

TASP

The Association for the Study of Play

2009 TASP Annual Conference

Brownsville, Texas

Conference Program

February 25 – 28, 2009

Wednesday, February 25

7:00 – 10:00 (Marriot Residence Inn)

President's reception; snacks and refreshments

Thursday, February 26

8:45 – 10:15 (Elementary Demo Lab)

The Causes, Consequences, and Remediation of Play Deprivation: A Historical Review

Joe Frost, University of Texas at Austin

The Holy Seriousness of Play

Eduardo Villegas Megias, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de México

Deconstructing Play

Tom Henricks, Elon University

8:45 – 10:15 (Salon Cassia)

Play Reflections: Quality of Journaling in Play Service Learning Courses

Joanna Cemore, Missouri State University

The Relationship of Preservice Teachers' of Their Own Play Experiences and Their Description of Play Experiences of Young Children within Classrooms

Joy Bechtold, Bloomsburg University

Teaching About Play: Data and Insights from the Lectern

Stuart Reifel, University of Texas at Austin

10:15 – 10:30 (Salon Cassia Lobby)

Break: coffee and refreshments

10:30 – 12:00 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Block Play: Following the Child's Lead

Marcia Nell, Millersville University, Walter Drew, Institute for Self Active Education James Johnson, Penn State University, Michael Patte, Bloomsburg University, and Alice Meckley, Millersville University

10:30 – 12:00 (Salon Cassia)

Through the Eyes of the Experts: Children's Visual Representation of Their Play Spaces

Carol Barron, Children's University Hospital, Dublin

Playing with Language in a Bilingual Kindergarten Classroom: "Tu eres un huevo de weenies!"

Ana Laura Rodriguez Garcia, University of Texas Brownsville

Multicultural Music Play: How to Connect Key Components of Music with Young Children's Play

Hae Kyoung Kim, University of Texas Brownsville

12:00 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30-3:00 (Elementary Demo Lab)

The Development of Beginning Play Therapists

Peter L. Kranz and Sylvia Z. Ramirez, University of Texas Pan American

The Use of Stories in Play Therapy

Cynthia Wimberly Rice, University of Texas Pan American

Building Family Connections: Designing Culturally Relevant Classrooms

Georgianna Duarte, University of Texas Brownsville

1:30-3:00 (Salon Cassia)

Using a Multimedia Technology Character to Engender a Play-based Medium for Learning

Denise Chapman, University of Houston Clear Lake

A Study of Children's Play with Strange Peers in the Public Place

Pang Jiou Huang Sheng His Lin, National University of Tainan

Digital Play: Videogames as a Form of Play and Integrated Learning

Hannah Gerber, University of Texas at Brownsville

3:00-3:15 (Salon Cassia Lobby)

Break: coffee and refreshments

3:15-4:45 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Stimuli in Play Activities Among Flemish Parents of Pre-school Children

K. De Martelaer, W. Cools, C. Samaey, and C. Andries, Vrije Universiteit

Play and Conflict: Why Do We Fight?

Vejoya Viren, University of Texas Brownsville

Play in the Future

Tom Reed, University of South Carolina

4:45-6:00 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Improvisation

Carrie Lobman, Rutgers University, Barbara O'Neill, Brooklyn University, and Tony Perone University of Illinois Chicago

7:00pm-8:00pm (Marriot Residence Inn)

TASP Board Meeting

Friday, February 27

8:45-10:15 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Adult Playfulness: Conception and Scale Development

Xiangyou Sharon Shen, Penn State University, and Wing Sze Winnie Wong, University of Northern Iowa

Traditions and Innovations of the Children's Play Culture

Anna Chernaya, Southern Federal University, Pedagogical Institute

Exporting Play to the Far East to Enrich Early Education

Jim Johnson, Mei Fang Cheng, Ji Yeong Park, and Min Su, Penn State University

8:45-10:15 (Salon Cassia)

Whose Words are These Anyway?

Lynn Cohen, Long Island University

Quality of Play and Children's Literacy Learning

Myae Han, University of Delaware

Examining Play Through a New Lens: Facilitated Action Research in the One Year Old Classroom

Christi Moore, Olga S. Jarrett, Gerald Parks, Gail Townsend, Abigail Washington, and Stacey French-Lee, Georgia State University

10:15-10:30 (Salon Cassia Lobby)

Break; coffee and refreshments

10:30-12:00 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Storytelling: A Playful Tool for Creating Inclusive Educational Environments

Barbara O'Neill, Brooklyn University

Play Therapy in Schools – Is it Feasible?

Veronica Castro, and Yvonne Castillo, University of Texas Pan American

Imaginative Language Play in Storytelling and Joke Telling in Children with and without Hearing Loss

Eva Nwokah, and Sandra Burnette, University of North Carolina Greensboro

10:30-12:00 (Salon Cassia)

The Development of Play in Gray-cheeked Mangabeys

Rick Worch, Bowling Green State University

Captive Monkeys Meet the Challenge: Is this Food Acquisition or a Sporting Event?

