The background is a watercolor illustration of a busy street scene. It features several figures in various poses, some walking and some standing. The buildings in the background are rendered with soft, blended colors, suggesting an urban environment. The overall style is painterly and somewhat abstract, with a focus on light and shadow.

tracing the elusive
urban imprints
of *paidia* and *ludus*:
an illustrated
catalogue

Principal Investigator: Dr Penélope Plaza
UROP student: Oreoluwa Ijiginba

Cover image:

James McNeill Whistler, *Variations in Violet and Grey—Market Place, Dieppe*, 1885. Gouache and watercolor on off-white wove paper, mounted on academy board (20.2 x 12.7 cm). Gift of Douglass Campbell, Richard Strachan, and Stephen M. Strachan, in memory of Mrs. Douglass Campbell and Mrs. William Lyman Campbell, 2000. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. www.metmuseum.org

**tracing the elusive urban
imprints of *paidia* and
ludus: an illustrated
catalogue**

Principal Investigator: Dr Penélope Plaza
UROF student: Oreoluwa Ijinigba

School of Architecture, University of Reading
June 2020

contents

1	context: play and public life
10	a review of selected texts
18	findings
25	Illustrated Catalogue of Play
26	Bilboquet
29	Blindbock
34	Diabolo
39	Hide and Seek
43	Hopscotch
46	Kite Flying
72	Leapfrog
81	Marbles
90	Osselets
94	Pasemisí
98	Pétanque
102	Rope Jumping

115	Shove Ha'Penny
119	Shut the Box
122	Skittles
127	Spinning Top
133	Shuffleboard
136	Yo-Yo
140	reflections

**a personal
manifesto
for play and
public life in
times of
turbulence**

Dr Penélope Plaza

The invisible but very real menace of the mobile and highly infectious Covid-19 has disrupted life and introduced into our vocabulary words seldom uttered with such familiarity in recent memory: pandemic, quarantine, isolation... experiences of fearful retreat to the domestic sphere that although exceptional, are very familiar to me. My childhood, adolescence and adulthood in Caracas, Venezuela, were filled with more instances than I can count of retreats to the home out of fear of potentially deadly excursions around the city, in fraught attempts to avert urban crime, disease, coup d'états, urban revolts, blackouts, landslides, tremors... when catastrophes are inscribed into the everyday, the connections and relationships we build with our neighbours and our communities become essential to our survival, a life-line to cope with the pervasive powerlessness that serves as a daily reminder of an imminent mortality. This instilled a paradoxical mix of caution and defiance, placing great value in celebrating life and relationships through play-full interactions in the streets and public spaces with the people sharing our urban environment, whether friends, acquaintances or strangers. What could be mistaken as carelessness and indifference to urban disaster and chaos is in reality a very sophisticated coping mechanism devised to momentarily suspend fear to release a shared playful humanity, before being reabsorbed into the turbulent every day. This is the backdrop to the work of many urban play activist collectives, such as Ser Urbano and CollectiVoX, that have emerged in recent years in Venezuela and Latin America.

I co-founded CollectiVoX in 2008 and was an active member of the urban collective Ser Urbano from 2010 until 2012, both based in Caracas. CollectiVoX is a not-for-profit organisation that engages in co-designing small scale interventions in public space to create new positive forms of belonging, occupying, enjoying and inhabiting the city (Plaza, 2020, p. 2). Ser Urbano, created in 2008, mixes art, play and protest to promote *La buena vida pública* (the good public life). They organise disruptive temporary ludic interventions to re-claim public space, challenge urban fear and dominion over use of public space by local authorities, but most importantly, it offers a space for consumption-free playful leisure for all (Plaza, 2020, p. 20). Small scale urban interventions are the ideal platform for the enjoyment, re-occupation and appropriation of urban space in a way that is participatory, inclusive and playful (Plaza, 2020, p. 0).

The covid-19 pandemic has simultaneously flattened and emptied the publicness of our lives. Socialisation, meetups, our work environment, our favourite places, our mobilities in the outside world at large at once collapsed into the two-dimensional glowing rectangles we carry with ourselves. Our public spaces and streets had to be emptied of human presence, for the sake of public health all public interactions were abolished at once, now regarded as dangerous, harmful, infectious, adding an extra layer of fear and suspicion over any encounter, with loved ones and strangers alike. A blanket decision that whilst necessary, neglected to acknowledge how historical spatial inequalities would be magnified.

Whilst access to public spaces and green spaces are vital for public health, in cities like London, those 'living in deprived areas and those from BAME backgrounds share less space and have less access to private gardens and public parks' (Duncan, McIntyre and Cutler, 2020). Public spaces, parks and open green spaces are an essential part of our social infrastructure, vital for developing meaningful human connections through assembly in the public realm. All kinds of public interactions, including playing out with neighbours, had to be restricted by the necessary measures of social distancing and widespread lockdown (Klinenberger, 2018, p. 16; Stenning, 2020a). The high value we place on the positive effects of public assembly on our social and psychological wellbeing was evidenced by groups of people who, whilst following social distancing and mask-wearing, gathered in parks to preserve a sense of togetherness (McCann, 2020). We tend to underestimate how our local face-to-face interactions, when supported by a robust social infrastructure, form the 'building blocks of all public life' (Klinenberger, 2018, p. 5); this is how we forge bonds, collaboration and mutual support with our neighbours. When eroded, it can lead to widespread loneliness and isolation, 'leaving families and individuals to fend for themselves' (Klinenberger, 2018, p. 5) in times of crisis. In areas deprived of public space and parks, the covid-19 safety measures meant that meeting out and playing out with friends and neighbours was not possible, increasing the risk of loneliness and isolation. For these communities, the coronavirus was 'another insult, yet another stress' (McCann, 2020).

Alison Stenning, Professor of geography at Newcastle University and play streets activist, asserts that communities that 'connect through play are well-placed to know and support each other in times of crisis, large and small' (2020a), further explaining that:

Play has long been identified as an activity that facilitates connections between people, young and old. Most children make friends through play, of various kinds, and play-like activities (hanging out, chatting, sharing hobbies and interests, for example) are also important sites for friendships and relationships for adults. (Stenning, 2020a)

Her current research is focused on Playing Out, a national grass-root movement leading and supporting a campaign for children's freedom to play close to their door step (Playing Out, no date). Stelling is interested in how Playing Out shapes residents' attachments, material and emotional, to their streets and the people on them, and how play has the potential to challenge the erosion of relationships in everyday places. The evidence presented in the report Tackling Loneliness with Resident-Led Play Streets (Stenning, 2020b) highlights the 'value of everyday, neighbourhood connections and the place of play in connecting communities' (2020a). According to their survey, 95% of residents knew more people because of playing out, 86.7% felt their street was safer and friendlier, and 91.7% felt an increased sense of belonging (2020b, p. 1). Many of these new connections achieved through play were intergenerational, with children and adults of varying ages getting to know each other

(2020b, pp. 2–12). The report also identifies significant barriers for participation, particularly for adults, such as regarding playing in the street an activity exclusive for children, apprehension about meeting strangers or lack of awareness of the event taking place, and for some there may be additional cultural/language barriers and struggles with illness or mobility (2020b, pp. 3, 28).

