the entrance of another playmate.

Scales (1987) has found that self-directed play with others not only supports the development of social competence, but that there is a correlation between the duration of self-directed play interactions and the

children's own independent negotiating skills. Scales's work confirms what I had found in other resources: pretend play with others is an important component of children's social and emotional development. However, Scales is adding a new piece to the picture. She finds that the longer the game, the more children show evidence of negotiating skills. This makes sense. Children have a strong desire to be affiliated, and will work hard to keep the game going. When children are involved in making sense of play-area cues, their social skills are more integrated. Self-directed play offers an integrative glue precisely because children are actively interpreting rules and expectations for each other. Here the primacy of the peer culture is revealed. When children are encouraged to autonomously make sense of their world, as they do when they play with each other using rituals and routines established as a cultural group, their social skills are more cohesive.

Autonomous play occurs more readily in outdoor ecologies in part because play yard ecologies are more flexible to innovative interpretation. Children work hard in the play yard because they are motivated to be affiliated. Issues of power, control, and access emerge as children make sense of flexible ecological cues. Children use a variety of rituals and routines to integrate their games. Vigorous play emerges in the play yard where children are distinctively social even as they negotiate the play of chasing, fleeing, and wrestling. When children playing together are given the opportunity to make sense of the environment autonomously, play interactions are decidedly more cohesive. And children more than likely will be engaged in pretend play with each other. Teachers support children's social competence by focusing on how children are using and interpreting play ecologies. The teacher in the play yard determines whether learning-area cues are clear and make sense for the children as they play. What do teachers look for as children independently organize themselves in the play yard?

### Sequence of Pretend Play with Peers

Scales has identified three phases in the sequence of an episode of play with peers. *Initiation* involves some proposal by a child accompanied by an acknowledgment from another child. This condition of initiation or proposal of some mode of activity is very familiar to any preschool teacher in the play yard. "Let's play dinosaurs, O.K.?" "We're twins, right?" "I'm the father and you're the baby." "You wanna play sharks?" In fact, initiation is so standard in peer play that it makes identification of the beginning of a game quite obvious. A familiar form of initiation of an episode of play begins with the use of a question such as: "We're friends, right?" followed by an acknowledging "Right!" If players have a history of shared

play together, such acknowledgment can be quite subtle, such as a simple exchange of smiles or an idiosyncratic yell or screech. At this point children are deciding whom to play with.

Once players are identified, the episode proceeds to a *negotiation* phase when children decide what they are playing. Again, a question is often a familiar device to prompt such negotiation, and teachers observing peer play will often hear such dialogue: "We're making cakes, right?" "Yeah, and this is our house, but we don't have a Mommy." "Pretend we're hiding from the bad guys, and these are our bullets, O.K.?" "Up there is where we sleep, right?" While such explicit negotiating is often heard, it is not necessary if the theme is obvious, as it might be with players who have a long history of shared play together. Here the influence of the teacher begins to emerge. The ecology in which the play occurs includes cues, which help to establish the theme more clearly. The teacher's creation of an ecology for play, be it trucks and shovels in the sand area, or a cluster of milk crates suggesting some kind of enclosure, can expedite peer play when the teacher is aware of the suggestive features of objects and materials, what children naturally enjoy doing with materials, and the shared history of past themes amongst playmates. The ecologies serve a teaching function by complementing the themes of affiliation and control so prevalent in preschool peer play.

Once playmates have negotiated a theme to their game, the play episode proceeds to the *enactment* phase, where the play theme is expanded, developed, and/or transformed as the game progresses. Players may change ecologies, expand or lose playmates, or remain quite settled for a long duration. Players can be independent in their negotiation during this phase or they may need help from the teacher when the play interaction breaks down.

Teachers can use their understanding of the sequence of play yard games to promote the duration of children's play interactions. In this way, teachers support complex, independent interactions. Teachers set up and maintain learning areas, noticing how their setup represents cues for thematic play. When breakdowns occur in children's games, teachers help them to clarify their play intentions and choices. Teachers mediate disputes by offering words to use. Sometimes teachers also play in the ecologies and, by example, offer themes and roles. Sometimes children respond to area cues clearly and as teachers expect. Sometimes teachers find themselves reacting to unanticipated behavior, struggling to promote focus when enthusiasm seems out of control. They confer with each other, trying to make sense of the children's world in the yard and their roles in supporting the children's learning and development.

### THE ROLES OF THE TEACHER

Two girls are crouching low. One exclaims in a hushed whisper as she wipes the sand flat: "It's buried now!" The other adds more sand. "That's good." A third playmate arrives, questioning the proceedings. She is rebuffed with annoyance: "A *grave!* We're making a *grave!*" A fourth child crawls from an adjacent spot in the sand, driving his truck into the foot of one of the grave diggers. The teacher moves close to the truck driver, informing him gently: "Don't drive your truck into them, please."

Children in the play yard are making sense of themselves in social groups: recreating experiences from their family lives, from the life of the classroom, and from information received from text and media. They play vigorously, exploring physical and interpersonal space in often fast-paced, highly vocal, tactile games. Looking at the literature, I find that educators and researchers vary in their recommendations for how, when, and even if, to support children during self-directed peer play.

Van Hoorn and her colleagues (1999) promote play as the centerpiece of developmental learning in the classroom. Teachers are guided in their facilitation of children's play and learning by four principle strategies:

1. Appreciating the child's view of experience and materials
2. Functioning as a keen observer
3. Preparing the physical environment and daily schedule for play
4. Recognizing the variety of learning contexts in which children construct meaning and gain knowledge.

Jones and Reynolds (1992) and Reynolds and Jones (1997) believe children learn by constructing their own knowledge through play. The more competently children play, the more clearly they will understand their world. Teachers provide the opportunity for children to play and to develop through play. Teachers organize the environment, mediate disputes during points of conflict, and with beginning players, assume the role of teacher as player. As children master independent play, the teacher supports constructive learning as a play watcher who observes, reflects, builds hypotheses, and plans.

Smilansky (1968, 1990) defines teaching strategies as playing with children. Following her work is Trawick-Smith (1994). Both scholars advocate playing with children as one means of facilitating learning. Smilansky has developed teacher facilitation techniques during pretend play with peers to specifically support children who are lacking in play experience. Facili-

tation techniques include suggesting a theme, offering language, extending play ideas, modeling play behavior using objects and assumed roles, and changing the physical environment. Trawick-Smith argues that despite evidence like Smilansky's on the benefits of playing with children, teachers do not spend enough time in direct play interaction with children. He encourages being an unobtrusive player, offering comments and suggestive elaborations while refraining from becoming a leader of the action. In unobtrusive play, the teacher enriches children's play, promotes social competency, and enlightens herself or himself to the lives of her or his students.

Drawing on my own research and that described above, as well as my teaching experience, I have developed the following framework for characterizing the roles of teachers in supporting children in self-directed play in the play yard:

1. *The teacher as organizer.* Teachers organize ecologies in the play yard to create challenges and activities for the children. We emphasize the clarity of ecological cues to promote specific developmental goals. The play yard is designed and set up to replicate traditional indoor activities so that intellectual, social, and affective development can be integrated with the children's outdoor needs and interests. Teachers offer an array of outdoor activities, including domestic and social role play, constructive play, tactile and sensory experiences, fine and gross motor activities, and play in art, science, math, and language arts (see Figure 1.3). A designated area features teacher-guided projects. The play yard offers room for children to watch each other play. Arrangements in area ecologies are predictable and familiar and capitalize on the children's interests. The setup of a play ecology accommodates a range of skills and abilities, so that when children accomplish a level of play, they can return with newly developed expertise to master more complex tasks. Teachers introduce new materials and play opportunities following the children's autonomously directed progress. Play opportunities and materials are based on the background, interests, and readiness for new accomplishments.
2. *The teacher as observer.* Teachers position themselves in adjacent supervision areas of the inside classroom and play yard so that the children can freely move among inside and outside areas at their own inclination. Having organized play ecologies with some idea of how children use materials, teachers now observe how children interpret play area cues. What do the children find enjoyable about the availability and organization of materials in specific areas? What themes emerge that the children will recall as a shared history when next in the area? Is there anything about the area that confuses the progression of peer play?

**FIGURE 1.3: Teachers Offer a Variety of Outdoor Activities, Including Language Arts.**



Credit: Lynn Bradley

Teachers in my classroom collect “slices of life” observational narratives on each child during floor time. These teacher observations are reviewed in staff meetings to discover how the child is interpreting cues for learning in inside and outside areas.

*The teacher as promoter.* Learning areas, when organized and maintained, do much of the teachers’ work as promoters of self-directed play in the yard. Teachers promote interactions in small groups by encouraging face-to-face play: a small manipulative table with two play spots facing each other, an extra-wide slide or gym mat that allows for full-body embracing, a tire swing negotiated by the children that facilitates role identification (“I’ll be the pusher!”), as well as the vividness of eye contact. Teachers are alert to a balance in the number of children across the areas of supervision. Teachers protect interactive play by avoiding overcrowding so that the children’s burgeoning social and linguistic competence is not overtaxed. Teachers keep an eye out for those children who naturally initiate interactions, those who are currently learning by watching, and those who would benefit from side-by-side play. Teachers notice children who are disengaged and uninvolved with either materials or playmates, and invite playmate interaction: “Raymond, come and see what Marta is doing with the blocks.” Teachers make explicit their expectation that all children need experience in peer play: “It’s time to find someone to play with. Let’s see what’s cooking in the sand kitchen.” Teachers offer play language, voice, and actions to model behavior for novices.

These three roles are a way to look at how teachers support children’s outdoor pretend peer play by encouraging autonomous exploration, experimentation, and learning in small groups. To get a vivid look at teachers in action in the play yard, I introduce two teachers.

### TEACHER PROFILES

Karen and Ken are two experienced teachers in my study. Though different in style, they both support self-directed peer play in the yard.

#### Karen

Karen’s interaction into an ongoing play activity occurs most often by using a verbal reference to some detail of the children’s thematic activity. I call this kind of strategy interacting *within the play theme*. If the teacher observes what children are playing, or knows that the stack of milk crates

is actually their "refrigerator," the teacher can refer to such fantasy material when directly speaking to children. By referring to the children's fantasy play structures, locations, or adopted roles, the teacher figuratively "moves into" the play theme for a moment and accepts it as the current reality. The effect on children's play, and often on their willingness to comply with requests, is discussed in Chapter 6. Karen frequently refers to the play theme when interacting with children (e.g., "that's their jail"). On some occasions, such thematic references are for the benefit of a child on the sidelines.

Karen does not directly intervene as a player in any of her interactions. I therefore differentiate Karen's style from Smilansky's (1968) play intervention technique, which Smilansky denotes as being within the play interaction. Karen's style functions to acknowledge the play theme while remaining a commentator rather than a player.

Karen's observational stance provides her with rich information about who is playing with whom, who wants to play with whom, which play themes are currently being adopted, and which materials and areas of the yard are being used to act out such themes. As Karen observes, she is continually framing her observations vis-à-vis a developmental perspective. In one particular conversation early in the research, Karen explained that she felt her developmental perspective had come more from her master's credential program than from accumulated experience as a teacher at the center. She finds that this developmental perspective helps her make sense of occurrences during teaching. She told me, "Children will work on intonation, for example, and you can tell from their odd phrasings what they are working on." Her developmental framework appears as an overlay to the immediacy of the moment-to-moment interactions she observes in the yard. Karen's style is so observational, in fact, that it was not until she and I viewed the videotapes of her teaching that I was able to account for Karen's perspective during interactive teaching-learning events. During these screening sessions, Karen was quite talkative in regard to her thoughts during the actual taping. She was able to provide ample evidence for the fact that an observational stance can function to developmentally frame and assess the progress of interactions as they occur.