Peggy O'Neill-Wagner, and Eunice Kennedy Shriver, National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development

Animal Play Days

Thomas W. deMaar, Amanda L. Guthrie, and Sergio Garcia, Gladys Porter Zoo

12:00-7:00 Open

7:00-10:00 (Salon Cassia)

As if: The Importance of Make-Believe for Children, Parents, and Other Human Beings

President's Address

TASP Presidential Address

David Kushner, University of Cincinnati

Sutton-Smith Award

Presidents' Panel Reflections on the Next 35 Years of TASP

Saturday, February 28

8:45-10:15 (Cassia)

Playing with Siblings: Supporting Brothers and Sisters of Children on the Autism Spectrum

Dana Gross, Vanessa Brown, and Nicole Marvin, St. Olaf University

How Play Optimizes Brain Development

Karen Hutchison, SUNY Brockport

The Importance of Physical Activity and Play for the Child with Autism

Susan Hart, University of Texas Brownsville

8:45-10:15 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Playful Interactions in the Visual Arts: The Case for Artist-in-residence Programs in Early Childhood Classrooms

Angela Eckhoff, Clemson University

The Role of Play and Humor in Science Education

Dorothy Justus Sluss, James Madison University

Play in the Concrete Jungle: A Look Inside Urban School Classrooms

Michael Patte, Bloomsburg University

10:15-10:30 (Salon Cassia Lobby)

Break: coffee and refreshments

10:30-12:00 (Elementary Demo Lab)

Family Game Night

Sandra Murillo, and John Andreu Sutterby, University of Texas at Brownsville

Rough and Tumble Play: It's Not What it Looks Like

Tom Reed, University of South Carolina

Games of the Rio Grande Valley

Diana Castro Cortez, and Alma Rodriguez, University of Texas at Brownsville

10:30-12:00 (Salon Cassia)

Play Advocacy Panel: Contemporary Challenges and the Need for Research

Panel members from the American Association for the Child's Right to Play will share their concerns about what is happening to play in the 21st Century. Topics to be discussed are the following:

- cutbacks in recess,
- decreases in outdoor play,
- the need for playground design that maintains challenge while decreasing hazards,
- increased academics and cutbacks in play in kindergarten,
- the connections between play and mental health
- disparity in play opportunities of rich and poor, and
- the benefits of U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A discussion will follow on the research support for these topics and the areas in which additional research is needed.

Olga S. Jarrett

Dorothy Sluss

Joanna Cemore

Christi Moore

Tom Reed

Georgianna Duarte

Angela Eckoff

Arlene Dodd

Michelle Duckett-Hedgebeth

12:00 – 12:30 (Salon Cassia)

Meditations on the Referee

Conference Closing

Abstracts

Karen L. Hutchison (SUNY Brockport)

How Play Optimizes Brain Development

Play provides optimal stimulation for the brain and produces a positive change in brain anatomy. Neurologists worldwide ascertain that the play-learning connection is inherently biological. Over 80 studies confirm that play facilitates cognitive functioning. Now with three-dimensional PET scans of the brain, researchers can visualize and record evidence that the entire brain is stimulated during play, rather than isolated areas when over-regimented and regulated learning takes place in a high-stakes context. Activity in the higher functioning areas of the brain emerges as play becomes more elaborate, indicative of cortical growth. The critical time for learning is from birth to ten – a time when brain development corresponds identically with play development.

Joy Bechtold (Bloomsberg University)

The Relationship of Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Their Own Play Experiences and Their Description of Play Experiences of Young Children within Their Classrooms

Young children have an innate desire to learn, and this learning occurs through their play. For many young children in today's society these play experiences often occur within child care centers, preschools, public schools, as well as other early learning institutions. Classroom teachers within these Early Care and Educational institutions play a vital role in young children's play experiences and its interconnection across the curriculum.

This session will correlate how pre-service early childhood and elementary education teachers describe their own past and present play experiences and the relevance of play. It will also explore their perceptions and attitudes regarding the importance of young children's play experiences within their classroom.

Marcia Nell (Millersville University), Walter Drew (Institute for Self Active Education), James Johnson (Penn State University), Michael Patte (Bloomsburg University), and Alice Meckley (Millersville University)

Block Play: Following the Child's Lead

The main purpose of this interactive session is to provide a hands-on play experience. Participants will engage in hands-on adult block play and then reflect, debrief, journal, comment, and discover how blocks and other reusable materials can provide the bridge for supporting, scaffolding, and facilitating the inquiry approach to learning for young children. Participants will also work collaboratively within small groups as they develop group consensus connecting the integration of an inquiry approach to learning through using blocks, the types of questions that block play stimulates, and how these questions can help a child become a life-long learner. The small groups will share their ideas with the whole group. Throughout the session the presenters will facilitate, offer research and resources, guide and support the new knowledge that the participants glean from their experiences and dialogue during this session.