Whilst the report stresses that playing out is not a single magical solution to structural spatial and social inequalities, it does make a compelling case for the direct positive effect playing on streets and public spaces have in fostering a sense of belonging, neighbourliness and friendlier streets (2020b, p. 39). Play then, particularly in adulthood, is not a sign of frivolousness or immaturity; in the words of poet and children’s author Michael Rosen:

‘Play isn’t an extra, it isn’t an add on [...] Play is a fundamental human right [...] Whoever you are, maybe you’re a mum, a dad, an auntie, an uncle or a grandparent, a child, a teenager, a teacher, whoever you are, let’s get out there and play’
(British Psychological Society, 2020)

It is then fair to say that play is not trivial, it should be given the same importance and respect as any other ‘serious’ aspect of daily life, and considered ‘part of a broadened conception of human needs’ (Stevens, 2007, pp. 27–28, 31; Smith, 2020) with public spaces as the primary and essential arena.

References

Duncan, P., McIntyre, N. and Cutler, S. (2020) 'Coronavirus park closures hit BAME and poor Londoners most', *The Guardian*, 10 April. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/apr/10/coronavirus-park-closures-hit-bame-and-poor-londoners-most> (Accessed: 3 July 2020).

Klinenberg, E. (2018) *Palaces for the People, How to Build a More Equal and United Society*. London: Bodley Head.

McCann, E. (2020) 'Spaces of publicness and the world after the Coronavirus crisis', *Society+Space*, June. Available at: <https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/spaces-of-publicness> (Accessed: 3 July 2020).

Playing Out (no date) *What is 'Playing Out'?*, *playingout.net*. Available at: <https://playingout.net/about/what-is-playing-out/> (Accessed: 13 July 2020).

Plaza, P. (2020) 'urban play & activism for living the good public life: experiments, interventions & antics'. London: Self-Published.

Smith, G. (2020) 'An insider's view of Play Well', *Wellcome Collection*, 16 January. Available at: <https://wellcomecollection.org/articles/XfpagxEAACEAG0W0> (Accessed: 3 July 2020).

Stenning, A. (2020a) 'Is play a cure for loneliness?', *The Developer*, 23 April. Available at: <https://www.thedeveloper.live/places/places/is-play-a-cure-for-loneliness> (Accessed: 3 July 2020).

Stenning, A. (2020b) 'Tackling Loneliness with Resident-Led Play Streets'. Newcastle University.

Stevens, Q. (2007) 'Play and the Urban Realm', in *The Ludic City*. New York: Routledge, pp. 26–53.

**a review of
selected
texts on play,
the city
and
coronavirus**

Dr Penélope Plaza and Oreoluwa Ijinigba

The terms *play* and *game* tend to be used interchangeably but this is inaccurate: game is a form of play. For a more precise differentiation, French sociologist Roger Caillois, building on the work of Johan Huizinga, coined the terms *Paideia* and *Ludus*, borrowed from the Greek and Latin respectively (Pérez de Arce, 2018, p. 4). *Paideia* (for Caillois, the cradle of play) is chance, improvised, spontaneous, devoid of rules it is eminently tactical, snatching 'ludic opportunities from any given place'; *Ludus* is organised, structured with explicit and stable rules and a priori agreements with 'mandatory norms and spatial criteria' (Pérez de Arce, 2018, p. 4). Thus, *Ludus* has a direct relationship with architecture whilst *Paidia* can only be indirect (Pérez de Arce, 2018, p. 5).

Up until the nineteenth century, in the West, play was embedded within the ordinary life of the city, disrupting routine activities rather than creating urban spaces for it to unfold. Outdoors play usually took place on shared grounds, there are little to no urban traces left of outdoor play up until the late 19th century (Perez de Arce, R. 2018). By contrast, the twentieth century separated play from the flow of ordinary life by creating the division between -useful- work and -useless- play (Pérez de Arce, 2018), play began to take architectural and urban form. Starting with Le Corbusier putting play as a prime subject in the Athens Charter, a change in urban priorities ensued with modernist architects discourse and architectural programme embracing a new ludic agenda that accounted for the city 'as the ultimate ludic space' (Pérez de Arce, 2018, p. 4). For architect and scholar Rodrigo Pérez de Arce:

Play is like art in its unproductiveness, its essential freeness; it develops in parallel with productive activities. It is not labor or work (in Hannah Arendt's terms), but more like the field of action, the area of appearance –essentially political– where the individual presents himself to the community, although play (the simple experience, purely expressive and with “a propensity for beauty”) lacks a plan. Idleness and freedom, modern social aspirations, find their expression in play. It has a powerful urban impact in the 20th century.

(Pérez de Arce, 2003, p. 10)

The interest on play in the city throughout the twentieth century primarily focused on playgrounds and play-spaces for children, understood as an essential component to their healthy psychological development and wellbeing. By contrast, adult play has tended to be considered a frivolous concern, only available to those with the money to afford leisure (Donoff and Bridgman, 2017, p. 297). Emerging research in the fields of psychology, urban sociology and cultural studies are challenging this notion of the ‘uselessness’ of play in adulthood, and across generations.

Whilst children's public play (parks, playgrounds, the street) is embraced as a normal component in city life, for adults, being seen playing in public can become a ‘political act’, as making a statement about who they are and who they choose to interact with rather than a normal everyday public behaviour (Koh, 2014). For this reason, adults require to be ‘given

permission to play' through verbal, physical or spatial 'keys' that signal an accepted shift of frame from a non-play situation into a play situation (Walsh, 2019, p. 2). These keys serve the function of temporarily suspending social embarrassment or awkwardness, and re-framing the situation into play mode:

Most frames for adults are inherently non-playful based on previous experiences, so although adults do play, it is often short-term playful interludes, or in strictly controlled circumstances. This suggests that giving adults permission to play is about signalling, or keying, more playful behaviour, and potentially giving alibis for behaviours that go against the normative frame for a situation. (Walsh, 2019, p. 2)

Owing to the fear of social embarrassment, when public play is frowned upon, or regarded as socially unacceptable or too political, adults will tend to retreat to their private realm when engaging in play activities (Walsh, 2019, p. 6). This highlights the importance of providing a 'safe space' and welcoming environment for adults to participate in play and interact with other groups. There is a myriad of intangible and tangible ways in which this 'safe space' can be encouraged, such as emphasising there is no competition for better inclusion and exploration, developing an alternative narrative before playing, as well as props and play spaces so adults are enabled to inhabit more readily an 'alternative play world' (Walsh, 2019, p. 12). Whilst children's playgrounds are an unmistakable, but potentially narrow, key for play, for adults the scope for integrating play into their complex social

existence, available in ways which are not available to children, particularly when it comes to public spaces (Stevens, 2007, p. 27). Rather than segregating play, integrating interaction between younger and older generations can function as keys for reframing urban space as potential play-spaces, which would also bring benefits in terms of creating bonds, interactions, safety, friendliness and overall wellbeing.