Karen's style is marked by a nondirective, observational stance, which provides her with rich information regarding the context of events in the yard. From such a stance, she clearly projects the impression of acknowledging and respecting the interests and perspectives of the children not only by allowing interactive activity generally independent of any direction from her, but also by being keenly aware of and acknowledging the children's play themes.

During a screening interview, Karen describes her interactive style as "coming and going":



That whole thing, coming and going, coming in close and stopping and going back out, and checking. And when I come in and when I don't come in. To me, *that's* what I'm really doing when I'm out there . . . I'm always debating, am I going to say something, how am I gonna say it? I can be sweeping away, sweeping away and never look up, but there will be a sound and something that will trigger me to look up and know something is going on. And then, I'll check it out for a minute, and I'll either come in closer or maybe just watch it from where I am. All that hinges on what's happening at the moment. Is somebody getting hurt, is somebody gonna fall in the near future so I should be over there right now, or is this something that while I'm going over there maybe they'll work it out as I'm on my way over, which sometimes happens. I'll get halfway there, and it's all worked out, and I just won't bother. I try and help them do it themselves and keep trying to get out of it as quickly as I can, so that they can take it over. But yet if they're not going to take it over, I'll stay there and help until I feel it's worked out.

Fromberg (1999) describes pretend play with peers in a similar fashion: "The negotiations of social play in particular appear to involve an oscillating process between what you expect in somebody else's behavior and what you find" (p. 33). Karen is well aware that children operate in a dynamic, nonlinear context during play and she attempts to match their context with her style. It is impossible to know for sure whether Karen is accurate in her determinations of context. However, the fact that she is rarely, if ever, corrected by the children when she refers to their play activities lends credibility to her understandings.

Karen facilitates small group play by preparing the ecologies in her area. She arranges physical space in defined ways so that play spots are marked. She capitalizes on the suggested features of materials. In this way Karen maintains an indirect role in supporting pretend play. She steps back to follow the play action as it evolves from the children's own pace and mode of activity.

## Ken

One of the most distinguishing features of Ken's style in the yard is the frequency with which he explicitly tends to promote small group pretend play opportunities either by suggestion of a play theme or by direct involvement as a player in the interactive play. Ken usually suggests quite specific imagery: "You might want to use this pole as an escape route from enemies."

Ken's setup arrangements are especially suggestive. Ken organizes ecologies to create "a place where things can happen." In an early screening interview, Ken characterized his creation of "place" in terms of both visual and geographic cues. These cues define actual physical, spatial boundaries in the sand and suggest an area "where you can do things," as, for example, by raising or lowering heights in the sand pit by digging out trenches, tunnels, and hills. For Ken, depending on the quality of such setup arrangements, his created "places" can suggest the allusion to specific themes: "safe/unsafe, civilized/uncivilized. My kind of set-up will pull for a place where you can do things. It's just a theme, and it's just mine. But they make it on their own level, like space play. Space is so flexible and of a different world." Ken's suggestive arrangements allow flexibility for interpretation. Outer space play is flexible because it can include all sorts of invented space tools, props, and eventual landing sites. It is not as tied to specific cues as is the inside playhouse, for example, and can therefore launch into any number of uncharted fantasies.

Ken is quite conscientious in terms of preparing the yard for thematic play before the children arrive. As a teacher he is hesitant, however, to admit that he is adopting a specific and conscious strategy in this regard: "Oh, if you are talking about timing, and setting up the yard, and thinking about that, I do a lot of that. When I am home, I will make drawings. You can always come up with rationalizations, but it's usually not so conscious, just visual play." Ken was hesitant in our discussions about his style because of his reluctance in seeing himself as a teacher with specifically defined teaching goals. During preliminary negotiations with Ken to secure his informed consent to participate in my research, Ken first voiced reservations. I had asked him what he thought being a teacher meant. For Ken, being a teacher means "someone who takes grades, rates performance, presents formal curriculum." In the play-based world of the play yard, Ken's conceptualization of himself as a teacher is incongruous to him. I explained that one of the important goals of this program is the preservation of play. When I stressed that the head teacher had chosen both him and Karen for their expertise in supporting self-directed learning, Ken appeared visibly relieved. He immediately related some "especially fun" times when he had been able to set up pretend play events with the children.

Throughout this study, Ken persisted in resisting the notion that what he is doing is actual teaching. During a screening interview of the videotapes of his teaching, Ken again stressed that he felt he was not teaching anything specific, but rather he was "like a big kid, who could help the other kids do things." For Ken, the teacher role is reserved for nonplay circumstances: "And when someone got hurt, for example, I would move into the

teacher role and bandage them up." Being a promoter and supporter of play activities, therefore, is not included in Ken's definition of teacher.

Ken nonetheless acknowledged his success in supporting fantasy play, attributing his success in part to the program's acceptance of teacher time spent in observing, and identifying the children's perspective or agenda:

I don't feel I have an agenda of my own, but I look at the children's agenda. I don't have to sit down and teach them numbers and concepts. This is why I want to be here. I get a lot of pleasure in talking to kids about what they are doing. I don't have to worry about what I am teaching. There are never any expectations on me as a teacher in regards to 'teaching' them, so I can be myself. And I just happen to enjoy watching their fantasy play. To the extent that I can facilitate that, and help them do it on their own in whatever way I do, the better I feel about what I'm doing.

In addition to suggesting possible thematic play options, Ken also participates directly in ongoing play interactions with children. This is the specific activity he is referring to when he describes himself as a "big kid." Prompted by a question from Karen, who was interested in how Ken both initiated and stepped out of interactive activity with the children, Ken described his participation this way:

I start with lots of direction. And I have to watch to see how they are holding it on their own. I only step out when I see they are carrying it on their own. And then I step back in quickly when I see they need help, when I see it's breaking down.

One specific consequence of Ken's involvement as a play partner in the children's play is his regular verbal and nonverbal participation in the immediate action of the evolving interaction. Ken will often provide commentary on his actions. Compared to Karen, whose teaching intentions became apparent only when she spoke about her thoughts during video screenings, Ken's strategies appear in-the-moment, spontaneously, as both he and the children work together within the play event.

These two teachers exhibit definite differences in how they guide children's outdoor play. Karen is the *teacher as observer*. Her style results in less direct interaction with the children than Ken's more active interventions as the *teacher as organizer and promoter*. Karen facilitates children's peer play based on their own devices for initiation. Ken acts as a model for interactive play, initiating actively with the children. Karen's

observational stance provides her with a rich appreciation of each child's level of development in play with peers. Ken's interactive stance results in his role as a player. Ken's information derives from an in-the-moment experience of being part of the spontaneous development of a play sequence, though he readily admits to elaborate preparations of the play ecology. The childrens' play may have a spontaneous script, but the area has been thematically structured prior to initiation.

### THE CLASSROOM TEACHING CULTURE

Teachers in my classroom use group meeting times to sing, act out dictated stories, read from topical books, and review school news, but also to surface peer group themes as they arise. For example, how do we keep each other safe at school? What is a friend? Is it O.K. for your friend to play with someone else? What does it mean to be a good guy? What is a bad guy? What do you think bad guys really want? These topics are ongoing discussions, usually being left in-process to be picked up later as all of us make sense together in the classroom. At these times of discussion, I am most aware that even as I facilitate the children's pretend play together, I nonetheless come from my own cultural perspective as a teacher.

The profiles of both Karen and Ken suggest that there are some overriding beliefs that both teachers, while different in style, nonetheless share. Like children, who have developed their own set of practices that make up the peer culture, teachers also have their own perspective, called the classroom teaching culture (see, for example, Erickson, 1986; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Florio & Walsh, 1980; Philips, 1982; Schultz, Florio, & Erickson, 1982). The classroom teaching culture, like any other cultural organization, they argue, includes rules of etiquette that define what is appropriate and inappropriate under certain circumstances. Susan Philips (1982) has defined the social organization of the classroom teaching culture: events such as circle time, cleanup time, reading, and so forth, where each event "time" has particular and definable ways of interacting. As any teacher knows, the label of reading "time," juice "time," or group "time" is a signal to children for a particular set of expectations for behaving and interacting. Heath (1983) confirms that the school environment communicates messages for expected behavior, and also that the children themselves help to shape those cues. Gallas (1998) notes the clash of culture evident in her classroom:

Observations that describe points of rupture in the life of the classroom, points of confusion, missteps, and even chaos give us access to the points

when teacher intention as it is embodied in a method encounters the prosaic world of children and daily life. (p. 17)

The classroom teaching culture is clearly evident in traditional, teacher-directed classrooms. My analysis of teacher's and children's interactions in the yard suggests that the inside classroom teaching culture can be expanded to include interactions outdoors as well. I look at the initiation of an occurrence of pretend peer play as my starting point, noticing points of rupture, confusion, and missteps, and activity appearing to stand out as important, puzzling, or difficult to grasp. It is in these moments of mutual negotiation between children and teachers in the yard where the two cultures can best be seen. The four anecdotal play episode chapters that follow are examples of the interaction between the peer culture and the classroom teaching culture. Together, the chapters are a glimpse into the world created by the children and their teachers as they navigate their way in the play yard.



# Play and Diverse Cultures

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## Play pictures different cultures



2

## Poland Play



## Play pictures different cultures



4



## Play pictures different cultures



5





## Sweden school-age



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## Korean two's and three's



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## Korean 4's



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## Korean Pre-K



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## Purposes of Presentation

- What should we know about: P + C ?
- Why should we know this information?
- From where does this information come?
- What should we do with this information?

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## What to know about P+ C ?

- General/Universal P vs Cultural Specific P
- Transnational Sharing of Play Methods
- Promotion of Anti-Bias ECE Curriculum
- Play as Medium of Inter-ethnic Communication and Multicultural Understanding

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## Why we need to know about P+C?

- ECE is now on a global stage
- World conditions unfavorable to childhood
- Educational trends against play
- Be prepared and able as ECE specialists to respond constructively and assertively to needs and challenges and to aspire for better future

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## Negatives on Play and Children

- Safety and social and ecological toxins
- Physical inactivity, nutrition, obesity
- Technological Child Abuse
- Hot-Housing & Academic Pressure-Cooker
- Consumer Exploitation and compression of childhood
- Parental Angst and Ambivalence

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## “Good Empire” Strikes Back

- U.N. Convention on the Rights of Children
- American Academy of Pediatrics Paper
- The Profession of E.C.E.
  - SUPPORT VALUE OF PLAY IN GENERAL
  - SUPPORT VALUE OF PLAY IN SCHOOLS
    - Indoor classroom and in gymnasiums
    - Outdoor playground and natural environments

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## Presentation Outline

- Conceptual Framework for P + C
  - Environment-Play Relations Model
- Evaluation Continuum for P + C
- Play and Education in Diverse Cultures
- Play as a “Cultural Bridge”
  - Penn State University “Mommy and Me” Program

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## Conceptual Framework for P + C

- Play as intrinsically motivated universal
- Play as culturally constructed activity
- Play is reflection of cultural influences
  - Institutions, traditions, history, geography, climate
  - Beliefs, values, attitudes
  - Environmental affordances, time, space, energy, actions
- Play as an expression of one’s culture
  - Child’s play is visual metaphor
    - P encodes cultural rules for proper behavior
    - P reflects cultural values
  - Child’s play is grammar of culture
    - P is a cultural language carrying dual semantic load
    - P is both communication and statements about communication

## Model: Macro- and micro-level

- Macro-level influences on Child' Play
  - Eco-cultural factors
    - History, climate, geography
  - Socio-cultural systems and institutions
    - Political, economic, social, educational
- Micro-level influences on Child's Play
  - Inner psychology of agents of socialization
    - Beliefs, values, and attitudes
  - Cultural working models
    - Ideas about what is and what ought to be
    - Ideas about achieving goals 'blue prints for action'
  - Activity settings for Play
    - Participants (teachers, parents, peers) involved in Play
    - Materials and objects for Play
    - Time and space for Play

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## Play is a complex phenomena and play is a double edged sword

- Many play genres
- Individual differences
- Situational variation
- Temporal stability and instability
  
- Light side and dark side
- Interpretations are relative to a perspective
  - Immature play or exuberant play?
  - Deviant play or alternative play?
  - Disruptive, defiant, disrespectful play or social equity play or play for social justice, equality?