Rick Worch (Bowling Green State University)

The Development of Play in Gray-cheeked Mangabeys

This presentation describes the development of play in a group of gray-cheeked mangabeys observed for 232 hours in the Kibale National Park, Uganda. The group was composed of one young infant, 1 old infant, 1 young juvenile, 3 old juveniles, 5 adult females and 2 adult males. Data were collected using focal sampling and instantaneous recording. Play peaked in the old infant stage and declined through the old juvenile stage. Infants engaged in more solitary play than juveniles; however, both groups engaged primarily in social play. Although, true object play was rare, play episodes incorporating object manipulations averaged just over one per 12 hours of observation. Infants and old juveniles tended to select same-age play partners, whereas young juveniles showed a marked preference for infant partners. In mixed-age play groups, juveniles controlled the frequency and duration of play bouts.

Angela Eckhoff (Clemson University)

Playful Interactions in the Visual Arts: The Case for Artist-in-residence Programs in Early Childhood Classrooms

In 2007, a non-profit early education center serving disadvantaged children moved into a facility housing a community arts center. This move resulted in a collaborative relationship between the early education center, the community arts center, and a university faculty member all with a collective aim to merge the interests of the three parties. Through this collaborative relationship, an experimental, early childhood artist-in-residence program was initiated. Utilizing qualitative methods and semi-structured interviews, the primary objective of this research intervention was to document the affordances and challenges of implementing an artist-in-residence program in a Pre-K classroom. During data analysis, a central theme of play emerged and was evidenced in children's playful interactions during art making and art viewing experiences led by the artist-in-residence.

This presentation will explore the artist-in-residence's emphasis on play as a means for developing young children's understanding and appreciation of the visual arts.

K. De Martelaer, W. Cools, C. Samaey, and C. Adries, (Vrije Universiteit, Belgium)

Stimuli in Play Activities Among Flemish Parents of Pre-school Children

Parents play an important role in stimulating children's physical activity (PA) (Eccles, et al. 1998; Ward et al., 2007). Data on various PA opportunities and participation for pre-school children (4-6 year) were collected using self-administered parental surveys. 1,637 families were approached to participate in the study, 987 returned the survey questionnaire (60%).

Results indicated that mothers' major interaction with their preschooler is calm play and reading books. About 65% of the mothers did not participate in individual activities that potentially involve PA more than one hour a week. Fathers tended to report TV-viewing as main child-father activity, and only secondarily, selected for active play. The majority of children's play frequency was indoor oriented rather than outdoors. Boys played significantly more outdoors than girls ($U = 107408,5$, $p < .01$, $r = -.09$).

Xiangyou Sharon Shen (Penn State University), and Wing Sze Winnie Wong (University of Northern Iowa)

Adult Playfulness: Conception and Scale Development

In this research, we develop the conception of adult playfulness from the interactionist stance, defining playfulness as a personality trait driven by a fun-seeking motivation, uninhibitedness, and spontaneity. The playful trait is assumed to function across various life situations, including the artificial categories of work and leisure. It gives rise to play or playful behavior by interacting with situational specifics. This conceptualization, partly adopting the social cognitive perspective of personality, strictly distinguishes the internal disposition from its external behavioral/emotional manifestations, rendering it theoretically probable to examine the trait-situation interactions. Based on this conception and results from a focus-group study and a Delphi study, we develop a scale to measure adult playfulness trait and characteristics of playful state (i.e., play). The scale is evaluated in terms of various forms of validity and reliability. The theoretical and empirical implications of the adult playfulness conceptualization and scale are also discussed.

Peggy O'Neill-Wagner (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development)

Captive Monkeys Meet the Challenge: Is this Food Acquisition or a Sporting Event?

The goal was to relocate a troop of 67 free-ranging rhesus monkeys into designated outdoor areas on a regular

basis. In the five-acre enclosure positive reinforcement was needed to stimulate relocation of the group, especially on hot, muggy days. During five days of scheduled testing, six 5-gallon water bottles containing food treats were introduced. Monitoring with a simple checklist recording system indicated all monkeys gained access to food treats either directly from the bottle or indirectly off the ground. Food dispersal success seemed to explain that food treats reliably relocated the entire troop. Yet, displays of solitary and social play with the bottle instruments continued long after food ingestion ended. Images show the animals as they playfully confront social competition and overcome physical challenges for emptying of the bottle contents. Observations of these unexpected play activities suggest further consideration is warranted prior to concluding which positive incentive is primarily responsible for successfully relocating the troop.

Myae Han (University of Delaware)

Quality of Play and Children's Literacy Learning

The purpose of study was to investigate the relationship between children' quality of play and literacy learning. The data were collected in four classrooms in one Head Start center. The center was Early Reading First recipient and used play-based-literacy program. The subjects were the 70 children in the program. Children's levels of play were examined in cognitive and social level using the child snapshot observation method. Children's literacy level was measured using the literacy assessments in the area of vocabulary, letter, and phonological awareness. The relationship between the level of play and literacy performance was analyzed. The implication of the study suggests the critical role of play in young children's early literacy development.