In this sense, the recently published report *Together in the 2020s: twenty ideas for creating a Britain for all ages by 2030* (United for All Ages, 2020) highlights strategies for re-framing urban space to enable, even if temporarily, spaces in which adults can engage in play with each other as well with older and younger generations. For example, making wider use of current traffic legislation to enable Play Streets for children can also

create opportunities for grown-ups to meet in a relaxed situation, breaking down barriers, melting assumptions and for older residents, a great opportunity to venture out, take in the sun and often, show the children games from the last century. (United for All Ages, 2020, p. 7).

The street can be transformed into a temporary playground for the entire community. Adults are further encouraged to engage because the safe signal to join are the kids themselves. Opening opportunities for interventions and play-forms to integrate older generations in both

unstructured (*Paideia*) and structured (*Ludus*) play, they may be familiar to them as well as allowing younger generations to appreciate their elders' play experiences. Cross-generational relationships that play can enable can also be make positive contributions in tackling loneliness, isolation, inequality and ageism (United for All Ages, 2020, pp. 6, 7, 18). The lack of public play contributes to the fact that the UK is one of the most age segregated countries in the world, 'people of different ages are unlikely to mix with each other outside their own families' (United for All Ages, 2020, p. 4). It is not hard to image that play in public spaces such as fields, parks and commons, can become an effective contributor overcome age segregation in urban spaces.

Unfortunately, the global pandemic of Covid-19 and the actions needed to reduce its spread, such as social distancing and widespread lockdowns, has added a new dimension of fear of the city; it is overwhelming for all people, young and old (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020; Robson, 2020). The effects of the uncertainty during lockdown include heightened anxiety, stress, feelings of isolation and constant worry about daily lives, in both children and adults (Dodd, H. and Gill, T. 2018). However, free play can ease these feelings: 'Play has helped families get through the anxieties created by the coronavirus outbreak' (Peachey, 2020), helping parents to not feel as irritable and bored through by engaging with their children at home. In addition, playful interventions in the context of the home can be 'a great leveller' in terms of how space is used and how money is spent (Peachey, 2020). Unsurprisingly, the lockdown has

sparked an increase in sales of playthings, regarded to be a worthy investment for keeping the whole family connected through the 'lens of joy, purpose and meaning' (Griffin, 2020). Paraphrasing Pérez de Arce, play dislodges routine (2018, p. 12), and this is particularly true when the routine has turned into monotony and isolation in the midst of the enforced widespread quarantines to deter the spread of Covid-19.

Hopefully, once the pandemic crisis has been overcome we can steer our focus back to the lack of play-space and play opportunities in urban spaces, so that the disruption is of a ludic nature, inciting play moments in the existing spaces we have available, be it during rush hour or our walk to the supermarket and make each other aware again that the city can be enjoyed together in a ludic way.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020) *Pandemics can be stressful, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases*. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html> (Accessed: 21 July 2020).

Donoff, G. and Bridgman, R. (2017) 'The playful city: constructing a typology for urban design interventions', *International Journal of Play*, 6(3), pp. 294–307.

Griffin, A. (2020) 'Coronavirus: World Health Organisation tells

people to stay at home and play games', *The Independent*, 31 March.

Koh, A. (2014) *The Political Power of Play, Hybrid Pedagogy*. Available at: <https://hybridpedagogy.org/political-power-of-play/> (Accessed: 22 April 2020).

Peachey, K. (2020) 'Coronavirus: The toys and games that saved lockdown', *BBC Business*, 10 June.

Pérez de Arce, R. (2003) 'Materia lúdica: Arquitecturas del juego', *ARQ (Santiago)*, (55), pp. 9–15. doi: 10.4067/s0717-69962003005500003.

Pérez de Arce, R. (2018) *City of Play. An Architectural and Urban History of Recreation and Leisure*. London:

Bloomsbury. Robson, D. (2020) 'The fear of coronavirus is changing our psychology', *BBC Future*, 2 April. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200401-covid-19-how-fear-of-coronavirus-is-changing-our-psychology>.

Stevens, Q. (2007) 'Play and the Urban Realm', in *The Ludic City*. New York: Routledge, pp. 26–53.

United for All Ages (2020) *Together in the 2020s: twenty ideas for creating a Britain for all ages by 2030*. Happisburgh, Norfolk, UK.

Walsh, A. (2019) 'Giving permission for adults to play', *The Journal of Play in Adulthood*, 1(1).

findings

Oreoluwa Ijinigba

The historiographical survey to catalogue depictions of play and play-things focused on online visual archives, under Open Access or Creative Commons license. Access to museum collections or physical archives was not possible because of COVID-19.

The survey resulted in a partial catalogue comprised of:

Images collected: 164

Play activities taking place indoors: 19

Play activities taking place Outdoor: 94

Play-things and play catalogued: 27

Types identified as Paideia (spontaneous, unstructured play): 13

Types identified as Ludus (organised, structured play): 14

Prior to starting with the archival research, we produced an initial list of play and play-things we considered would be able to create equal opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate, which also little to no competition.

The review of selected texts from the literature on play, adults and urban space suggested that we would mostly find that images of adults playing would be taking place relatively private locations as to avoid embarrassment. Otherwise, where adults are depicted to be in a public setting (crowd in a street for example) engaging with a play-thing or play-form to happen outdoors it would need to have been regarded as socially acceptable. Or that play among adults may be depicted more in comparison to children. The idea that play

and play-things are conventionally aimed at children is quite recent. In the same way Pérez de Arce describes play as combining artifact and space, one can deduce that public space historically was for citizens (men and, later, women) to participate in public play, this does not necessarily imply that citizenship was extended to children.

It was not surprising that *Paideia* has less concrete written evidence of its history due to its lack of structure in the form of rules and ephemeral imprint on urban space. Games such as Tag have many variations such as Blind Man's Bluff or Statues but it is very difficult to pinpoint exactly what their origins were. This being said, their endurance across generations is worth noting as, even in the digital age, a game of Tag is still present in playgrounds worldwide.

As we intended to include a collection of play from before the 19th century depicted in the West, it was clear beforehand that play may be depicted more so in public spaces outdoors than indoors. Up until the 19th century, urban spaces were not created specifically for play to unfold. As a result, play was intertwined with ordinary life as a way to disrupt routine activities e.g. in streets.

