

TASP 2019 Roundtable

Title: Play in Higher Education

List of Co-Presenters: Jim Johnson (organizer and moderator) ,Tugce Arda Tuncdemir ,Brian Bellard, Sean Durham, Myae Han, Lynn Hartle, Karen Johnson, ChanMin Kim, Michael Patte,, and John Sutterby.

Bio-Sketches:

Jim Johnson is Professor of Early Childhood Education at Penn State and Past President of The Association for the Study of Play and current Series Editor of *Play & Culture Studies*. His current research interests concern digital play during the early years and parental and teacher influences.

Tugce B. Arda Tuncdemir is a PhD student in Curriculum and Instruction Department at Penn State. She completed undergraduate and received her M.S. degree emphasis on Early Childhood Education. Her research interests are play, creative drama, social and emotional learning. She is teaching Early Childhood Field Experience and Play courses at Penn State. She was awarded NAEYC PPIF Walter F. Drew Emerging Play Scholar Award in 2018.

Brian Belland is Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at The Pennsylvania State University. His research interests include the use of technology to support argumentation and problem solving during problem-centered instruction.

Sean Durham is faculty in Curriculum and Teaching in the College of Education at Auburn University. His background includes early education program administration and his research is directed towards further understanding developmentally supportive contexts for early learning and preparing teachers to work with young children.

Myae Han, Ph.D. is a professor of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences at the University of Delaware, and a past president of The Association for the Study of Play (TASP). She studies a play-based intervention to support early language and literacy.

Lynn Hartle, Ph.D., a former Montessori directress continued her career in higher education teaching positions in Florida and Pennsylvania. Her research interests include: teacher preparation, play, learning through the arts, and appropriate uses for digital media; shared through presentations, books, chapters, and journals. For her service and advocacy to the field, she was awarded: *2008 Children's Champion Award* Central Florida AEYC and the *2016 Edgar Klugman Award for Play*.

Karen McChesney Johnson, Ph.D. is full time faculty at The Pennsylvania State University and teaches Play as an Educative Process. She has conducted Play Workshops in Japan, Poland, Taiwan, and China, as well as in the United States. Her publications and scholarly interests include special education and children museums.

ChanMin Kim, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Learning, Design and Technology at The Penn State University. She studies methods to help preservice and in-service early grades and elementary teachers learn to integrate robotics and computer programming into classrooms. One of her current projects involves use of robots for learning through play in preschool classrooms.

Michael M. Patte, Ph.D. Professor of Teaching & Learning at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Patte is a Distinguished Fulbright Scholar, Co-editor of the *International Journal of Play*, Past President of The Association for the Study of Play, and Board Member of The International Council for Children's Play.

John Sutterby is faculty in the Department of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching at The University of Texas-San Antonio. He teaches courses on play, creativity and learning, and advanced studies in play. Twice President and Past President of TASP, he is Series Editor for *Advances in Early Education and Day Care*. His research interests include play environments, play and social justice, and play and language development.

Abstract: Diverse group of professors will discuss current projects concerning play in higher education, inviting audience participation. Panelists represent various theoretical backgrounds and play discourses; and they will be asked by the moderator to describe current work and to explain the rationales. Core values and commitments will emerge, and directions for future endeavors.

Description: This roundtable is grounded in learning theory and social-cultural frameworks and is directed towards illuminating current needs, challenges and aspirations among those involved in play projects in college and university settings. A possible starting point would be to consider the notion that in order to boost teachers' skills, knowledge, and confidence, play arguably is the most important component of teacher preparation programs. A range of current projects will be briefly described during this roundtable. The panellists will be asked by the

moderator why they are doing them. It is anticipated that answers will reveal diverse rationales and theoretical perspectives, and perhaps even fundamental values.

To give a flavour of current projects, one participant will briefly share how creative dramatics training contribute teachers' professional development and how this training can be an important role in higher education. Another panelist will share how her graduate level play course, *Play & Human Development*, has changed over time from early education to life span development, and how play the course can play an important role in interdisciplinary education in higher education. Another panelist will introduce an educational robotics project that involves early childhood education preservice teachers' programming of robots for young children's play. Discussed also will be how the use of informal learning sites (including museums, arboretums, e-learning labs) leads to the use of playful learning strategies creating educational and developmental benefits for young children. Other roundtable content includes one panelist's presentation on university collaborative work with an inclusive amusement park(Morgan's Wonderland), and amuseum for children(Children's Museum in San Antonio).

Presentation of diverse projects and topics by the panelists will stimulate general roundtable discussion among the co-presenters and the audience. The kinds and purposes of play projects in higher education that will be covered should prove enlightening and hopefully will positively affect present and future endeavors. This roundtable will show the importance of play in theory and practice in the context of institutions of higher education.