Carol Barron (University Hospital, Dublin)

Through the Eyes of the Experts: Children's Visual Representation of Their Play Spaces

This presentation explores the visual representation of children's play spaces as produced by them, using disposable cameras. In total 58 children, [24 boys, 34 girls] aged between 9 and 12 years, produced 960 images of play spaces, activities, and play objects. The importance of "Private" Versus "Public" play spaces as depicted by the children was examined. I suggest that back garden's have been adapted by both parents and children as the new "playground" and has moved from the sphere of "public space" (Rasmussen 2004) to that of the "private space." The importance of outdoor play (Burke 2008) to children is investigated and the findings from this research lend support to the view of Valentine and Mc Kendrick (1997) that most contemporary outdoor play is actually centered near the home and its immediate environments. Intertwined with children's play spaces is the role of gender in the spaces occupied by boys and girls for play. These images portray a picture of urban childhood in the first decade of the 21st Century that suggests that despite the many barriers of the built environment, children adapt and transform differing "spaces" to both meet and suit their individual and collective play needs.

Michael M. Patte (Bloomsburg University)

Play in the Concrete Jungle: A Look Inside Urban School Classrooms

I will share the preliminary results of an action research project examining the attitudes and actions of teachers concerning the infusion of play-based pedagogy throughout the curriculum in urban classroom settings. Pre-service teachers conducted the research study during the summer of 2008 and sought to document the role of play/playfulness in cooperating teachers' instructional and non-instructional practices and the impact of such practices on student attitudes toward school. Reflective journals, interviews, and participant observation were the primary sources of data collection used to unearth current practices.

Denise Chapman (University of Houston Clear Lake)

Using a Multimedia Technology Character to Engender a Play-based Medium for Learning

For many pre-service early childhood teachers, learning about concepts in early childhood special education can be challenging given that pre-service general education teachers often feel uncomfortable with potentially having to work with children with disabilities, a population that they may have little interest in or understanding of how to effectively teach (Henning & Mitchell, 2002). This study will introduce how an interactive multimedia technology "character" can serve as a play-based, anchored instructional experience in which both the classroom instructor and the pre-service teachers are learning from each other while engaged in imaginative play. A marked increase of online discussion board postings for "non-required" readings was shown. Pre-service teachers reported that not only did they review their assignments presented by the "multimedia character" more often than their other assignments, but they also encouraged their friends and family to view and experience their online class assignments.

Ana Laura Rodríguez-García (University of Texas Brownsville)

Playing with Language in a Bilingual Kindergarten Classroom: "Tu eres un huevo de weenies!"

Guided by a holistic view of bilingualism (Grosjean, 1989), sociocultural perspectives on literacy (Vygotsky, 1978), and social positioning theory (Davies and Harre, 1990), this paper will explore the multiple ways in which bilingual kindergarten children played with their oral language as they composed alongside their peers. Data sources, including expanded field notes, video recordings of students' interactions, written/drawn artifacts, and an informal interview with the students were analyzed using micro ethnographic discourse analysis and the constant comparative method. Analysis revealed that the children drew on both their English and Spanish language in their spontaneous interactions with peers and often played with language in the following ways: code-

switching for comedic relief, name-calling, and creating nonsensical words/utterances. Through these playful encounters, the students strengthened social relationships and created a support system that ultimately played an important role in the composing process.

Anna Chernaya (Southern Federal University, Pedagogical Institute)

Traditions and Innovations of the Children's Play Culture

This article promotes Vygotskian ideas about cultural-historical research of the children's play culture (1966). Database includes researchers' materials of children's play culture in Russia and Europe from the 1980's to 2000. The main attributes describing a condition of children's play culture include: character and the contents of children's play and play phenomenon; play spaces; toys and play equipment; and play interactions. Analyzed materials testify to an historically objective process of the children's play culture development. From these positions, traditions, and innovations the culture of the children's play is analyzed.

Stuart Reifel (University of Texas at Austin)

Teaching about Play: Data and Insights from the Lectern

This presentation draws from on-line data collection and interviews regarding how to work with students and other adults when teaching about play. Working from theoretical perspectives about higher education teaching and learning, combined with the particular constraints associated with presenting course material to persons who believe they know all about the topic, this analysis focuses on learning purposes (e.g., using play to develop curriculum, using play while teaching, using play to understand children's development, doing research), conceptual bases (e.g., play theories), and learning experiences (e.g., observation and analysis activities, family interviews, internship projects). Data from 17 informants is combined with personal insights to elaborate three themes: (1) transcending personal views and past experiences; (2) using research to guide observation and understanding; and (3) linking theories to classroom practices. These themes point to the utility of using various lenses for teaching about and understanding children's play.

Barb O'Neill (Brooklyn University)

Storytelling: A Playful Tool for Creating Inclusive Educational Environments

The session will open with an experiential introduction to storytelling and creative drama. Participants will then learn about findings from a recent qualitative research study, which investigated the use of storytelling and creative drama in an inclusive preschool classroom. This study explored the ways that a resident teaching artist

used storytelling/creative drama activities to create an environment that taught the art of storytelling and was inclusive of children with special needs. This study also documented the ways that the classroom teacher integrated elements of storytelling/drama into her teaching and reported that her exposure to storytelling/drama prompted her to rethink her teaching approach. Participants will be invited to discuss the implications of these findings and to explore the relationship between teacher-led storytelling/creative drama and children's play.