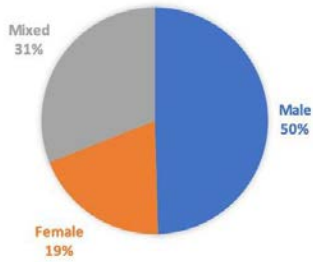
LUDUS

	Man	Woman	Boy	Girl	Mixed	Inter-generational	Photograph	Illustration / painting	Outdoors	Indoors
Shove Ha'Penny	2				2		4		1	3
Shut the box	2			1	1		1	3		4
Paper football	3		1				1	3	3	1
Pétanque	4				1		4	1	5	
Ladder Golf	1	1			3		5	0	5	
Jacks / Knucklebones		2						2	2	1
Leapfrog	4	1	5		2		6	4	9	
Marbles			4		2		4	2	6	
Shuffleboard		1			3		3	1	3	1
Foursquare	1				2		3	1	2	1
Teetherball	1				1	1	2		2	
Skittles	2		1		1		2	2	3	1
sub-total	20	5	11	1	16	1	35	18	41	12

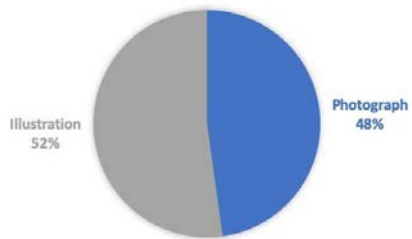
PAIDEIA

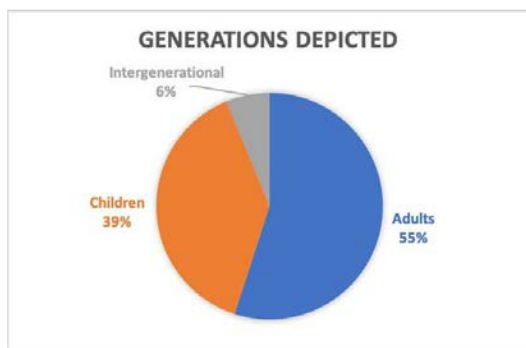
	Man	Woman	Boy	Girl	Mixed	Inter-generational	Photograph	Illustration / painting	Outdoor	Indoor
Hopscotch			1	1	1		2	1	3	
Tag			1		1		1	1	2	
Statues					2		2			2
London Bridge is falling down				1	2		1	2	3	
Jump Rope	2	2	1	1	4	1	2	8	9	1
Yoyo		3	1					4	4	
Whirligig			1	1			1	1		2
Spinning Top	1		3	2			2	4	5	1
Cup-and-ball		1	1				1	1	1	1
Kite	4		6		6	2	2	14	16	
Clackers		3	1		3	1	1	1	1	
Diabolo	1			1			4	1	5	
Blind Man's Bluff	1					1		4	4	
sub-total	9	9	16	7	19	4	19	41	53	7
TOTAL	29	14	27	8	35	5	54	59	94	19

GENDER RATIO



TYPE OF IMAGE





Illustrated Catalogue of Play

Bilboquet

Cup-and-Ball is a traditional toy made out of wood and string, it is usually composed by a wooden handle to which a wooden ball (or a cup) is attached by a string, the player balances the handle to try to catch the ball (or the cup). There are variations of this toy all over the world, known as Ring and pin (English), Bilboquet (France), Balero (Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, and Mexico), Boliche (Spain), bilboquê (Portugal, Brazil), Coca (Colombia), Perinola (Venezuela), Emboque (Chile). Known as 'ajagaq' by the Inuits who played using head of a hare and a bone for a baton. The game became very popular in 16th century France, according the St Fagans National Museum of History, the English Queen and her courtiers enjoyed playing it. (*Cup and Ball*, no date)



Unknown, 1750-1800, Cup and ball toy, A683011, England, Open Artstor: Science Museum Group



Castillo, José Del, 1780, Boys Playing Cup-and-Ball [Painting], P03313, Museo del Prado

As in the other four cartoons with which it forms a set (P03311 to P03314, P03534), destined for the decoration of the Princess of Asturias's dressing room at the palace of El Pardo, the artist has chosen a children's pastime as a decorative motif, in this case the game of cup-and-ball. The perspective, with its markedly low viewpoint, indicates a position over a door.

Blindbock

The game of Blind's man Bluff has been in existence for centuries and can be traced back 2000 years to Greece. It is known by many names in Europe such as: *mosca cieca* (blind fly), Italy; *Blindekuh* (blind cow), Germany; *blindbock* (blind buck), Sweden; *gallina ciega* (blind hen), Spain; *colin-maillard* (named after a medieval fight between a man named Collin and a French lord of Louvain, who was blinded in battle with a mallet yet continued to throw random swings), France. In order to play, the player who 'seeks' is blindfolded and spun around several times to the point of disorientation. The other players must call out while the blindfolded player attempts to tap one of them. Play restarts when a player is touched and they in turn become the next to be blindfolded.

Interestingly, an earlier variation of this game involved striking (or buffeting, hence the name 'buff') the blindfolded player. A version originating from the Igbo tribe of Nigeria (named *Kola onye tara gi okpo?* Meaning 'Can you find the person who knocked you on the head?') involves one player covering another player's eyes with their hands.

This gives a third player the chance to tap the blind player on the head. Out of all the remaining players, the blind player must guess who tapped them.

(*Blindman's buff* | game, no date)



Charles-Nicolas Cochin, 1739, The Game of Blind Man's Bluff [Etching], 1974.94, Open Artstor: The Cleveland Museum of Art



Unknown, ca. 1715–20, *Blindman's Bluff*: Page From a *Dispersed Bhagavata Purana* (Ancient Stories of Lord Vishnu) [Painting], 1992.7.2, India, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Unknown, ca. 1500–1525,
Five Youths Playing Blind Man's Buff [Tapestry],
65.181.17, Metropolitan Museum of Art

*In a raucous variation of a familiar game, a blindfolded boy tries to whack a playmate with an old shoe tied to a bat. Made for Nicolas and Guillemette Bouesseau, who married about 1485, this tapestry bears their family motto on the banner wrapped around the tree and their initials entwined in the lower corners. The youthful, outdoor play may reflect their motto, since *Selon le temps* can mean “According to the season,” or “According to the Weather”; the tapestry may have been part of an ensemble for the Bouesseau home representing the seasons or the ages of Man.*



Lorenz Frølich, 1835–1903, *A Mother and Two Children Playing Blind Man's Bluff* [Drawing], 66.576.10(8), Metropolitan Museum of Art

Diabolo

Passed down to the public during Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) in China, It was only until the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) that the diabolo could be seen being sold at spring festivals and it soon became a tradition. The plaything can also be found in acrobatic performances. (*History of diabolo playing in China*, no date)

The original Diabolos, bobbins with an axle and two cups on either end, were wooden but modern versions can be made from rubber.

Bobbin is spun using two handsticks connected by string.

This plaything, also known in the West as a Chinese yo-yo, comes in a variety of shapes and sizes. A larger model can be compared to the size of a car tyre!

In Chinese culture, the awakening of spring is symbolised by the buzzing sound the diabolo makes when spinning.