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## Play Evaluation Scheme

- Play evaluation rationale
  - Concern with child's present here and now
  - Concern with child's future well being
  - Play can be a child's friend or a child's foe in the state of being or the process of becoming
- Play evaluation criteria
  - Positive factors
    - Play power to create, imagine, invent, discover, learn..
    - Power to bring persons together, commune, bond..
    - Power to learn about one's self, discover interests, etc..
  - Negative factors
    - Play can harm self physically or psychologically
    - Play can harm others physically or psychologically
    - Play can destroy property (vandalism) or ruin the environment

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## Play Evaluation Continuum

- Enriching, 'soulful' Play
- Educational Play
- Expressive/therapeutic Play
- Recreational Play
- Entertainment Play
- Illicit Play
- Hurtful Play
- Dark Play
- Hateful Play

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## Play and Education and Cultures

- Sweden
- Norway
- China
- Taiwan

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## Sweden and Norway

- “Lekpedagogic” -- Pedagogy of Play --
- Highly developed logos and praxis
- Offer college degree in play pedagogy
- Professional occupation: Play Leader
  - Adults wary not to interfere with child’s play
  - Adults seek to support and enrich child’s play
- Congruent with Scandinavian Culture
  - Centralized governments assure uniformly high quality ECE
  - Very child-sensitive, taking child’s point of view
  - Image of childhood: “Sun match Nature Child”
    - Child is independent, self contained, free
    - Child always playing in rural, wild settings, in nature.
    - Child is preparing for future adult roles and responsibilities

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## Swedish Play



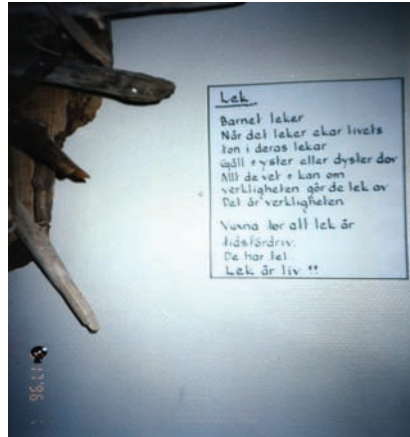
25

## Swedish Play



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## Swedish Play



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## Swedish Play



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# Play Pedagogy

- Play pedagogy part of developmental pedagogy—child development & ECE
- Principles of Play pedagogy
  - Envision child as playing learning child
    - See the playing in the learning act
    - See the learning in the playing act
  - Start with the child's initiative in play
  - Encourage, stimulate, and challenge
- Kinds of play intervention methods
  - Direct and from the outside play episode frame
  - Indirect by arranging the 'play stage'
  - Direct and inside the play episode frame

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# Examples of Play Pedagogy

- Mixed age peer play
- Individualized play assessments
- Special toys for exceptional children
- Workshop play pedagogy
- Narrative curriculum and play
- Playworlds

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## Norway Play



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## Norway Play



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## Norway Play



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## Taiwan and Play

- 'Feeding of Ducks' "tianya"
- High academic expectations
- Memorization valued by tradition
- Recitation
- Performance
- Order and Constraint

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## Taiwan Play



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## Taiwan Play



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## Taiwan Play



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## Taiwan Play



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## Variation and Change

- Taiwan is fast changing society
- Educational reform
- New interest in intrinsic motivation and intrinsically motivated learning
- Play, imagination, creativity

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## Teacher and Parents beliefs (Johnson & Chang, 2007)

- Middle class parents and teachers more positive about play than working class parents.
- Play beliefs differ depending on activity
  - Teachers' roles in play
  - Children's spontaneous expressions
  - Social interaction and play and creativity versus social interaction and group harmony
- Play practices differ from stated play beliefs
  - Teacher facilitation of peer interaction in dramatic play and creative expression and story telling may not match stated beliefs about value of these activities

## Play beliefs and practices

- Sharing across cultures are diasporic or global in its identification and local in its identification.
- Play method and play theory export and import are governed by local execution in indigenous situation
- Transplanting should be reflective and negotiated with local stakeholders
- Trans-cultural processes and play pedagogy methods shared need to be co-constructed

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## Play as Cultural Bridge-Making

- Play is medium and context for multi-cultural communication and network building and social bonding
- This is seen at the macro-level between programs and institutions in different countries.
- This is seen at micro-level in classroom with mixed ethnicity and race and languages

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## Play as a Cultural Bridge

- Play and social interaction among children of different cultures promotes multi-cultural awareness and understanding
- Play and social interaction among parents and children also promotes cultural sensitivity and relationship building across cultures.

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## Penn State “Mommy & Me”

- Parent and child playgroups at PSU for international graduate student families
- Promotes social networking
- Multi-cultural: Taiwan, S. Korea, Russia, Turkey, etc.
- Play and parenting skills
- Opportunities for learning school readiness during circle time with parents and children sitting together.

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## Mommy and Me



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# Mommy and Me



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## Conclusion: Value to Study Play and Diverse Cultures

1. general play & culture specific play?  
~answers can be found
2. Trade Play Ideas and methods in ECE
3. Build anti-bias multicultural ECE
4. Promote inter-cultural understanding
5. Advocate for childhood and play  
Play in general: experiential learning  
Play in ECE: developmental learning

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## The End

- Questions and Answers

– Thank You!

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# Play and Diverse Cultures

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## **Play and Diverse Cultures (second draft 5-17-07)**

James E. Johnson

*Pausing to listening to an airplane in the sky, stooping to watch a ladybug on a plant, sitting on a rock to watch the waves crash over the quayside—children have their own agendas and timescales. As they find out more about their world and their place in it; they work hard not to let adults hurry them. We need to hear their voices.*

~Cathy Nutbrown, Contemporary British educational theorist.

What do early childhood specialists need to know about play and diverse culture and why is it important to be knowledgeable about this topic? Trying to provide a reasonable response to these two questions is a daunting task even leaving early childhood researchers who have their own special concerns that do not affect professional practitioners and policy-makers in the field in the same way as they affect the researchers. Answering these questions for teachers, administrators and educational leaders by drawing upon our current knowledge base is a timely and critically important task. Teacher lore, experience, and the results of recent research and theorizing come to our aide to illuminate the importance of play in relation to culture at this important cross-road in the field of early childhood education (ECE).

At this juncture ECE on the world's stage faces enormous attention as well as scrutiny. ECE is rapidly growing globally as developing countries seek to strengthen their programs for young children and their families (Roopnarine & Metindogan, 2006). ECE is seen as a way to serve national and economic development goals. While ECE deserves and celebrates this new attention and welcomes the challenges that are involved to create good care and educational programs, and to have positive impacts on families and their communities, ECE also is under stress to meet these demands at a time when world conditions seem to be changing in a direction not favorable to young children. A great deal of uncertainty exists as to how ECE should respond. Angst over children's play is a prime example of this present tension. Should ECE favor programs that are holistic and play-based , sequential and academic, or some combination of these two general approaches to curriculum? How does play in general and play that is culturally specific fit into ECE? How does ECE respond to changes in play and childhood?

Childhood and play are tightly connected in the minds and hearts of peoples living in many different lands and circumstances across the ages. The United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child (<http://www.unicef.org/crc.htm>) acclaims that play is a human right of children that should not be denied. Across nations children should not have to go to work or be exploited in ways that take away from their chances for play and leisure activities. Play is held to be critical for the health, the well being and growth and development of children living everywhere. Play is seen to be a most significant natural and experiential way for children to explore, create, learn, relate and interact with the world around them through all their senses. It is a natural process requiring minimal adult guidance as exemplified in outdoor play, unstructured sports, creative expression in dance, music, arts, exploration of nature, and various games, mastery play, and forms of make-believe and story. Play promotes social skills, fosters language and cognitive abilities, stretches the child's imagination, and helps exercise the child's lungs and muscles and helps the child learn about his or her physical limitations. Recently, the prestigious American Academy of Pediatrics asserted in a new clinical report that "play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength (Ginsberg, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006, p. 3).

Despite this clear message from professional authorities concerning the importance of play, there are international trends which are undermining child's play and eroding childhood itself. Factors that have been contributing to this decline in unstructured experiential learning and play during childhood include the growing popularity of electronic media such as television, videos, DVDs, and computers, the rise in consumer exploitation and materialism and technology, competitive organized sports and other activity such as lessons and special classes that vie for children's time and attention, parent's fears for their children's safety and lack of quality play space near to children's homes.

Much needs to be realized about play and diverse cultures by ECE specialists. I next present a summary of my general model for environment-play relations as a useful conceptual framework for teachers and others to have to try to understand better that play in relation to culture is complex. This is followed by my model of a play evaluation continuum. These two models will serve as ideas to consider in relation to play and education in different cultures including Sweden and Taiwan that I will briefly compare. In closing, I will describe the Penn State University "Mommy and Me" program for international graduate students and their young children as an example of play serving as a vehicle for families of different cultures get to know each other.