Dorothy Justus Sluss (James Madison University)

The Role of Play and Humor in Science Education

Play is often viewed as a nonacademic activity at school and is often relegated to the playground for a limited period of time. In the same way, humor is generally discouraged in the classroom. Citing traditional educational goals and objectives, teachers generally view play and humor as activities unrelated to science curriculum and outside the range of acceptable activities that should occur at school. In contrast, proponents of play and humor have encouraged adults and teachers to use play and humor as pedagogy and believe that using these as instructional tools can lead to cognitive gains. This session will investigate the history of play and humor in science education/teaching, examine current research and scholarship on play and humor in science education, and propose a play and humor based approach to science curriculum that encourages inquiry and creativity.

Pang-Jiou-Huang (Sheng-His Lin, University of Tainan)

A Study of Children's Play with Strange Peers in the Public Place

The purpose of the study was to explore the meanings of children's play with strange peers in a public place. This study purposely investigated children's play in contexts and got more information about children's play with strange peers in Tainan Children Center. Through naturalistic observation of six target children, analysis included the events of children's play with strange peers, as well as interviews with target children and their parents.

The findings indicated the progresses of children's play with strange peers were: brewing to initiate play, maintaining play, terminating or stopping play, and restarting play. The elements of play areas, equipments, materials, children's experiences, parent's participations and play time relate to each stage of play. Children use mature social play skills to initiate and maintain play with strange peers by taking advantage of the contextual environment. Parents also play important roles, as "social pivot" (Reifel & Yeatman, 1993), before initiating children's play with strange peers, guiding children (even strange peers) to enter play frame; offering play scenes, actors or materials in their play frame; and leaving play when children play independently with strange peers, etc..

Carrie Lobman (Rutgers University), Barbara O'Neill (Brooklyn University), and Tony Perone (University of Illinois Chicago)

Improvisation

Improvisation is a valuable form of adult play in many communities (e.g., Holzman, 2005; Lobman, 2007; Sawyer, 2006; Spolin, 1963). To encourage camaraderie, inclusiveness, creativity, and play among TASP 2009 conference participants this plenary session will include active participation by attendees in some basic improv activities that support creativity, community building, and listening. One of the values of improvising together early in the conference is that it is *a doing* of the very activity that is going to be talked about throughout the conference. This plenary session has three parts. First, the presenters will briefly discuss research on the relationship between improvisation and development. Next, conference attendees will form 2-3 breakout groups to engage in improvisation games. Finally, the participants will reconvene for a short reflection of their improv experience, and to discuss the relevance of improvisation to their professional activities.

Eduardo Villegas-Megías (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

The Holy Seriousness of Play

A well-recognized feature of play is seriousness. There is, of course, a common dichotomy between the world of play and the so-called "real life", the earnest one, according to which the former, joyful, provides pleasure and the latter only bothers. However, games must be taken seriously, otherwise, they would have no sense at all. Furthermore, we act more seriously during the play than in "normal" existence. An age long friendship can suddenly come to an end due to an argument on a poker night. The aim of this paper is to show why and how this holy seriousness of play is a veritable trouble.

Lynn E. Cohen (Long Island University)

Whose Words are These Any Way?

Most early childhood play researchers tend to use Piagetian or Vygotskian perspectives to examine young children's discourse and play. Notably absent is any substantial use of the work of Bakhtin in theorizing young children's language and play interactions. This study examines Bakhtin's theories of dialogism (1981) by interpreting children's authoritative and internally persuasive discourse in pretend play with 3-and-4 year-old children. Children struggle against the authority of adults and are drawn into a "contact zone" (Bakhtin, 1981). The discourses of adults in children's lives influence the ways they think and children appropriate, redefine, and es-

establish their own voice in pretend play. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Findings suggest preschool children parody the authoritative discourses of adults in a struggle of *ideological becoming* (Bakhtin, 1981). This examination of children's social play discourse from a Bakhtinian perspective makes a significant contribution to the fields of early childhood and social sciences.

Peter L. Kranz, and Sylvia Z. Ramirez (University of Texas Pan American)

The Development of Beginning Play Therapists

Play therapy literature is noticeably lacking in the discussion of the development of student play therapists, their perception of themselves, and their role in the therapeutic process. As student therapists develop into practitioners, a number of experiences and observations of the process are significant and noteworthy in relation to this specialization. Students entering training in play therapy often entertain misconceptions about the nature of play therapy. Perhaps because of the connotations of the word "play," the therapeutic relationship is frequently anticipated as "fun." Skills in the training of student play therapists must be taught specifically and systematically. These issues and others concerning the education of play therapists will be discussed in this presentation.

Joanna Cemore (Missouri State University)

Play Reflections: Quality of Journaling in Play Service-learning Courses

Results of a study examining undergraduate students' reflections on their service-learning in a "Play As Development" course will be shared. The quality of reflections is compared when a different reflection writing cue is used in one semester of the course to the previous reflection cues of the course. Anecdotally, during class and during coding there was an increase in quality when the new cue was used. Statistical analysis is underway. If the statistical findings support the anecdotal findings this will challenge the current predominant use of Kolb and Eylers' methods of reflection in service-learning.