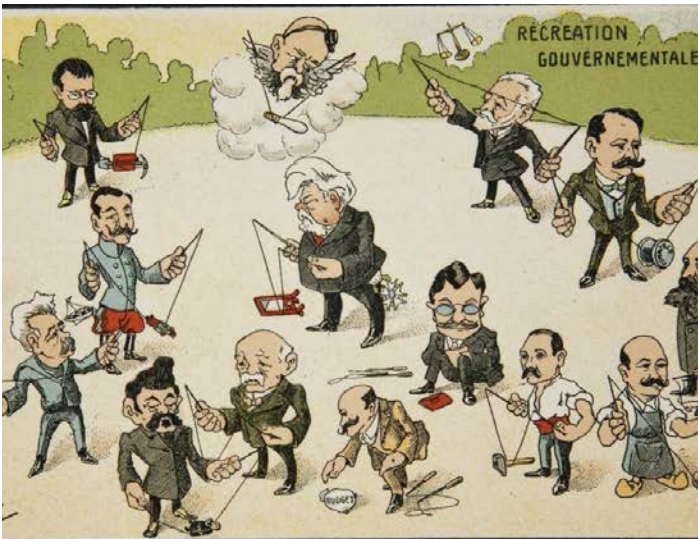
*Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1906,
Démonstration d'une joueuse de diabolo [Photograph],
Bibliothèque Nationale de France*



Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1907, Jeune joueuse de diabolo [Photograph], Bibliothèque nationale de France



Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1925, Mode à Deauville, jeune femme en costume de bain jouant au diabolo [Photograph], Bibliothèque nationale de France



Clement, A. ca. 1960, Récréation gouvernementale [Postcard], Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris

Hide and Seek

Hide and seek involves players hiding themselves in different places while one player with their eyes closed counts to an agreed number. Once the seeker has counted, they open their eyes and look for each player. The first person to be found becomes the one who finds the other players in the next round.

As objects are not used, it is hard to trace the first game of hide and seek. Writer Julius Pollux describes a game very similar to Hide and Seek in 2nd Century Greece named *apodidraskinda*. Hide and seek is also known as *kryfto* (Greek), *el escondite* (Spanish), *jeu de cache-cache* (French), *machboim* (Israel), *sumbaggoggil* (South Korea) and *de-av-ati ascunselea* (Romanian).

One variation involves having a home base which the players hiding must make their way to before being found. Alternatively, hiders that are found can help find the other players with the seeker. Another, known as *oro* by the Igbo children of Nigeria, combines tag and hide and seek: player who seeks stands in the middle of a drawn circle, telling other players to hide. The seeker then steps out of the circle to find the other players who try to reach the circle without being touched. (hide-and-seek | Definition, Rules, & Facts | Britannica, no date)



Unknown, Fresco depicting Cupids playing hide-and-seek, from the cryptoporticus of the House of the Deer in Herculaneum, Empire of colour. From Pompeii to Southern Gaul, Musée Saint-Raymond Toulouse, Wikimedia Creative Commons



Meyerheim, Friedrich Eduard, 19th century, Versteckspiel im Wald [Painting], Germany, Wikimedia Creative Commons



Weller, Franklin G. 1873, Hide and go Seek [Photograph], 84.XC.873.9187, Getty's Open Content Program

Hopscotch

In English, the origin of the word Hopscotch comes from jumping over the 'scotch' which is a line or scratch in the ground. Also known as *Rayuela* (Spanish), *Marelle* (French), *Campana* (Italian), historians are equivocal about its origins. Roots in 2357 BC China is a possibility but also the Roman era: soldiers would supposedly perform hopscotch in full armour with a longer grid to improve strength and agility. A hopscotch pattern can be drawn permanently or temporarily onto tarmac with chalk or paint. Players hop with both feet into squares side by side and on one foot in the others. The aim of the game is to toss an object to a numbered square on the ground and hop through spaces to collect it. A variation of the game includes hopping your way around a snail-like pattern on the floor. (*Hopscotch* | *Play Encyclopedia*, no date)



Collins, Marjory, 1942, Chinese-American girl playing hopscotch [Photograph], USA, Wikimedia Creative Commons

New York, New York. Chinese-American girl playing hopscotch with American friends outside her home in Flatbush



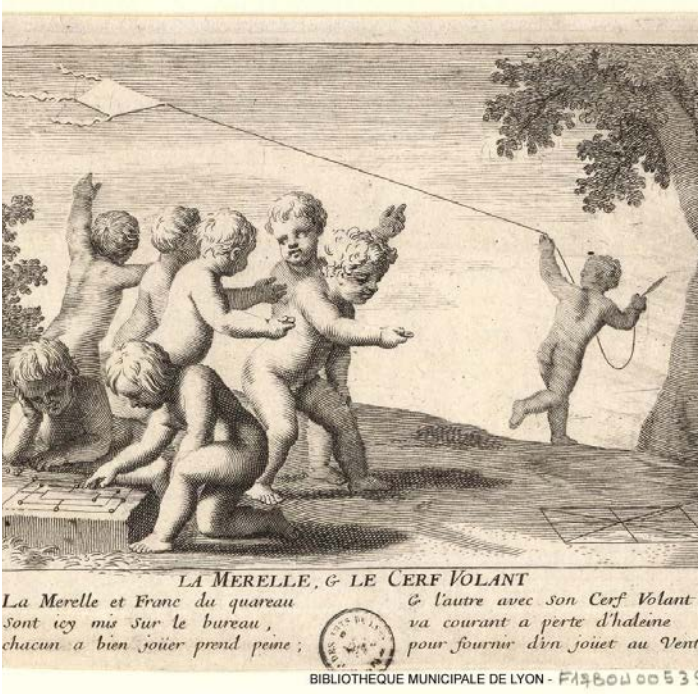
LA MARELLE A CLOCHE-PIE
et l'Enfant saute a Cloche-pie' Peut estre qu'il travaille en vain
entre-faisant l'estropie' car, s'il passe outre la mesure
sur dessus cette tablature ; son En-jeu changera de main

BIBLIOTHEQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON - F14 B0U00 5896

Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 1657, La marelle à la cloche-pié [Engraving], Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon

Kite Flying

The kite has an ancient history. The first account of a kite written by the Chinese general Han Hsin, of the Han Dynasty between 206 B.C.-220 A.D. (*'History of Kites'*, no date) Variations of this traditional outdoors play-object can be found all over the world, with different names such as Cometa and *Papagayo* in Spanish, or *Cerf-volant* in French. To play with kites requires at least two people, one holds the string while the other person runs the kite in the opposite direction. This person then launches the kite in the air to allow it to fly in the wind. (*No. 7 Fly a kite*, no date)



LA MERELLE, & LE CERF VOLANT
La Merelle et Franc du quareau & l'autre avec son Cerf Volant
Sont icy mis sur le bureau, va courant a perte d'haleine
chacun a bien jouïr prend peine ; pour fournir d'un jouïet au Vent

BIBLIOTHÈQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON - F1560400539

Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 1657, La marelle et le cerf-volant [Engraving], Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon



Jean-Baptiste Pillement, 1728–1808, Figures Flying a Kite [Print], France, 1920-36-233, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Collection



*Unknown, 1760-90, Venus and Cupid [Print],
1901-13-1, France, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian
Design Museum Collection*

*Venus, seated in her chariot, flies a winged heart on
the string, kite-like, while cupid aims at it with his
bow and arrow. In a hexagon inscribed in a circle.
Decoration for the lid of a snuff box.*



*Harunobu, Suzuki, ca. 1766, Kite Flying [Print],
Open Artstor: The Metropolitan Museum of Art*



*Katsushika Hokusai, 1760-1849, Kites at Tsuji [Print],
Japan, 1941-31-127, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian
Design Museum Collection*



Ando Hiroshige, 1797-1858, Scene of Flying Kites [Print], Japan, 1941-31-258, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Collection

A gathering of people admiring kites soaring in the air decorates the lower half of this print. However, upon further inspection, the center group of men is looking downward. The geometric composition of this playful print highlights the horizon in a brilliant red ombre effect.