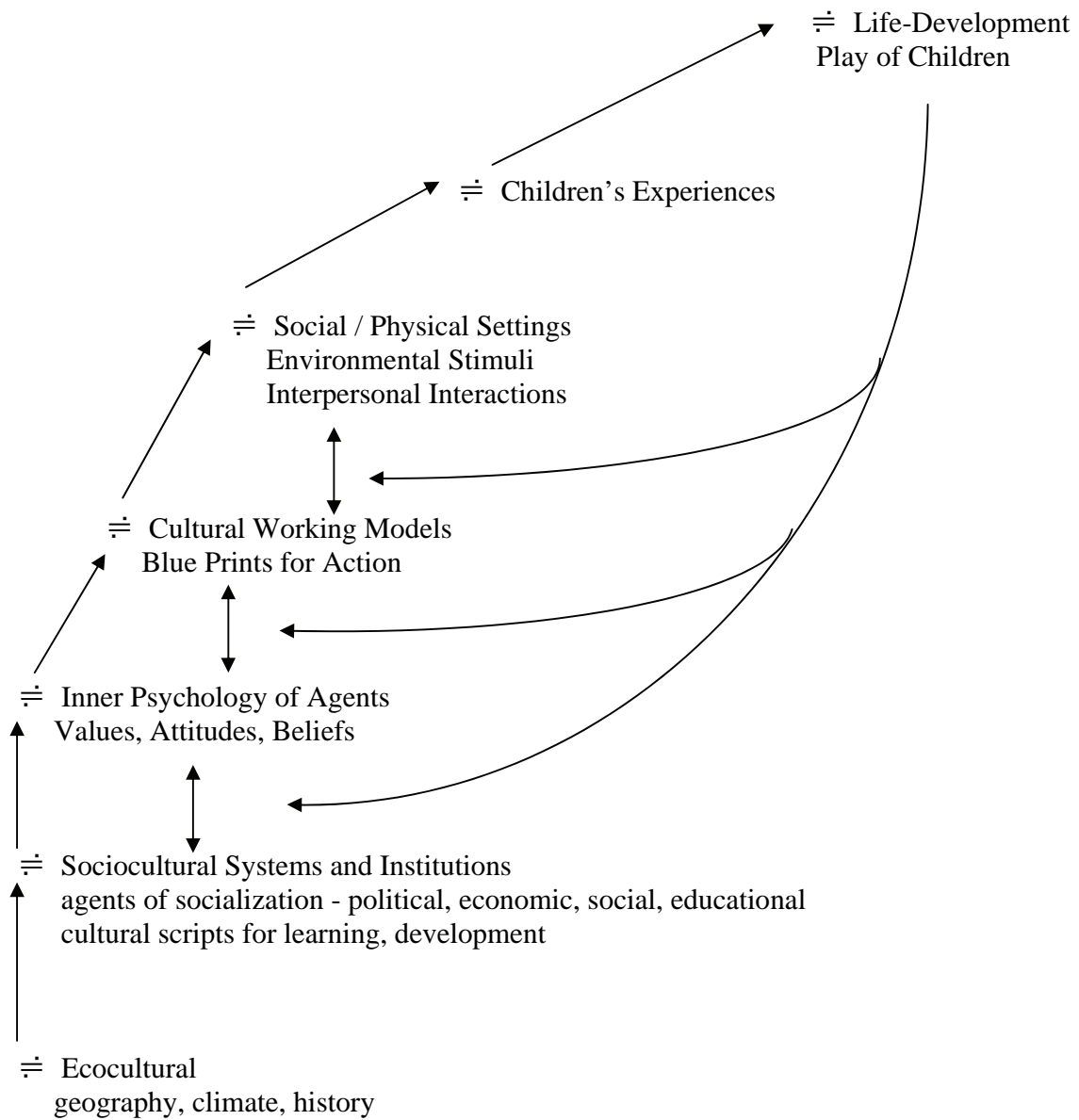
In sum, play and diverse cultures is useful to study to (a) help us appreciate what is general or universal about play and what is culturally specific, (b) how ECE programs

and models can share information about play across national boundaries, (c) how play and culture information can promote anti-bias curriculum and education that is multicultural in ECE, and finally (d) how play is a way to make cultural bridges and to enhance inter-ethnic communication.

### **Environment-Play Relations**

Gaskins, Haight, & Lancy (2006) have recently proposed that we must resist seeing children's play as an intrinsically motivated universal behavior of children that looks the same across cultures. Instead, play is a culturally constructed activity and play is a cultural activity (see also Goncu, Jain, & Tuermer, 2006; Goncu, Tuermer, Jain, & Johnson, 1999). Children's play reflects their culture and it expresses their culture (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2001). Play varies widely across but also within cultures with respect to (a) types of social interactions experienced during play and who is involved, (b) materials time and space factors, and (c) the content and forms of the play (*e.g.*, types of games played, kinds of pretend themes, etc.). Across cultures play as a structured and meaningful activity within a society is associated with childrearing beliefs, values, and practices. Play is related to a culture's institutions, traditions, history, and everyday activities. Some of these environmental factors support play, others interfere with play, and still others are neutral with respect to play. Figure 1 illustrates my general model of environmental-play relations.

Figure 1 shows a general model for a cultural-contextual study of children's play. This general model represents major categories of factors operating on both macro- and micro-levels about which information is needed to understand play-in- context. At the foundation are **ecocultural factors** which are the history, climate and geography of a given culture that influence its **sociocultural systems and institutions**. These systems and institutions create the political, economic, social, educational scripts for learning and development. The **inner psychology of agents** (values, attitudes, beliefs) and **cultural working models** (actions) of members of a culture are in a process of dynamic reciprocal relation over time with the sociocultural systems on the one hand, and with the generation of physical-material, temporal-spatial, and interpersonal **activity settings**, on the other hand.



**Figure 1**  
**Conceptual Framework for Macro-/Micro- Level Analysis of Play-Environment Relations**

Source: Johnson, Christie and Wardle. *Play, Development and Early Education*.  
 Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright © 2005 by Pearson Education,  
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As shown in Figure 1, also linking inner **psychology of agents** and **activity settings** are **cultural working models** or “blueprints for action”. Cultural working models are how individuals in the culturally community personally represent for themselves within their own belief system, how they think things are in their culture, and how they would like them to be. Hence, they give rise to goals and intentions and are the motivating force leading to actual behaviors and events and objects in activity settings. Activity settings, which require analysis in terms of actors-participants, task-activities(*e.g.*, chores, schooling, care giving , play, etc.), scripts(*i.e.*, norms for self expression, motives, and goals related to salient cultural values), are the various contexts for children’s play and non-play experiences that impact development. In turn, the life course developmental manifestations of children, including play actions, affect the transactions occurring between social systems, and also affect the thoughts and actions of caregivers and the activity settings they influence.

Hence, this general model suggests that to properly think about play-environment relations, or play-in-context, requires broad consideration of macro-level and micro-level factors, physical environments and social environments, group processes and individual processes, and ideational variables (beliefs, attitudes, values, ideas) and behavioral variables.

Whenever ECE considers play it soon becomes obvious that not all play is alike within a given culture or indeed as expressed by the same person over time and in different situations. In addition to different play genres there are complications brought on by the fact that play is a double edged sword and has many possible interpretations. For example, different play genres can refer to mastery play, game play, pretense play. Yet within each kind of play alternative interpretations are possible. Immature pretense play as exemplified by a child of five years playing make-believe like a three year old can be seen as fun regression or fooling around by a permissive mother or teacher and may be experienced as fun fooling by the child himself or herself. Disruptive play likewise can be viewed from another perspective as settling on a different play, as seeking alternatives in play. Disrespectful play can be social equity play. Beauty (or ugliness) is in the eye of the beholder. This conceptual ambiguity and complexity about play makes it hazardous to evaluate play in any simple-minded kind of way.

## **Play Evaluation Continuum**

Fostering the well being and development of children demands asking how play is a positive and how it can be a negative influence in the process of growing up. Responding to this important question requires appreciating play as a complex multifarious phenomenon. Examining play in relation to child development and early childhood educational programming, and other social contexts, not only leads to a realization that play is a differentiated construct, but also that it may be possible to fruitfully order the play behaviors of children along an evaluative dimension (Johnson, 2004, 2006).

Evaluating play is a value statement as well as an interpretation of theory and research evidence which is relevant in defining play quality. Play evaluation can assist in deciding play options. One general criterion I propose for judging play quality is whether play serves any of the 'powers of play'. Various potential powers of play are recognized including these three categories: (1) promotion of divergent thinking, imagination, and creativity; (2) fostering individual expression for personal discovery and fulfillment; and (3) social communication, belonging, and communal bonding (Johnson, Christie, & Wardle, 2005). A second criterion I propose is whether the play harms self or others physically or psychologically, or destroys property or the environment. How these questions are answered with respect to a specified play action determines where the play is placed along the play evaluation continuum depicted in Figure 2

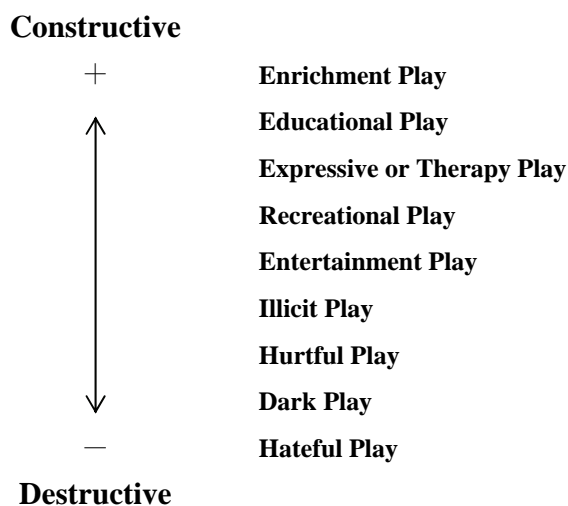


Figure 2 Play Evaluation Continuum

As seen in this figure 2 the most positive play is labeled *enrichment*, or play which nourished the over-all development of the child. This play is common in Waldorf or Steiner kindergarten programs (Drummond,1999) or Reggio-inspired early educational programs(New,2005), for example, where children are granted the freedom and time to engage in deep and authentic play experiences that are very meaningful to children This play is spontaneous, child-initiated, and transformative. Next along this continuum is *educational play* that serves some teacher-determined pedagogical goal as part of an intellectual, not academic, curriculum. This kind of “learn-full” play is common in the USA in well-run developmentally appropriate and enhancing classrooms or centers, such as those following Montessori or the USA ‘home-grown’ curricular models of the Banks Street, Spectrum, High/Scope, and the Projects Approach programs or in other high quality classrooms (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2005).

*Expressive or therapeutical play* appears next and is also clearly positive in that it serves many wholesome interests and needs which are not directly tied to traditional areas of cognitive development but which are nonetheless beneficial due to its healing or restorative functions or because it gives children an avenue for physical, artistic or musical self-expression, recovery, restoration or fulfillment. Some teachers and parents may chose to value expressive play even more than educational play that aims primarily for intellectual growth in traditional areas of cognitive development.

The middle ‘neutral’ region of this play evaluation continuum is taken up by child-initiated *recreational* play that tends to be active, as well as *entertainment* play that tends to be passive and mostly escapist in its intent, a time to ‘turn off ones mind’ and relax, such as by television watching or by video game playing. However, some forms of this entertainment play can be negative. This happens when the entertainment play (*e.g.*, certain books, music, movies, television shows or computer or video games) promotes hostile or otherwise negative feelings, thoughts, or behaviors in the child. The negative side of the continuum also includes *illicit* play which can include disruptive play at school or on the playground, such as throwing spitballs, or making a game out of seeing how many times you can be excused by the teacher to go to the rest room, or to go to the pencil sharpener without a real need(King, 1986)

Further down the scale comes *hurtful* play, *dark* play and *hateful* play which are all very negative forms of play because either self or other, or both self and other, are victims of the play. Such play is offensive, nasty or mean-spirited, and often hostile and aggressive. Teasing, bullying, and enjoying sexist, racist, and violent entertainment in the use of “X”-rated video games are examples of very negative play behaviors. Hurtful play that is persistent and intentional and that reflects ill-will and a desire to express harm



toward another person or group of people is labeled hateful play. Dark play is a form of pathological, morbid play in which the player takes a chance of being killed or killing oneself and others(*e.g.* Russian Roulette).

Parents and teachers have responsibility to promote opportunities for positive and constructive play in children and to guard children from temptations to participate in negative and destructive play. Analogous to eating, all children need nourishing ‘play food’ to thrive, but sometimes “play junk food” is okay, neutral types of recreation and passive entertainment. However, extremely negative and destructive illicit play, and certainly hurtful, dark and hateful play, can be considered ‘play poison’ and must be stopped and removed without question.

In addition to this general socialization and educational goal in connection with children’s play, goals that would appear to be similar across cultures, there are particular ways education and play have interfaced in different cultures. In the next section an example will be given contrasting two Nordic Countries with an East Asian country.

### **Play and Education**

Play is used in education differently in various cultures. For example, there are interesting contrasts between Sweden and Norway, on the one hand, and Taiwan, on the other hand.