Dana Gross, Vanessa Brown, and Nicole Marvin (St. Olaf University)

Playing with Siblings: Supporting Brothers and Sisters of Children on the Autism Spectrum

This presentation will describe the creation of a support group for school-age siblings of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), one of the fastest growing developmental disorders in the United States. Children with ASD often behave in ways that create stress for family members in public settings as well as in the home. Their unusual behaviors may cause siblings to experience embarrassment and stress around peers, as well as

jealousy and resentment of parents' focus on the sibling with ASD. Age-appropriate support groups can address these concerns and reduce feelings of isolation; especially when they incorporate games and play.

Christi Moore, Olga S. Jarrett, Gerald Parks, Gail Townsend, Abigail Washington, and Stacey French-Lee (Georgia State University)

Examining Play Through a New Lens: Facilitated Action Research in the One-Year-Old Classroom

This study is a collaboration between university researchers and child development center practitioners engaged in "facilitated action research," with research questions posed by center staff and facilitated by experienced university researchers. Through one minute interval digital photos and accompanying anecdotal notes, the play of five focal children was observed over a twelve day period during spring 2008. Additionally, interviews were conducted with center staff and their lesson plans were examined to help determine positive outcomes for children based on Georgia Early Learning Standards (GELS) for approaches to learning and emotional and social development. Teachers and researchers examined both anecdotal notes and digital photos to determine the child behaviors that corresponded with indicators found within the GELS. The presentation will include typical examples of behaviors representative of approaches to learning and emotional and social development along with a discussion of teachers' and researchers' experiences using facilitated action research.

Cynthia Wimberly Rice (University of Texas Pan American)

The Use of Stories in Play Therapy

Stories, an enjoyable part of childhood, provide a natural way of communicating. Children learn to understand their experiences by organizing them into narratives about who they are, what they do, and how they relate to others. Even if children are unable to express themselves verbally, they are naturally receptive to stories.

Stories provide a unique insight into the mindset of an individual by tapping into the unconscious mind. The story told describes their reality. For troubled children, their stories reflect a lack of power, an external locus of control, and a victim mentality. Stories provide an avenue to suggest change in a nonthreatening manner. Children who are dealing with normal life issues can learn from therapeutic stories.

This presentation will explore ways to utilize storytelling. Specific stories and techniques will be provided to the counselor to assist children in learning to cope, to resolve, and to overcome their struggles.

David Kushner (University of Cincinnati)

“As If”: The Importance of Make-Believe for Children, Parents, and Other Human Beings

TASP Presidential Address

Most definitions of play (at least as they apply to the play of children) include the concept of a ‘non-literal’ orientation to the activity at hand. The child is often described as adopting an *as if* stance toward her play. For example, a child might be playing *as if* she is a doctor, examining a doll *as if* it is a patient, and listening to its heart with a straw *as if* it is a stethoscope. Her face may then look worried *as if* she is concerned about the health of the baby. By playing *as if*, a child is able to try out roles, display emotions, and express the scripts of her life, without necessarily experiencing real-world consequences.

Playing *as if* is not reserved just for children, however. The purpose of this Presidential Address is to suggest that the adoption of the *as if* stance may be important for and inherent to our essential humanness.

Veronica Castro, and Yvonne Castillo (University of Texas Pan American)

Play Therapy in Schools-Is it Feasible?

The school counselor’s role seems to be shifting more and more towards administrative duties. However, there has never been a more urgent need for school counselors to help children with their personal, social, behavioral, and/or academic problems. Landreth (1987) states, “. . .it is not a question of whether the elementary school counselor should use play therapy but, instead, of how play therapy should be used in elementary schools” (p.255). While counselor educators promote the use of play therapy in school settings, school counselors are hesitant to use this therapeutic approach for many reasons. This workshop will discuss issues related to the use of play therapy in schools, play therapy theoretical approaches best suited for the school setting, and recommendations for school counselor educators and school counselors.

Vejoya Viren (University of Texas Brownsville)

Play and Conflict: Why do we Fight?

This presentation draws upon data collected through a yearlong participant observation of two preschool classrooms and discusses the importance of verbal conflict in children’s play. Its main focus is the inherent need, and usefulness, of conflict in play as young children struggle with their growing awareness of ‘others’.

The presentation is based on two lines of inquiry. The first is a qualitative study of the nature and negotiation of children’s conflict during play, and of the contribution of this conflict to the development of shared understandings within a classroom culture. The second is an examination of the content of repetitive dialogic conflict during play and the reaction it provokes, toward understanding relationships inherent in such verbal

exchanges.