Unknown, 19th century, A kite flying festival. Watercolour by an Indian artist, V0045552, Open Artstor: Wellcome Collection



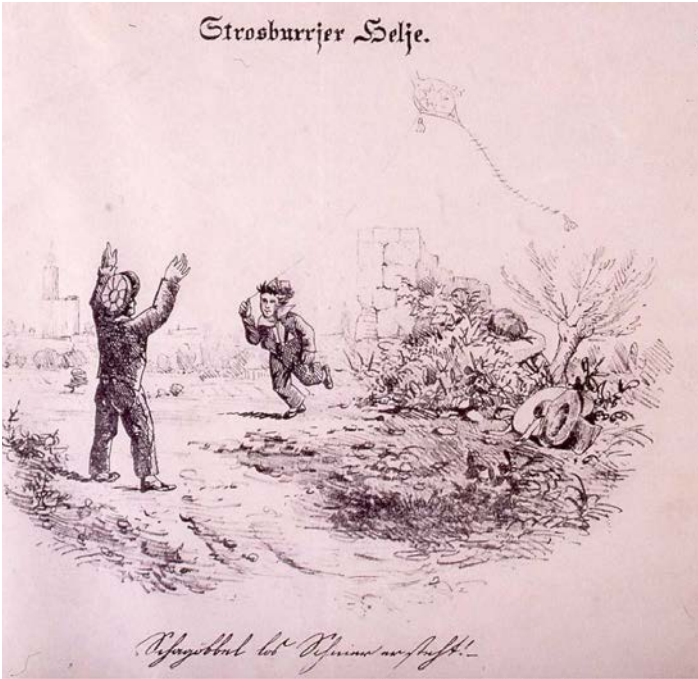
Ando Hiroshige, ca. 1834, Kakegawa, Mount Akiha, in *The Fifty-Three Stations of the Tokaido Road (Tokaido Gojusan Tsugi-no Uchi)* [Print], Japan, 1948-134-27, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

Right, Mount Akiha rises beyond rice fields and mist. Lower half, trestle bridge on which travelers are saluting priest who crosses from left. Kite is flown from left and another has broken loose.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de St

Stridbeck, 1835, Deux enfants jouant au cerf-volant (TR)
[Illustration], Strasbourg, Bibliothèque nationale de France



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de

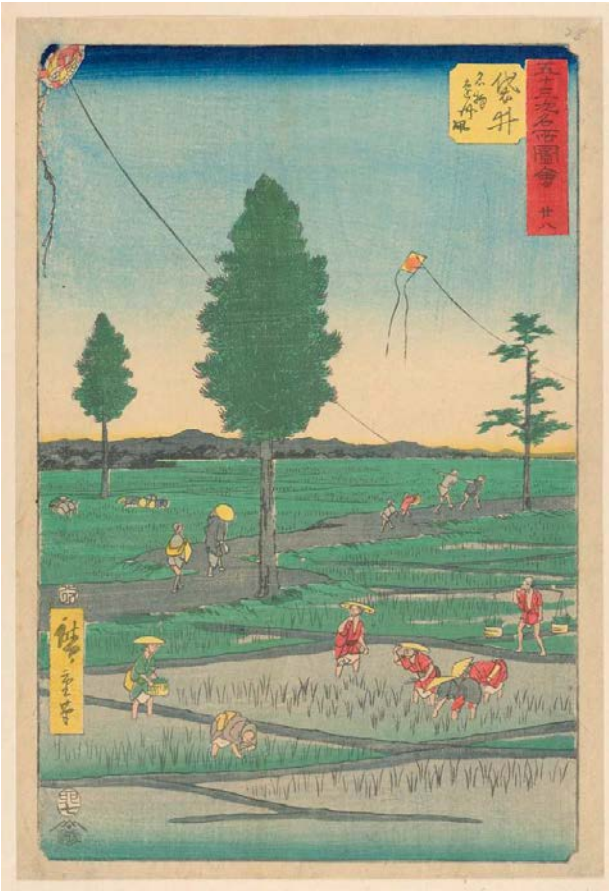
Poquet, 1839, Deux enfants jouant au cerf-volant (TR)
[Illustration]. Strasbourg. Bibliothèque nationale de France



Utagawa, Hiroshige, 1841-2, 東海道 五十三次之内. [28], 袋井 / 広重画Fukuroi / Hiroshige-ga [Print], Bibliothèque Nationale de France



*Unknown, ca. 1850, A Chinese kite flying competition
[Drawing], V0047106, Open Artstor: Wellcome Collection*



Ando Hiroshige, 1855, Scene of Flying Kites Fukuroi: Famous Totomi Kites (Fukuroi, meibutsu Ensu tako) from the series 53 Stations of Tokaido [Print], 1941-31-224, Japan, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Collection

Women working in the rice paddles stop and admire the kites flying in the air. These kites, flown by playful children in the background, are somewhat similar to the original kites that were flown years ago. During the mid-eighteenth century, kites carried samurai who flew over buildings to spy on the enemy.



Utagawa, Yoshitora, 1865, Kite-flying at a boys' festival in early spring [woodcut, triptych printed in colours], V0047328, Open Artstor: Wellcome Collection



Unknown, 1860-9, Kite Flying [Print],
2000-134, Open Artstor: Science Museum
Group

Print, woodblock, oban-tate-e, depicting kite
fliers in an urban scene during life under the
Bakufu, red-ground series title beside two-
coloured cartouche, signed Hiroshige ga.



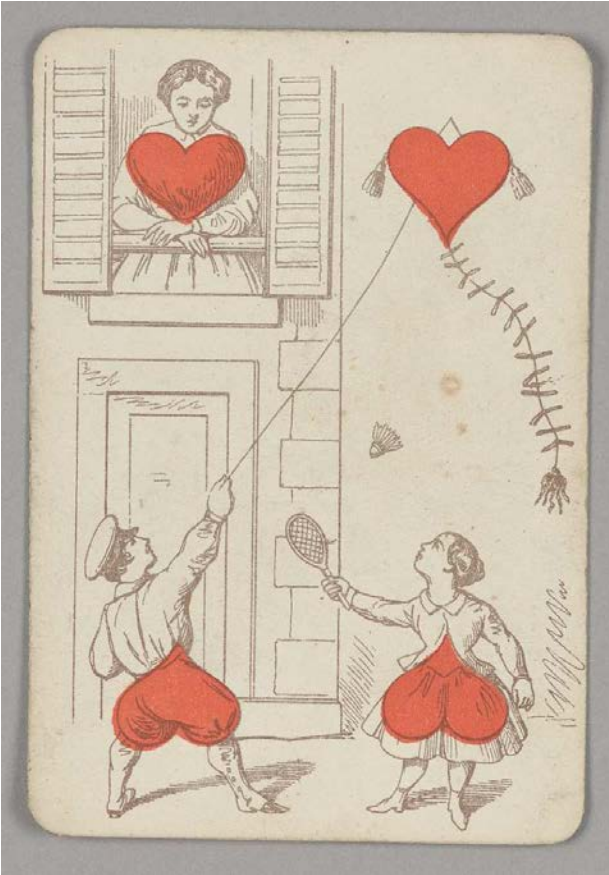
*Unknown, 1870-1914, Clark's
spool cotton O.N.T. trade mark
[Poster], Bibliothèque Forney*