*Lekpedagogik*, or the pedagogy of play, is an extremely significant topic in Scandinavian countries today (Tragedon, 2005; Welen, 2005). This has not always been the case. As recently as the 1980s teachers and adults in Sweden and other Nordic countries were reluctant to actually play with young children. This may be partly due to a reserved adult personality as a national trait, but it is mostly due to a fear that adults going into children’s play will take control over it. The duty of teachers is to support but not control play. Children’s play inside and outside of school is marked by freedom without interference by adults.

In Sweden, children are ideally viewed as persons who are independent and self-contained, free to ramble on their own, forever playing in open settings yet practicing future adult roles(Aronson & Sandin, 1996). This image of a ‘wild child’ in nature contrasts sharply with the image of children in East Asia where children are carefully cultivated to become members of adult society.

Nowadays in Sweden this image of childhood and play is changing somewhat because play is seen more clearly (fruits from ECE research and practice) as very much

linked to learning in childhood. Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, Sweden's first Ph.D University Professor Chair, writes about developmental pedagogy and the *playing learning child*. Teachers are urged to see the learning in play, but also the play in learning. Scandinavian countries have a very child-sensitive culture. Play pedagogy honors the child's point of view. ECE programs uniformly are high quality with play seen as a tool of developmental enrichment more so than as an educational tool, as is the case generally in the USA, for example.

Teachers are careful observers of children's play in Norway and Sweden. Starting with the child's initiative, teachers use materials suggestions, and interventions to add to the child's creativity and imagination. Teachers navigate carefully in child's play to help children and peer groups to further their play along with encouragement, stimulation and challenge. Play can and is stirred in three different ways: (1) direct and from the outside by various teacher interventions; (2) indirect by arranging for play by use of the environment and materials; and (3) direct and from the inside with the teacher participating in the play episode of children as a full fledged co-player.

Teachers in Scandinavian ECE programs have been employing innovative practices in recent years. For instance, older children are encouraged to play with younger children. Mixed age peer play foster learning between children at various developmental levels. Careful individualized play assessments are employed to plan each child's play to reap the most from the child's play experiences. This play pedagogy method has helped to drastically reduce peer conflicts and individual child play-related difficulties.

Different play pedagogy techniques are being employed in as ECE and the science of play has been perfected over the years in the Nordic states. For example, Arne Trageton has used word processors in play-based literacy centers to have children make their own books, magazines and classroom newspapers in kindergartens through the primary grades. He has also stimulated creative writing and imagination in children by maximizing outdoor play time at school with the creation of a socio-dramatic play village with play huts built by parents and teachers on the school grounds. Other play and ECE specialists have designed programs using special toys for exceptional children as a play pedagogy method. Still others include encouraging the creation of stories by the children to be weaved together over time with all the children and the teachers participating, similar to Vivian Paley's narrative curriculum. As a final example, in 'play worlds' adults and children create a structure for play inspired by children's literature. Sorrow and fear and conflicts are given aesthetic form. Teachers can be successful using play when they know their children very well and have good relations with them, and have

mastered play-based assessment and communication techniques. Play pedagogy is very common now in Sweden and Norway and other Nordic states (Trageton, 2005; Welen, 2005). In Sweden one can earn a college degree majoring in play pedagogy.

Turning to the Far East Asian countries of Taiwan and Mainland China in contrast, training and didactic instruction by tradition is valued as effective education. This greatly influences how play is related with education. The Chinese word for such education is *tianya*, which means feeding of ducks. Chinese children are believed to be highly malleable, moldable like clay. High academic expectations are placed on children. Memorization, not an imaginative playful disposition or creative thinking, is the road to excellence in traditional Chinese society. As an old Confucian scholar in the Ming dynasty, Shi-Yi Lu, averred, “anyone who can remember can understand.” Recitation without understanding is justified, as in memorizing the classics, in that it is like filling the four stomachs of a cow: “once its stomachs are filled, it can slowly ruminate on what it ate” (Liou, 1996, p. 85).

Taiwan is a fast-changing society still very much influenced by Confucian philosophy, but one which is questioning basic assumptions. As in other developed and developing countries, there has been a strong trend towards diversity and liberalization. There is growing concern about educational reform and how to help children become smart, happy, and creative all at once. There are the traditional values of order and constraint, but there is new interest in children’s play and expression at school and at home. There is a new found concern for having a space at home and school for children’s freedom and pleasure, cooperation and a more means-over-ends orientation in examining learning and development. Valued more nowadays in Taiwan is intrinsic motivation, and last but not least, the importance of play, creativity, and imagination to the developing child. More and more teachers and parents point to a greater willingness on the part of many adults in Taiwan to take on the challenges of educational reform.

There is within-country variation in Taiwan concerning play and early childhood education in general, and between teachers and parents in particular. For example, parents differ in their beliefs and attitudes about play and ECE with middle class parents being more like teachers than like working class parents. There are subtle differences in play beliefs, such as the distinction between teacher roles in play and children’s spontaneous expressions in the classroom, and the belief in the importance of social interaction occurring along with expressions of creativity, play, and imagination (Johnson & Chang, 2007).

Also, there are lags in the adoption of actual classroom practices compared with the willingness to espouse beliefs based on Western theories of child development and

early childhood education. Teachers in the Johnson and Chang study supported the importance of social commerce in the classroom and believed it to be related to positive outcomes in the areas of creativity, imagination, and play, but they did not facilitate peer interaction when children were engaged in dramatic play or other symbolic behaviors such as story telling.

Sharing across cultures of early childhood beliefs and practices requires socio-cultural research seeking to comprehend the importance of eco- and socio-cultural systems in relation to local contextual factors. Early childhood beliefs and practices are borrowed and shared across cultures as well as emanating from within cultures. Early childhood educational practices today in this era of globalization are diasporic, or global in its identification, local in its execution, altered by processes of diffusion, recontextualization and conventionalization (Wollons, 2000).

Assuming that it is worthwhile to have some transplanting of curricular and programmatic elements from one culture to another, this must be done through a process of co-constructivism, with the play pedagogy exporter and importer early childhood education experts working together, and with the importer also working closely with other stakeholders in their local indigenous situations. One might ask whether in Taiwan early childhood teachers should put into practice better their Western-inspired beliefs concerning the importance of social interaction in the expressions of imagination, creativity and play (as opposed to the value of social interaction for learning social graces and group harmony inspired by traditional Chinese values). Or should early childhood teachers in Taiwan change their stated beliefs to be more in accord with their actual practices in this specific area of their early childhood curriculum? Who is more important here, Vygotsky or Confucius? Or can we (they) have both?

### **Play as Cultural Bridge-Making**

Play is an exceedingly important topic to talk about within and across cultures, and play is a wonderful vehicle for communication and building social bonds between people—children and people of all ages and different ethnic backgrounds.

“Mommy & Me” playgroup at Penn State is designed for residents living in an on-campus university apartments complex. Most participants who enroll in the program come from diverse cultures and are only in the USA for a few years while attending The Pennsylvania State University graduate school to earn a masters of doctorate degree. However, until recently non-residents who are students or students’ spouses were also

welcomed to attend to the playgroup without any charge. One of the reasons that the playgroup was established in the first place was for having moms get a social connection with other moms. This concern was mentioned in the interviews and a letter starting the program in the 1990's. Establishing a connection among parents especially mothers is the most important aspect of the playgroup. From participants' point of views when the husband comes to the USA and brings his family with him, the wife is left with the only choice which is taking care of their children. In this process, women have to have a connection with the community in large and with other women who are in the same situation to get through this temporary life stage. Many international graduate students from Turkey, South Korea and Taiwan and Mainland China and Russia and other countries have come to "Mommy and Me" over the 12 years of its existence.

Play has proven to be an excellent medium and context for families of different cultural groups to get to know each other. Young children are able to gain play and social skills as a result of attending the program. The director allows mostly free play but there is also a circle time. At circle time the children learn to function in a social group that is structured by the teacher, singing simple songs, responding to one's name and other activities. During free play mothers and a few fathers and grandparents enjoy time playing with their children. However, children from different families play together during this free play time. Before and after the "Mommy and Me" daily session parents build social networks, and during free play also parents are often seen chatting about various topics while the children play. Although language is a barrier in many instances, play helps facilitate social interaction among the children and the adults. Play is a bridge between cultures in the "Mommy and M"e multicultural program.

### **Final Remarks**

Study of the literature on play and culture can be useful in two general ways: (1) By making more likely fruitful sharing of programs and curriculum across nations or cultures; (2) By making more likely the successful implementation of culturally congruent and anti-biased programs and curriculum within nations or cultures.

(1) Sharing Across Cultures requires:

(a) An understanding of cultural difference and the importance of contextual factors. Within a given cultural context, *micro-analysis* of ECE phenomena such as free play in the classroom must always be joined by *macro-analysis* of ecocultural forces

( Grieshaber & Hatch, 2001). **Ecocultural**=geography+climate+history+sociocultural systems(agents of socialization, cultural scripts for learning and development), institutions(political, social, health care, economics).(Roopnarine et al, 2000).

(b) An acceptance that ECE programs(or components) in general are borrowed and shared across cultures as well as emanating from within nations. As has been the case historically with the kindergarten institution( see Wollons,2000), many ECE programs and curricular models today are **diasporic**=global in its identification, local in its execution-- altered by processes of diffusion, recontextualization, and conventionalization.

(c). An assumption that it is worthwhile for some ECE transplanting of curricular and programmatic elements from one culture to another. This must be done through a process of **co-constructivism**=exporter and importer ece experts work together, as importer ece experts also work with other stakeholders in their local situations.

(2) Implementing Culturally Congruent and Anti-Bias ECE :

(a) The focus of NAEYC's **DCAP**= Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Practices(Hyun et al., 2001). DCAP urges culturally congruent critical pedagogy.

(b) It is likewise important for educators

(i) to elucidate the many cultural patterns that are encountered in a multi-ethnic classroom or a community child care program, and

(ii) to increase inter-ethnic communication via use of **Structuring Play Observations Checklist** (Farrer,1990)(see Appendix A)..

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## Appendix A

Structuring Playground Observations (Farrer, 1990) Claire R. Farrer *Play and inter-ethnic communication: A practical ethnography of the Mescalero Apache* New York: Garland

### I. Physical Environment of the Play Area

#### A. Boundaries

1. Are the boundaries natural features (trees, gullies)?
2. Are boundaries artificial features (walls, dividers, fences)?
3. Sketch the play area.

#### B. Division of Available Area

1. Are there specific places for specific activities?
  - a. Are these dictated by equipment, materials, toys?
  - b. Do kids determine what will be played with where?
2. Do kids use adult-planned centers only for 'proper play'?  
(or do they play differently in ways unexpected by teachers?)
3. Are there gender-specific areas defined by kids?
  - a. If yes, where in context of whole play area?
  - b. If yes, how is play different in these areas?
  - c. If yes, are there ever cross-gender play?

[ Now select one game or play activity to observe in close detail]

### II. In and Out of Play

#### A. Initiation

1. How is play for the game or activity initiated?
2. How does this vary or does it?

#### B. Duration

1. How long is a turn or a typical reciprocal exchange in a game or play episode, respectively?
2. How long does the game or activity last?

#### C. Cessation

1. How is the play terminated?
2. When do the kids know the play is over, and how?

#### D. Number and Composition in Play

1. How many usually play the game or activity?

- a. Do both sexes play? Separately or together?
- b. Does cross-age play happen?
- c. Does cross ethnic group play happen?
- 2. Do kids join the play after it is started(in progress)?
- 3. Are there spectators?
- 4. Do the same children usually play the game or activity

together?

#### E. Rules

- 1. What are the rules for the game or activity?
- 2. What rules seem subject to negotiation, if any?(ask kids)
- 3. Who determines the rules?
- 4. What happens when the rules are broken?