Georgianna Duarte (University of Texas Brownsville)

Building Family Connections: Designing Culturally Relevant Classrooms

High quality classrooms are ones that reflect the cultures, languages, and values of the children and families. The proposed session will provide promising practices for designing responsive environments for dual language learners. The conference goal of this session: Dual Language Learners and Social Emotional Development as reflected in Environments. These practices are reflected through the integration of culture, emergent visual cues, labeling, traditions, and family values. The three major goals of the session include: The participant will learn how to design developmentally and linguistically appropriate environments where children feel family connections, and a sense of belonging. Second, the participant will learn how to apply concrete ideas based on family history, languages and knowledge. A third important goal is the participant will examine dual language visuals and analyze the importance of emerging literacy and dual language. A final goal will involve the participant in creating spaces that are reflective of culturally diverse families, while building stronger family connections. The session strategies will incorporate the work of several researchers (Clayton, Moore, Carter & Curtis Migrant), visuals, interactive activities, and discussion that are reflective of the unique characteristics and needs of the migrant child/family. It will also relate to existing practices of parent respect and family involvement. The session will generate new knowledge for teachers in how to design more empowering classrooms where children and families feel a sense of wonder, belonging, and intellectual engagement.

Thomas W. deMarr, Amanda L. Guthrie, and Sergio Garcia (Gladys Porter Zoo)

Animal Play Days at the Gladys Porter Zoo

Animal Play Days are animal interactive, visitor visible events at the Gladys Porter Zoo. The events fulfill several zoo goals: increase the practice of animal enrichment, and provide connections between animals and the zoo visitor. The link is the attraction and enjoyment humans invest in play. The role of play in animals is unclear; however it ranges from vital training of survival skills to spontaneous pleasurable activities. Zoo based animal enrichment provides choices for animals that encourage natural behaviors, and provide mental and physical stimulation. Animal enrichment designs can be arranged in several categories: Sensory (e.g.: scents, spices, bright colors), Foods/Feeding (e.g.: novel or frozen food items), Environment (e.g.: ice blocks, plastic barrels), and Tactile (e.g.: paper tubes, feathers). By providing changing enrichment, different behaviors are exercised. Presenting these to the public in a concerted event allows for a visitor oriented nature experience beyond a walk around the zoo.

Joe Frost (University of Texas at Austin)

The Causes, Consequences, and Remediation of Play Deprivation: A Historical Review

Over the past few decades a number of factors, unique in history, emerged to result in deprivation of traditional forms of outdoor play. Loss of play spaces and opportunities is resulting in a growing crisis in children's health, fitness, and development. Similar but less complex factors were seen in American cities a century ago, resulting in an American child saving movement. This movement and others that addressed major historical crises provide insight into contemporary remediation. A number of these historical approaches endured and are being integrated into present remedial approaches, but novel, broader, and more complex steps are needed to address the present play crisis and preserve the traditional play culture of childhood.

Tom Henricks (Elon University)

Deconstructing Play

When play scholars discuss the character, causes and consequences of play, they commonly operate with a global or general model of that concept. This paper focuses instead on the different aspects of and assumptions about play that are gathered together in scholarly understandings of that activity. To do this, the author explores the idea of "deconstruction" as this has been developed in cultural studies. In addition to discussing play itself as a deconstructive enterprise, the author argues that this process helps identify which elements of play are related to other elements of behavior and experience.

Hae Kyoung Kim (University of Texas Brownsville)

Multicultural Music Play: How to Connect Key Components of Music with Young Children's Play

This presentation will discuss the results of research into multicultural music play in early childhood classrooms.

Hannah Gerber (University of Texas Brownsville)

Digital Play: Videogames as a Form of Play and Integrated Learning

This session explores the results of qualitative case studies that focused on adolescent gamers who played Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG) and traditional console games. Emerging trends show that these interactive media encourage and foster collaboration with peers and lead to a deeper enjoyment of the task at hand. Interestingly, the data show that videogames also develop a more integrated learning

process as the participants who play online games foster a deep affinity to the game and their online persona, show how they begin to make connections across multiple modalities, and show how they also connect multiple literacy strands (reading, writing, listening, viewing, and speaking) through this integrated play. This session will discuss the results of research, will look at future ways to tap into this form of play, and will point to practical applications for use.

Thomas L. Reed (South Carolina University Upstate)

Rough and Tumble Play: It's Not What it Looks Like

From Groos to Pelligrinni, the importance of Rough and Tumble Play (R & T) has been well documented. However, to the untrained or uninformed observer, children participating in R & T appear to be chaotic and unruly. However, the children who participate in R & T see it in quite another way. This presentation will outline R & T in terms of developmentally appropriate practice, socio-emotional, and cognitive benefits of R & T. Integral to this presentation will be how R & T exceeds the parameters of play and becomes a vehicle for the development of friendship, the expression of affection, and ultimately becomes a form of communication among players. R & T (often confused with aggression) will be compared and contrasted to aggressive play. R & T is widely researched in relationship to social affiliation and the cognitive benefits associated. Implications for this research are far reaching in that nationwide 98.5% of early childhood teachers are women and 83% of all elementary teachers are also female. These statistics suggest that the majority of teachers are not familiar or are uncomfortable with R & T yet, the experience has developmental and social implications for the players.

Play in the Future

For centuries children have played with what are considered tools (toys) of the future. In other words what is "played with" is part of a future that has not been made known to the player. Available technology drives the future and in a direct sense dictates what a child plays with and indirectly impacts that child's future. For example: in developing nations, children still play with rudimentary tools that they will use to provide for themselves physically. In our more modern western society, children play with electronic media that serves to train them for later contributions to society. This presentation will investigate the toys used in society and the impact they have on physical and intellectual development and the implications for the future.