Unknown, ca. 19th century, Coup de Vent [Print], France, Bibliothèque Bordeaux



*Unknown, ca. 19th century, Enfant
jouant au cerf-volant [Print],
Bibliothèque Bordeaux*



E. Le Tellier, Late 19th century, Four of Hearts [Playing Card], 1955-78-14-14, France, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Collection

Four of Hearts playing card from a pack of transformation playing cards. A scene of children playing in front of a domestic building. A boy at left in a cap flies a kite--his bottom and the kite take the form of red hearts. At right, a girl holding a racquet plays badminton; a red heart forms the skirt of her dress. At upper left, a female figure in a window surveys the children, a red heart forming the shape of her chest.



Unknown, One Plate, 1950-297/12, Open Artstor: Science Museum Group

*Embossed edge, polychrome. 8 1/4". Boys flying kite.
Inscription: "Employ thy time well if thou meanest to gain
leisure"*



MacLaughlan, Donald Shaw, 1900, The Kite [Painting], 1924.4112, Art Institute Chicago



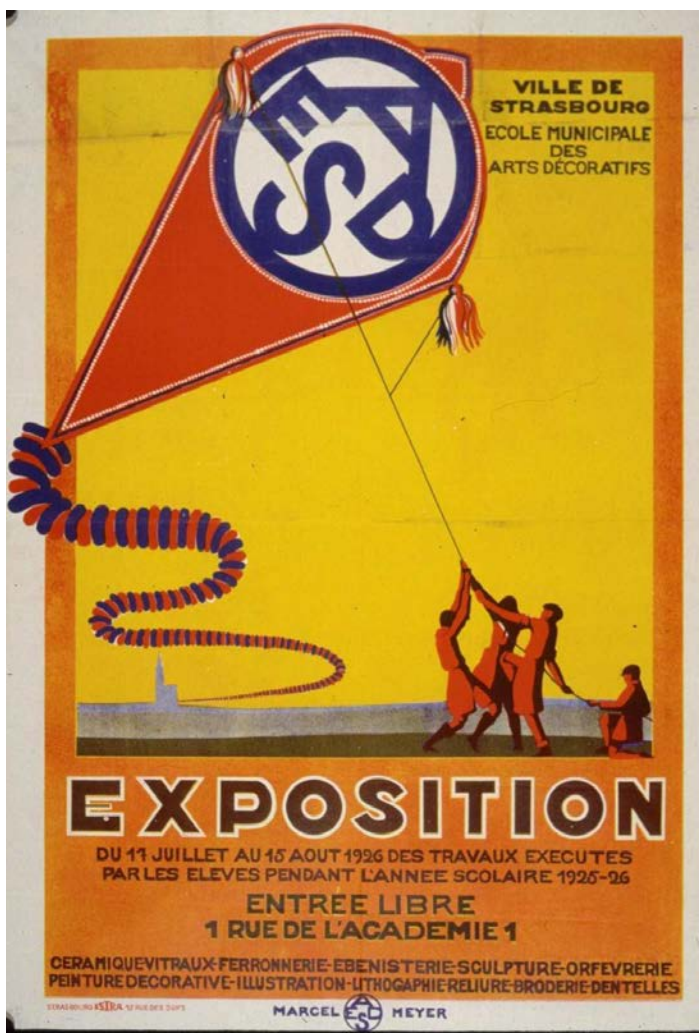
*Vincennes, 1911, coupe Gordon Bennett des cerfs-volants
[Photograph], 16973, Val-de-Marne, Bibliothèque nationale
de France*



*Vincennes, 1911, coupe Gordon Bennett des cerfs-volants
[Photograph], 16975, Val-de-Marne, Bibliothèque nationale
de France*



George Auriol, 1918, Carte de vœux [Print], Bibliothèque nationale de France



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg

Meyer, Marcel, 1926, Exposition du 17 juillet au 15 août 1926 des travaux exécutés par les élèves pendant l'année [Poster], Bibliothèque nationale de France

Leapfrog

Leapfrog, also known as *Saute-mouton* (French), *Pídola* (Spanish), *Cavallina* (Italian), is a traditional outdoor game, of a physical nature, for children and adults. The first player crouches down, then the second player runs up and jumps over while placing their hands on the crouched player's back. They then crouch down straight after and the sequence repeats. This game is mentioned in Boyer's Royal Dictionary Abridged mentions it in 1814. (BOYER, A. 1715)



LA POSTE
ainsy rangez, d'un air leger
S'exercent à voltiger
vont par voltes & courbettes
Que si quelqu'un est curieux
de juger qui saute le mieu
il n'a pas manque de lunette

BIBLIOTHEQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON - F19300054

Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 1657, La Poste [Engraving],
Bibliothèque Municipale de Lyon



Unknown, ca. 19th century, Sautemouton [print], France, Bibliothèque Bordeaux



[R. 15133-Im. 2]

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de

Guérard, Henri, Petits personnages jouant à saute-mouton [engraving], 19th century, Bibliothèque nationale de France



Agence de presse Meurisse, 1911, La saison à Trouville, saute mouton [Photograph], Bibliothèque nationale de France



Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1912, Entrainement de Carpentier à Cannes [Photograph], Cannes, Bibliothèque nationale de France



Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1914, Manitot, entraînement Carpentier [boxeurs et entraîneurs jouant à saute-mouton] [Photograph], Bibliothèque nationale de France



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque

Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1921, St Cloud, championnats militaires, marins de Lorient [exercice de "saut-mouton"] [Photograph], Saint-Cloud, Bibliothèque nationale de France



Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1927, Entraînement du boxeur André Routis à Manitot dans l'Eure, [exercice de saute-mouton] [Photograph], Vernon, Bibliothèque nationale de France

Marbles

Marbles, also known as *Billes* (French), *La rangette* (Old French), *biglie* (Italiano), *canicas* (Spanish) can be played on a variety of surfaces. Whether on a dusty, sandy surface or a more formal concrete or stone slab, players take turns to shoot half-inch, glass marbles at the group of 49 of them in the center. So long as a player knocks at least one marble out of the ring, he / she is entitled to continue their turn. In this way, play continues until a marble fails to leave the ring. The aim is to Knock more marbles out of the ring than your opponent/s when play finishes i.e. when the last marble is knocked outside of the ring. (*The Rules / Instructions of Marbles | How to Play Marbles*, no date)