### III. Extra-Somatic Conditions

#### A. Verbal

- 1. What verbal interactions occur?
  - a. Who initiates the verbal component?
  - b. Who responds?
- 2. Is verbal behavior needed for game or activity?
- 3. Does verbal behavior vary by gender or age or ethnicity?

#### B. Social

- 1. Who plays with whom?
  - a. Do the same children always seem to play together?
  - b. Are some kids routinely left out of the play?
- 2. How many form a group?
  - a. Does this depend on game or activity?
  - b. Do groups change during play?
    - 1. Who joins?
    - 2. Who leaves?
- 3. Does the group change with a change in the game?

### IV. Kinesic and Proxemic Conditions

#### A. Kinesic Conditions-Movement

- 1. Are games involving the whole body dominant?
- 2. If not, what part/parts of the body move(s) most?
- 3. If so, are there also games involving less body movement?

#### B. Proxemic Conditions--Personal Space

- 1. How far apart do kids place themselves?

2. Is it 'cheating' to be close?
3. Where must kids be for a game or activity to proceed?
4. Does the degree of separateness or closeness vary from game to game?

## V. Synthesis

### A. Space

1. Do particular games and activities occur in specific places?
2. Do kids use all the space available?
3. How does use of indoor and outdoor space compare?
  - a. Similarities?
  - b. Differences?
4. Is there a relationship between the way personal space is used on the playground and in the classroom?

### B. Verbalization

1. How did the children communicate with each other?
  - a. Primarily by verbal interaction?
  - b. Primarily by non-verbal means?
2. How do the children teach each other to play?( see it or ask)
3. How are disputes settled?
4. What similarities and differences exist in the way children teach each other in play and the way they are taught in the classroom by the teacher?

### C. And Finally.....

1. What struck you the most while observing?
2. How does it relate to classroom experiences?
3. How might it be possible to restructure the classroom or your teaching technique to more closely approximate the patterns you observed?

Using the above 'practical ethnographic tool' will allow the teacher to become more attuned to what children actually do when relatively free from constraints. The teacher becomes an ethnographic observer and recorder, obtaining information with which to study socio-linguistic patterns in ethnically diverse groups of children. The teacher who becomes more sensitive to individual and cultural differences, seeing different ethnic styles in the use of time, movement(kinesics), and space and placement(proxemics), as

well and other nonverbal signals( all of which are ‘messages’ in a culturally multi-layered text), will become more self-aware of one’s own communication patterns and styles. The teacher will be in a better position to ‘read’ ethnically diverse students and tell when the teacher has the children’s attention, or how to obtain their attention, how to motivate and teach more effectively.

Children’s play is a visual metaphor, a grammar of culture. Play is viewed as a language carrying a dual semantic load—both communication and statements about communication. Play is itself and is communication about the child’s culture. Play encodes cultural rules for proper behavior—including speech and communication behavior.



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# Play and Creativity

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## **Play and Creativity (5-11-07 - second draft)**

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James E. Johnson

*Play is the highest form of research* ~Albert Einstein

Within the field of education the new millennium brings forth an urgent demand for teachers, parents, and administrators to find ways to meet important challenges connected with preparing our children for an unknown future in an increasingly diversified, interdependent, and troubled world. Our perennial ‘dilemma of socialization’ has always been to create ways to employ what is known to help the next generation become ready to face what is not known. Anxiety in response to this longstanding problem is now exacerbated by the present state of our world with new threats posed by global climate change, terrorism, religious and cultural differences, poverty and obesity, and technology. We feel as never before the seriousness of the saying that the human race as a species is one generation away from extinction if we do not properly educate and socialize our children to survive –and also to hopefully thrive- on our good planet Earth.

Solving the ‘dilemma of socialization’ is not easy. Luminaries such as Jerome Bruner and Jean Piaget have made suggestions over the years as to how we might seek to address the dilemma. Bruner’s book *Beyond the Information Given*(1973) provides a cogent case for focusing on cognitive processes including problem-solving, exploration, and play; the corpus of Jean Piaget’s work supports this approach. For Piaget, to understand is to transform. Most educators nowadays would probably agree that important clues for how to meet this inter-generational imperative can be found in constructivism epistemology.

Play and creativity are linchpins in constructivism epistemology and are clearly needed to begin tackling the socialization and educational dilemmas of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In what follows I discuss each construct separately and in relation with each other. I identify present day barriers to play and creativity; I then apply my ideas about play and creativity to early childhood education (ECE). In so doing I will be suggesting that ECE is the hopeful field in a dismal world; and moreover I think that we can aspire for brighter days ahead by preparing children to be playful and creative. Furthermore, I will be suggesting that this can be achieved only when teachers and other knowledge mediators within the educational system can themselves be more creative and playful. But this is



only possible when favorable conditions for play and creativity exist for everyone in a society. The *Zeitgeist* or cultural values must be supportive. There must be a play ecology prevailing over the land before creativity can flourish among the people.

### **Defining play and creativity**

Play and creativity are illusive, exceedingly complex constructs. Each notion resists any attempt at precise definition. Writing a dictionary for these terms can be an endless and thankless task. For example, consider the word play and how metaphorically in the English language we even say that inanimate objects play. We have the play of gears, the play of waves, the play of lights, the play of sounds, the play of colors and so forth. Hence, I will target what I consider the essence of play for purposes of this paper.

Two meanings for play I find useful when thinking about play in relation to young children and ECE include, first of all, the to- and fro- movement of play, and secondly, play's separation from ordinary reality. Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (noted in Gadamer, 1979) introduces the German word *Spiel* meaning 'dance' or 'play' as a backward and forward movement without effort and without goal or purpose other than its process itself. Here we see that the essential quality of playing is akin to the dynamic self-generating mobile process of life and nature itself. Play is an intrinsic self-renewing constant that for humans can enter into art, drama, games, language use, and human actions and ideations in general. Play in humans can also be said to be a separate mode of existing different from being in a reality state of mind used for adapting to ordinary life circumstances (Johnson, Christie, & Wardle, 2005).

Creativity likewise has many denotations and connotations in the English language. Although computers themselves cannot create or be creative, play as a spontaneous 'to and fro' process may be viewed as the binary system language for creativity software. Creativity is hallmarked by originality and adaptive-ness. The creative person does, or the creative act is, something brand new and technologically or aesthetically useful in a society. Original means it is not habitual and not routine; creative implies unconventional and intrinsically motivated, intentional actions—not actions governed by conventions or extrinsic rewards or blind luck. Unambiguous creativity is difficult to pin down. The creativity complex or syndrome, then, is comprised of intrinsic motivation, intentionality, adaptive and original to help distinguish genuine creativity from creativity-related processes such as discovering, inventing, and innovating, and pseudo-creative processes such as fantasizing, daydreaming, being contrary, and being disinhibited and impulsive (Runco, 2007).

The literature on this topic creativity is indeed as voluminous as the literature on play. For instance, studies have sought to show the relationship between intelligence and creativity; creativity has been defined as a process which involves the production of remote associations ('thinking outside the box') and divergent or unusual, if not original, ideas. Creative thinking has been characterized as divergent as opposed to convergent thinking in Guilford's model of the intellect. Personality traits such as autonomy, self-expressiveness, open-mindedness and tolerance for ambiguity have been studied in relation to creativity. Environmental conditions conducive to creativity, such as having a playful or non-threatening or non-evaluative learning or performance situation, have also been investigated (Runco, 2006, 2007). Life background factors, such as growing up in hardship and adversity, have also been researched (Runco, 2006, 2007; Russ, 2004).

Two characteristics about creativity discussed in the extant literature on this broad topic are particularly important for ECE specialists and practitioners. First, everyday creativity has been distinguished from eminent creativity. For Howard Gardner, for instance, the criterion for adult or eminent creativity is that it must result in an original aesthetically or technologically useful product recognized and appreciated by mature members within a particular culture. A societal criterion applies. For everyday creativity, on the other hand, a personal criterion applies. The creative action, product or idea needs only to be original for that individual, and useful to that person and those in that person's immediate life, such as the person's parents, teachers, or peers. Clearly, creativity in the latter sense applies directly to ECE, but not creativity in the former sense. We can bestow the laurel of creativity on young children as well as ordinary mortals but our meaning of creativity is quite different than the meaning of the creative accomplishments of eminent individuals.

A second characteristic about creativity pertinent to ECE is that it is domain specific and developmental. Parents and teachers need to recognize the many areas in which children (and adults) can express their creativity. These domains can be conceptualized in terms of Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences (*e.g.* logical mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, natural, interpersonal, etc.). Moreover, effortful learning and discipline (*i.e.*, time on task) propels the developmental progress that a child achieves in expressing his or her creativity in a particular domain. Accordingly, instead of asking 'what is creativity?' and 'why is that child creative?' one might more fruitfully ask 'where is the child's creativity and what can be done to support and scaffold it?' (Chen, 2005).

### **Establishing link between play and creativity**

Research has reported many correlates of play. One of the strongest findings is that imaginative play and divergent thinking are positively and significantly correlated. Both cross sectional and longitudinal research support this relationship (Johnson et al, 2005). As noted above, divergent thinking is a characteristic of creativity. One might infer then that play is related to creativity. One must be cautious in jumping to this conclusion, however.

Play is a necessary but not sufficient condition for creativity, especially the development of domain-specific creativity. Play is a two edged sword. While play is life affirming it is not necessarily a positive force for creativity. Play is at the same time expressive and affective as well as a process that can be cognitively controlled. Play is ordered but it is ordered flexibly and not rigidly. Only when play and imagination are controlled flexibly can they serve positive socially useful creative functions. Play which serves creativity is flexible and not rigidly controlled; therefore, the child's imagination is not being subdued but is harnessed for creativity.

Furthermore, in order to progress developmentally in any domain of potential creativity, the child must master a great deal of content knowledge and skills and acquire ability before the creative potential can become fully realized. Therefore, not only do parents and teachers need to support play and favorable learning dispositions in children, they must also provide developmental enrichment, social supports and learning opportunities to enable children to grow in their abilities, skills, knowledge and motivations to achieve.

### **Modern hindrances to play/creativity**

Contemporary life poses serious threats to the full blossoming of play and creativity in children. At the recent meetings in Rochester New York of the joint conference of The Association for the Study of Play and the International Play Association, Joe Frost listed five foes to healthy play and child development: (1) Law suits or fear of litigation; (2) Parent anxiety and fear for their children's safety and academic success; (3) Organized sports and over-scheduling children's time; (4) Too much use of technology such as playing videogames and watching DVDs and television; and (5) Too much academic pressure. In the USA we have tremendous pressure to prepare young children to be ready for school with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal law. Children need to have returned to them a right to play and a right to have a childhood. Joe Frost advocates 'No child left inside' to counter these pernicious trends

cutting into children's play and creative expression. Children must return to play outdoors and to having a better relation with the natural world.

David Elkind (2007) also has noted the dangers of so-called postmodern play ( *i.e.* competitive organized sports at younger and younger ages, technology toys and play, and use of academic or educational playthings such as 'Leap Frog'). In his new book *The power of play: How spontaneous, imaginative activities lead to happier, healthier children*, Elkind proposes his own theory of play which posits that positive experiences result when home and school and community activities for children represent a well proportioned blend of play, work, and love. In Fall of 2006 the prestigious *American Academy of Pediatrics* came out with an influential position paper defending children's play and the importance of unstructured 'down time' with significant others in the young child's life, in agreement with Elkind's thesis.