James Johnson, Mei Fang Cheng, Ji Yeong Park, and Min Su (Penn State University)

Exporting Play to the Far East to Enrich Early Education

The lead presenter has been to Taiwan twice and China once, and is preparing to present a nine hour play pedagogy workshop titled, "Energizing Education Through the Power of Play" in Tokyo in March 2009. Over the years he has taught many international graduate students about play research, theory, and practice. The students have taken the information back to their home countries' early childhood teacher preparation programs. A persistent concern has been how Western play notions and applications have been received, adapted, and applied in indigenous locales, and what can be learned about play and early education in different cultural contexts.

The purpose is to: (1) Review previous trips to Taiwan in 2000 and 2007, and China in 2000; (2) Summarize the workshop to be given in Tokyo; and (3) Present the results of recent discussions with international graduate students about how play ideas and practices find value and usefulness in Taiwan, Korean and Chinese early education settings.

Discussion will include seeking to identify the limits of the fruitfulness of the present information flow, to explore how to improve the process, and make it more bi-directional and valuable to educators and researchers on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, and to suggest directions for research and development.

Eva Nwokah and Sandra Burnette (University of North Carolina Greensboro)

Imaginative Language Play in Story-Telling and Joke Telling in Children with and without Hearing Loss

Children ages 6-9 were asked to tell a joke and compose a funny story. This study compared two groups of 10 children with and without hearing loss. Children with hearing impairment may have reduced language skills and difficulty with verbalizing abstract concepts that can impact their ability to use language in abstract and humorous ways. SALT (systematic analysis of language transcripts) software was used to analyze both jokes and stories. Applebee's story structure was used to evaluate story complexity. Results showed similar language skills in both groups but wide individual differences depending on degree of hearing loss, age of initial hearing aid use, and speech intelligibility. Popular jokes were knock-knock jokes. Funny stories were sometimes fiction and sometimes based on personal experiences. At this age the story structures were typically focused chains with a central person, object, initial event, and consequence, but often had weak plots with abrupt endings.

Susan Hart (University of Texas at Brownsville)

The Importance of Physical Activity and Play for the Child with Autism

Physical activity and play are vital for all children and for children with autism, specific activity considerations may result in three for one gains, including: (1) the development of health-related physical fitness; (2) a decrease in maladaptive behavior; and (3) an increase in social interaction with peers. Currently, the effects of

exercise on the physical and emotional development of children with autism are a growing area of inquiry in light of the ever-increasing number of children with the autism diagnosis. This presentation will discuss recent scientific evidence supporting specific activity suggestions for positive gains in each of these areas. In addition, testimonial evidence from a successful university-public school district (UTB-BISD) collaboration project, the *UTB Adventure Fitness Camp*, will be highlighted.

Sandra Murillo (University of Texas Brownsville), and John Andreu Sutterby (Science Academy)

Family Game Night

This presentation will cover the history of board games in the United States and how that relates to family interactions. It will cover how games have different roles culturally, and how they can serve to acculturate immigrants into United States culture. Games serve as transmission of culture especially in family contexts where adults transmit cultural norms on competition, fairness, and good sportsmanship.

Diana Hilda Cortez-Castro, and Alma Rodriguez (University of Texas Brownsville)

Traditional “Folk” Games Played in the Rio Grande Valley: Rediscovering Part of Our Hispanic Culture Through Play.

There is a vast amount of “folk games” that have been played by children in the Rio Grande Valley for many generations. “Folk” games are those traditional games passed along informally from one group of young children to another. The folk games of Rio Grande Valley children have the same functions that games have had from the beginnings of the human race: they entertain, educate, and instigate young children to live out their vivid imaginations through play. These traditional games reveal the values and beliefs of our parent’s and grandparent’s cultures, generation after generation. Games facilitate children’s minds and imaginations to mature, providing them with an opportunity to act out roles, make choices, and experience the gratification of winning and the frustration of losing.

The purpose of this session is as follows:

- To learn about the power of play in the development of young children in all four learning domains;
- To promote pride in our Hispanic heritage through the introduction of a collection of thirty five traditional “folk” games in the Rio Grande Valley; and
- To foster the importance of teaching our students cultural pride and awareness.

John Andreu Stutterby (University of Texas at Brownsville)

Meditations on the Referee

I have recently begun refereeing basketball games at the junior high and junior varsity levels. This experience has led to a meditation on the referee and what role she/he serves in the area of sports. Historically, referees were not part of sports, as they were gentlemanly games. However, early in the history of the sport of soccer referees began to become included in order to oversee the impartiality of sport. Since then, a number of stereotypes have developed around the idea of the referee including the referee as impartial judge, the referee as clown, the referee as a 'homer', the referee as corrupt, and the referee as inept. The idealized referee is one who is invisible to the game except when needed to impartially interpret the rules. The referees themselves serve in this role for many reasons including wanting to stay closer to the sport, wanting to be mentors/coaches for the players, wanting to get exercise, and enjoyment of the activity.