### **ECE responds to the problem**

In general, ECE can help promote play and creativity in children by relentlessly advocating for developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) as proposed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Play is an important engine of learning and well being during the early years and beyond. ECE and a play- and creativity-based curriculum must counteract the rigid test-driven curriculum that plagues so much of children's early schooling in the USA with NCLB; and other countries have similar problems as well.

In addition, specific model programs in ECE provide valuable clues for how to advance forward to help support play and creativity in children. The Project Approach (Katz&Chard,2005) is an outstanding example of a program that combines creativity, self-motivation, and practical learning( Elkind's trinity of play, love, and work). The projects or investigations can increasingly build children's knowledge and skills using technology constructively as a resource as the children become more mature, yet retaining playfulness and nurturing initiation and positive learning dispositions, including curiosity and creativity. Waldorf education and Waldorf ECE in particular (Williams & Johnson, 2005) is another wonderful model to emulate to foster play and creativity in childhood. Sustained concentration, enjoyment of fantasy, and a close relationship with nature are important qualities in the Waldorf approach. All three factors are very important in supporting playfulness and creativity. A third example is Project Spectrum(Chen. 2005). This model program is based on Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and David Feldman's developmental continuum from universal to unique with domain-specific ECE curriculum and assessment( Chen, 2005; Feldman,

1974). While all three examples, The Project Approach, Waldorf, and Project Spectrum, eschew a strict academic approach to ECE and elementary education, and support a play- and creativity- centered pedagogy instead, Project and Spectrum stresses cognitive development more than does Waldorf; however, Waldorf's attention to the inner child and quiet time and nature may be an often unnoticed set of ingredients to an optimal ECE recipe for fostering playfulness and creativity in children and teachers alike.

Waldorf accords well with Roger Hart's research linking creativity with children's experience with place and the physical environment outdoors in nature( Hart, 1976). City play spaces in New York City have been created to include natural objects based on advice given by Roger Hart. One aim is to instill memories of early encounters with nature in favorite outside play spaces as a foundation block for later adult creativity

### **Teacher Education**

Psychology and child development theory might help teachers realize that creativity and play are related and that creativity is determined by forces from the child's past, forces in the present here and now, and the force of the pull of the future. First, from the past, children's inborn proclivities to become creative are one factor to realize. In addition, adversity and suffering to overcome difficulties is important for creative potential. A past brimming with emotionally-charged memories can make one very determined and motivated to find solutions and to cope with challenges. Sublimation and compensation and overcompensation are at work here as ego-function defense mechanisms operating full steam ahead in the service of building ego strength.

Second, in the present here and now teachers can help children by guiding them and scaffolding their learning experiences and by granting them open-ended activities to be creative and to then to value their creativity. Conflict and challenges, even turbulence and stress, bring out creativity provided that the level or intensity is optimal; and what is optimal varies from child to child so teachers must have close relations with children and know each child very well. Third, the future enters into the creativity equation combining with the force of the past and the force of the present. Teachers and parents must encourage hope in the future and help children have aspirations and to envision possibilities in the days and years ahead.

Teacher education needs to train teachers to realize that all human capacity is flexible and that one can enhance creative talent. Creativity happens by intention and by choice. Teachers need to model and encourage creativity; they must show children and their parents that they value and enjoy new and original things and that they appreciate creative people. Teachers and parents must remember the importance of creativity and

playfulness when they are making choices for classroom or home activities, when they are in the toy stores, when they are in the library. Creativity enhancement tactics such as brain storming, using analogies, restructuring, transposing, and 'synectics' ( make the strange familiar, make the familiar strange) should be used. Practicing taking the point of view of others is very useful because this can help a person think of alternatives.

Envisioning alternatives in specific contexts and assuming the child's perspective is especially helpful in identifying and solving problems and in acting creatively over-all.

Spontaneity and playfulness are useful for creativity expression and development; they help one take intellectual risks. The threat of evaluation and external sanction are relaxed. Teacher education should include improvisation and preparation for dealing with surprises and unexpected events. Teachers like everyone else should have procedures and heuristics for dealing with challenges and problems in a creative, not routine or ritualized, manner. Finally, staying true to one's feelings, and being aware of one's feelings and knowledgeable about them, are all critical for creative emotions. Emotional authenticity is part of creation intention and action (Runco, 2007).

Hopefully, ECE teacher education can succeed in making ECE programs more conducive for building children's creative potential by producing creative teachers. Creative teachers make creativity a top educational goal and have the means of achieving this goal. ECE can lead the way for the rest of the educational system since we have a head start by valuing child's play—a necessary but not sufficient condition for creativity.

### **Conclusions**

Play by itself is not a strong context for creativity as it is not a strong context for academic achievement. Innate ability, culture, family and school background, other environmental factors-- all are all implicated in creativity development in children (Runco, 2006). Nevertheless, play is important as a precursor for the development of potential creativity. Foundations for creativity include open-mindedness, flexibility, sensitivity, viewing possibilities in an imaginative way. Play often entails open-ness and sensitivity to one's surroundings and thinking imaginatively. Creativity and play likewise share intrinsic motivation, spontaneity, initiative, intellectual autonomy, and self-expression. Hence, playing well-- and thinking well and saying and doing things well and making things well in a creative way-- often go hand-in-hand.

Certainly a concurrent relationship exists among individual everyday creative expression, self actualization and play. However, the development of domain-specific creative potential requires playfulness, but it also requires much more. Quality ECE programs and later schooling must provide many opportunities for play and creative

expression, but also instruction and enrichment aimed at developing the other characteristics needed for the full realization of the child's creative potential.

American schools have been credited with successfully incorporating creativity into its educational system (Kim, 2005). In the USA many teachers do encourage free and open discussion; students are encouraged to be imaginative and original. Older students have gifted programs and competitions for enhancing creative thinking, such as *Odyssey of the Mind*. However, now many students, especially minorities and at risk children in the early grades, are constrained by a curriculum narrowed by test mania brought on by NCLB and the standards movement. Consequently, as much as teachers would like to focus on relationships with students and nurturing playfulness and potential creativity, they feel strangled by administrative directives to allot inordinate amounts of time and energy to teaching the new basics in ECE—the high intensity subjects of math and especially reading or emergent literacy.

Taiwan and other East Asian countries have the reputation for not having as much focus on creativity as the USA and other Western nations. Taiwanese have more difficulty than do Americans thinking, feeling and acting in a creative manner (Kim, 2005). Confucianism and its four principles (*i.e.*, Benevolence, Family System, Hierarchical Relationships, and the Educational System) has strongly influenced Taiwan institutions making them structured and rigid in ways that diminish playfulness and creativity( Chen & Chung, 1994). Norms exist for proper behavior in social settings that are tightly organized, collectivistic, hierarchical, and face-conscious (Rudowicz & Ny, 2003). The Taiwanese educational system has had the reputation for being extremely competitive, having a work-play dichotomy, much rote learning, and a devaluation of play.

In this decade Taiwan has become devoted to building creativity capital. Research on creativity is occurring at a fast pace and there is great interest in applying research results in educational and business setting (Nui, 2006). ECE in Taiwan can contribute to this important national goal by providing play and creative opportunities and by appreciating children's play and creativity expression. In the long run, however, creativity that is needed for national prosperity is not the child-like play and creativity found in ECE. Students must also be encouraged to become very self-disciplined, come to possess good study habits, and learn how to take responsibility for their own development. Child-like play is needed but the kind of creativity requiring qualities that are already a strength in Taiwan are also needed to achieve the dream that Taiwan is a place where creativity is “indispensable to everyone's life and which the preservation of creative capital will be maintained through knowledge management” ( Advisory Office

of Ministry of Education, p.17). Republic of China can become the Republic of Creativity!

In closing, ECE in Taiwan or any place else can become more playful and creative when teachers themselves can become more playful and creative. The Playful Teacher and especially the even more important and desired Creative Teacher must have administrative support for planning time. To accomplish creativity teachers need a retreat from the hectic pace of modern living where teachers are rushed and multi-tasking all too often. Creativity spawns from play and from incubation periods of time for rest and reflection. Note that Waldorf education hints at the importance of a return to quiet tradition without modern technology and an embrace of nature's cycles and rhythms. Teachers need to be encouraged and supported in their quest to become more flexible and open—willing to imagine the possible outside the usual. Teacher's life-long experiences and their memories of their trials and tribulations, anguish and adversity, are seeds of will power and determination to be creative. Unconscious forces can be tapped for creative ideas, and worked on to yield creative results. Mining these subliminal powers requires time for deep reflection and contemplation whereby improvements in creative teacher planning and creative curriculum development can result.

Also, the disenfranchised and marginalized in any society can be viewed as a great untapped resource of potential creative talent in a society. This is because they have suffered so much and have endured adversity, experiences that can be important precursors to later creativity and wisdom (Hall, 2007). To state this metaphorically, we must not overlook the royalty in peasant's garb among us; for many of these unheralded people and children are wishing for a life that is an impossible dream for them now, but given a chance could make a big difference for all of society in the future—the minorities, the poor, the disabled. Many are hidden treasures of creativity capital so important for nation building and world improvement. This is an important way for a nation to invest in its future

Creativity also arises in collaboration and team work; creativity is not necessarily just a solo effort only. Group contexts can trigger creative problem identification, setting the parameters and generating problem-solving solutions. Social creativity within the world of ECE can happen within Taiwan and within the USA, and also between Taiwan and the USA for the sake of children and families served by ECE everywhere. Our world situation can use all the help it can get through joint enterprises in research and application and the sharing of ideas.

To conclude, effective adults working with children in ECE, and all adults living at this time of global stress and strife and information overload, need to be adaptive and



resilient. Only in this way can we begin to solve the ‘dilemma of socialization’ by helping our children become ever more adaptive and resilient. Karen VanderVen(1998) asserts that the kind of person who will be able to live successfully in complex and chaotic times, and the kinds of requisite attributes we must instill in our children, can be predicated on Proteus, the Greek sea god of many forms who could change to meet new conditions. Our Protean Selves have great human resilience and will be able to adapt to fast occurring and great and profound changes in circumstance. And we can do this while remaining true to our inner core of being and to our internal sense of direction, *Deo volente*.

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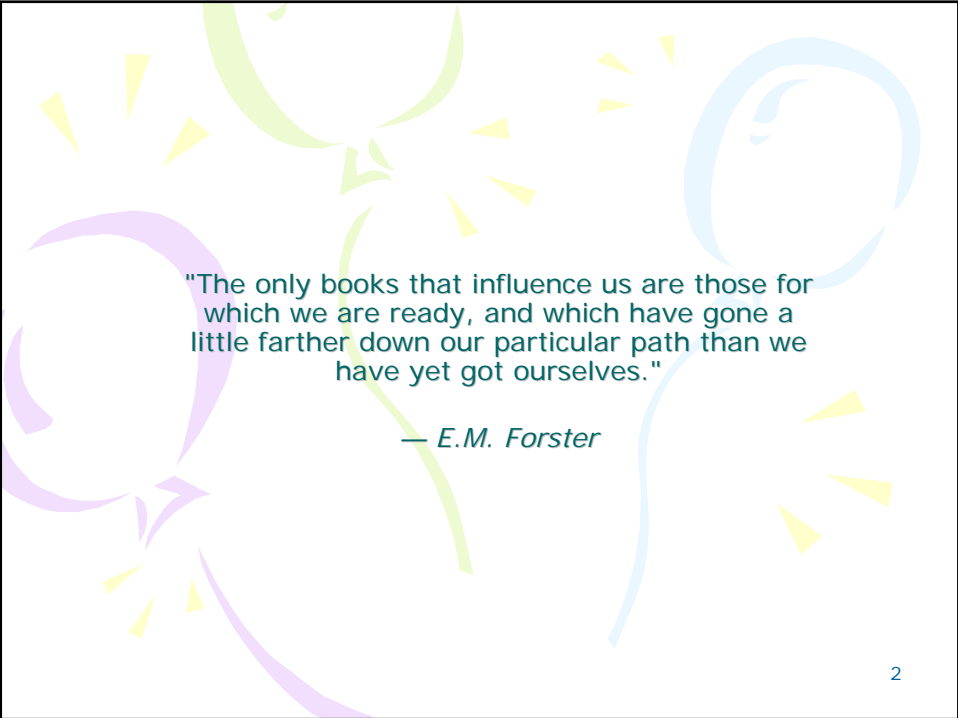




# **Bibliotherapy with Young Children**

**Karen McChesney Johnson  
Taiwan  
May/June 2007**

1



"The only books that influence us are those for which we are ready, and which have gone a little farther down our particular path than we have yet got ourselves."

— *E.M. Forster*

2



## Foundations

- Nel Noddings: ethic of caring and partner as mirror
- Howard Gardner: MI
- Systems Approach
- Social Constructivist
- Emergent Personhood

3



## Bibliotherapy

- Term to describe the use of books to help children solve personal problems.
- Through empathy with the book character(s) the child can examine her/his own thoughts and feelings about self, others, and situations.

4



## Bibliotherapy is a Non-Threatening Medium to:

- Get to understand self.
- Enhance self concept.
- Modify behaviors.
- Develop life skills.
- Solve problems.

5



## Expected Outcomes of Bibliotherapy (1)

- Enhance self concept
- Increase understanding
- Foster a realistic appraisal of self
- Relieve emotional pressures
- Promote the realization that child is not the only one encountering a particular problem

6



## Expected Outcomes of Bibliotherapy (2)

- Recognize there is often more than one solution to a specific problem
- Be able to discuss issues that are of concern to the child without fear
- Help child develop an action plan for her/his problem

7



## Principles to Guide the Bibliotherapy Process

- Listen to the child's responses.
- Observe the child's body language.
- Encourage the child to share thoughts/feelings.
- Know the book before using it.
- Give the child time to think about the material.
- Use open-ended questions and activities as much as possible.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the session.

8



## The Process of Bibliotherapy

- Identification of child's need or problem.
- Identify books that address that need or problem.
- Pre-reading discussion and/or activities.
- Reading the book.
- Analyzing/discussing the book.
- Follow-up activities.
- Evaluate the session.
- Re-read the book at a future time.



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## Where to Find Books (1)

- Beaty, Janice J. (1997). [Building Bridges with Multicultural Books: For Children 3-5.](#)
- Coon, Cheryl (2004). [Books to Grow With: A Guide to Using the Best Children's Fiction for Everyday Issues and Tough Challenges.](#)
- Hall, Susan (2000). [Using Picture Storybooks to Teach Character Education.](#)
- Halsted, Judith W. (2002). [Some of My Best Friends are Books \(Second Edition\).](#)

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## Where to Find Books (2)

- Jalongo, Mary R. (2004). Young Children and Picture Books (Second Edition).
- Kilpatrick, W., Wolfe, G., & Wolfe, S.M. (1994). Books that Build Character.
- McElmeel, Sharon L. (2002). Character Education: A Book Guide for Teachers, Librarians, and Parents.
- Ruethling, Ann & Pitcher, Patti (2003). Under the Chinaberry Tree: Books and Inspirations for Mindful Parenting.

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## Pre-Reading

This is the time to have the child think about the topic to be discussed in the book.

Allow the child to look through the book.

Give the child a brief statement such as – “This book is about.....”

Two basic strategies:

1. Child talks about experiences similar to those of the book.
2. Child makes predictions about what will happen in the book.



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## During Reading

- Allow the child to talk while reading the book, if it is related to the story.
- At different points in the story ask questions such as : “How do you think s/he feels?” “What do you think will happen next?”

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## After Reading

- Have the child retell the story in her/his own words.
- Go back and discuss the comments the child made prior to reading the book (similar experiences, predictions). How are the pre-reading comments similar or different from concepts in the book?
- Do a follow-up activity.
- Re-read the story at a future time.



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## Framework for Questions

- Who is the book about?
- What is different about \_\_\_?
- How does \_\_\_ feel when \_\_\_?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What does \_\_\_ want?
- What happened?
- In the end, how does the problem get solved?

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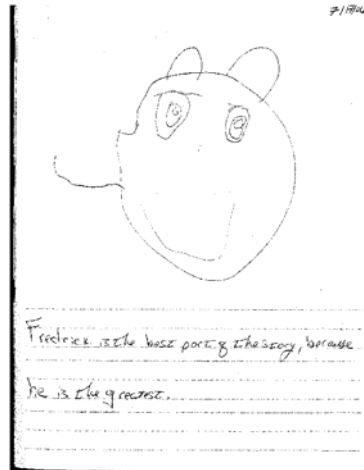
## Example 1

### **Frederick** by Leo Lionni

- Show the cover and read the title to the child. Ask the child: 'What do you think the book will be about?'
- Read the book. (Ask the child at different parts of the book: "How do you think Frederick feels?" "What do you think will happen next?" Record responses here and indicate if the child is accurate in her/his response.)
- Ask the child these questions:
  - Why do the mice scurry about collecting food? Do mice really do this? What other animals store up food for the winter?
  - How is Frederick different?
  - How does his family react as he sits around gathering sun rays, colors, and words while they collect food?
  - What happens when winter comes and the mice take to their hideout?
  - Does Frederick remind you of anyone you know?
  - Do his brothers and sisters remind you of anyone?
  - Could this story really happen? Why/Why not?
- Have the child write and illustrate her/his own favorite part of the story. Date entry.

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## Example 1a



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## Example 2

### **A Big Fat Enormous Lie**

- Talk to the child about the word 'lie'. Ask and write responses to these questions:
  - Do you know what a lie is?
  - Have you ever lied?
  - How did you feel after lying?
  - Has someone ever lied to you?
  - How did you feel about that?
  - Is lying wrong? Why?
- Read the book **A Big Fat Enormous Lie**.
- Talk to the child about the book. Ask and write responses to these questions:
  - What did the boy lie about?
  - Why do you think he lied?
  - How did he feel after he lied?
  - How did he solve his problem?
  - Did you learn anything from this story? What?"
- Have the child draw a picture about the book in his/her journal. Write words for the picture. (put name and date on drawing).
- Share the drawing and words with me.
- Re-read the story a few times on different days. Always have the child make a new picture and writing after each reading.
- Return this completed page to me with child's name and date on it.
- Be sure the child's name and the date are on all final products.

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## Some Favorite Books for Young Children

- My Many Colored Days Dr. Seuss
- Mean Soup Betsy Everitt
- Owl Babies Martin Waddell
- Clifford Books by Norman Bridwell
- Arthur Books by Marc Brown
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar Eric Carle
- The Snowy Day Ezra Jack Keats

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## Demonstration

My Many Colored Days

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## Parent Involvement

- Supply the book title and a synopsis to the parents
- Suggest parents re-read book with child (go to the library)
- Have parents ask child about the book
- Give suggested activities for parents to do with the child

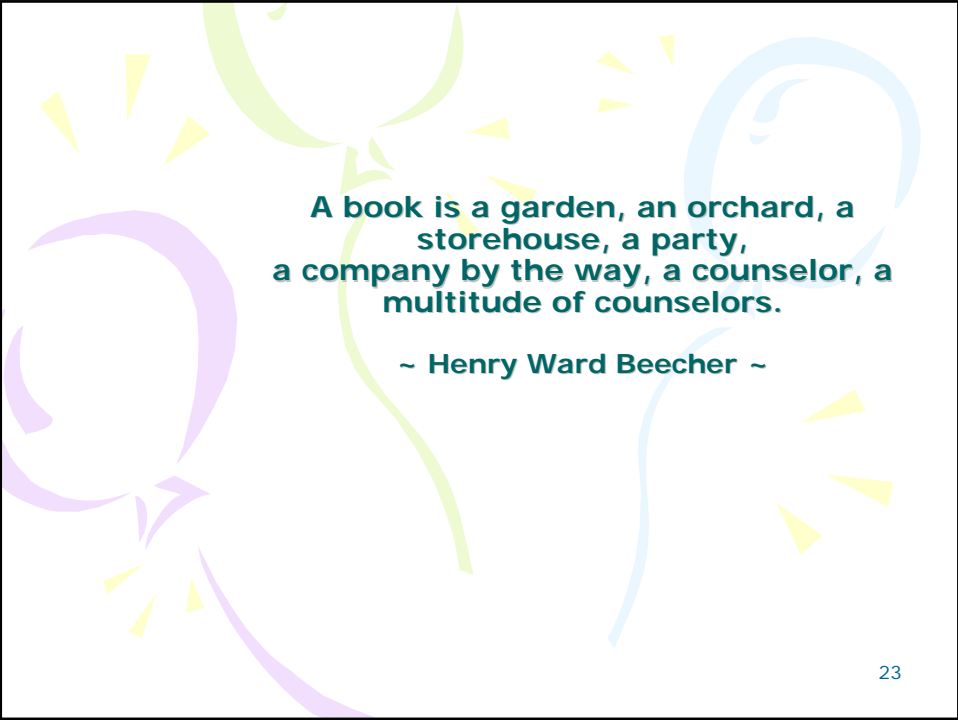


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## Who should do Bibliotherapy?

- Therapists
- Librarians
- Teachers
- Parents (with aid)
- Therapeutic Staff (with supervision)

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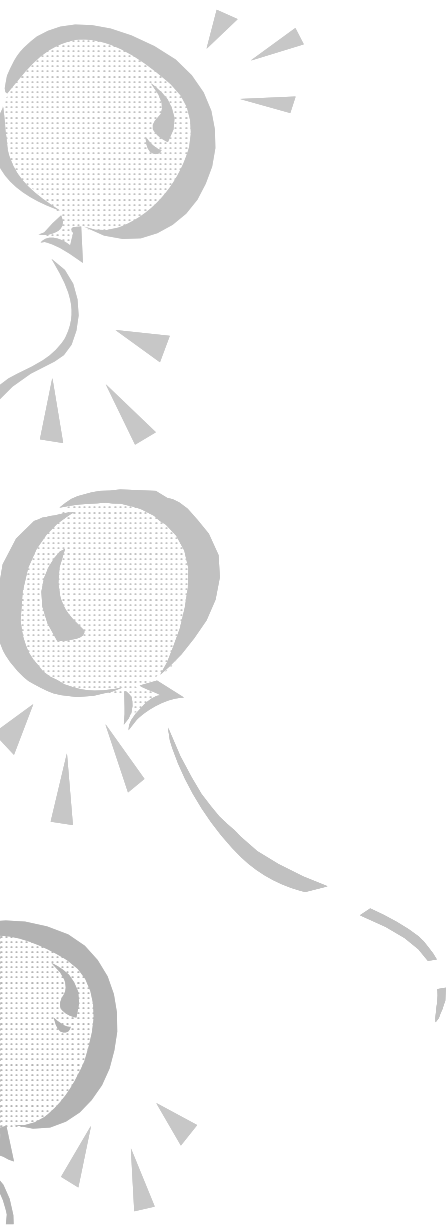


**A book is a garden, an orchard, a  
storehouse, a party,  
a company by the way, a counselor, a  
multitude of counselors.**

**~ Henry Ward Beecher ~**







**Children's play and its implications Conference**  
**2007.06.04-05**  
**Taipei, Taiwan.**

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Taipei Municipal University of Education

**Department of Early Childhood Education**

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