Marbles can be traced as far as back as Mohenjo-daro, Ancient Egypt and Rome. (*Research – UNBOSI*, no date)



LA RANGETTE

... visent tous à ces monceaux, Quel qu'il soit il n'importe p
l'entre eux ils noient des chasteaux, car tout est pris de bône gue
nur en jeter quelqu'un par terre, pourveu qu'on en mette vu à b

BIBLIOTHEQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON - F17 B00005

Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 1657, *La Rangette* [Engraving],
Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon



Boilly, Louis-Léopold, 1824, *Groupe de jeunes savoyards jouant aux billes* [Print], Bibliothèque municipales de Chambéry



*David Gilmour Blythe, 1858, Boy playing marbles
[Painting], Smithsonian American Art Museum*



*Unknown, ca. 1860, Group of children playing marbles
[Albumen Silver Print], 84.XC.979.6783, Getty's Open
Content Program*



*Unknown, ca. 1870, Group of children playing marbles
[Photograph], 84.XC.1158.433, Getty's Open Content
Program*



A. Suzanne, ca. 1870. School children playing marbles [Albumen Silver Print], Wikimedia Creative Commons



Marble Time.

*Unknown, ca. 1891, Marble time
[Photograph], LOT 7143, Library of
Congress Prints and Photographs
Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA*



J.H. Tarbell, ca. 1901. 2 African American shoe shine boys playing marbles [Photograph], LOT 11826, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Osselets

Knucklebones, also known as Chuckstones, Dibs Dabs, Tali, Fivestones, Jacks, *Osselets* (French), *Matatenas* (Spain), *Aliossi* (Italy), is a game that dates as far back as Ancient Greece. Depictions of this game can be found on ancient pottery. A handful of five, small stones can be used to play this game to play the game more in the style in which it was originally played. These days, jacks (metal objects with six prongs) are used instead of stones as well as a small bouncy ball. (*The Rules / Instructions of Fivestones and Jacks*, no date)

For the original game, stones are spread across the floor. You pick a piece off the floor and throw it into the air, picking up a piece on the ground with the same hand immediately after. The aim is to catch the piece you through as well so you end up with two pieces in your hand. Play repeats by throwing one of these pieces up again and collecting another piece from the floor. Players try to collect all 5 pieces in their hand. A Chinese variation uses 7 cloth bags filled with rice. (*Catching Seven Pieces*, no date)

With the modern game, a bouncy ball can be thrown while you are collecting knucklebones from the floor.



*Unknown, 330BC-300BC (circa), Figure [statue],
Campania, British Museum*



*Unknown, Second Intermediate Period–Early New Kingdom
ca. 1635–1458 B.C., Gaming pieces (knucklebones), Upper
Egypt, Thebes. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Open
Access.*



*Unknown, 1st century A.D.,
Women playing knucklebones
(astragali) and standing figures
of goddesses Latona [painting
on marble], Niobe and Phoebe
from Italy, Bay of Naples,
Herculaneum, Naples, Museo
Archeologico Nazionale
(Archaeological Museum)*

Pasemisí

Also known as London Bridge is falling down (UK)

In this game, all players form a chain except two players who instead form an arch with arms. The players sing the song as the chain (snake) passes through the arch. The arch can be dropped whenever to capture a part of the snake. The captured player joins to form a new arch. Play then repeats. The last two players engage in tug of war.

The song sung while the UK version is played is as follows:

London Bridge is falling down,
Falling down, falling down,
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair Lady.

Build it up with wood and clay,
Wood and clay, wood and clay,
Build it up with wood and clay,
My fair Lady.

According to Britannica, Pasemisí began around 5 centuries ago in France. (*London Bridge | children's singing game*, no date)



Alexander B. McBride, 1898, Girls playing London Bridge [Photograph], Wikimedia Creative Commons

Girls playing "London Bridge Is Falling Down", United States



Atwood, Clara E. 1901, Illustrations from the novel *A Book of Nursery Rhymes* [Illustration], Wikimedia Creative Commons



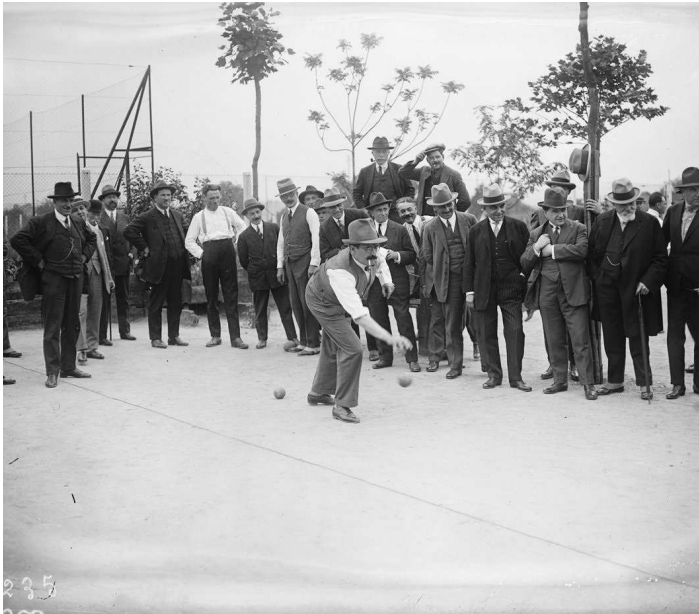
O'Shea, M. V, 1918, *The World book : organized knowledge in story and picture* [Illustration], 42924472, Chicago : Hanson-Roach-Fowler

Pétanque

The game of *pétanque* as we know it arrived in 1907 to Southern France, evidence indicates aspects of the game dating back as far as Ancient Greece. Throwing spheristics (stone balls) as far as possible appears to have been where the game started in society and would gradually throughout centuries see variations such as adding targets (Ancient Rome) or running three steps before throwing (Southern France). Above all, the game with a colourful history is known most commonly by its French name but, etymologically, *pétanque* comes from expression *pès tancats* [' pɛs tan ' kats] meaning feet fixed in the Occitan Language '*History and rules of the game*', (2013)



Unknown, ca. 19th century, Children playing pétanque in the lawn [print], Bibliothèque Bordeaux



Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1927, Jeux de boules, sénateurs contre députés [photograph], M. Escoffier, Bibliothèque nationale de France



*Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1928, Jeu de boules
aux Tuileries [photograph], Plocq, Bibliothèque nationale de
France*

Rope Jumping

The joy of rope jumping is that it can be played alone for practice and with other players. One or more players jump over a rope which swings under their feet and over the heads. The game has a left an elusive mark on history as the earliest record of people jumping over rope was Egyptians in 1600 AD jumping over vines. The fact that vines were used could indicate an even longer history as this isn't an artefact that can be preserved. It goes by other names in other countries such as *sauter à la corde* (French), *salta la cuerda* (Spanish), *saltare la corda* (Italian). (Quick, P. S. 2014)

The game was particularly popular in the Netherlands and actually is the source of the English term 'double dutch' —an English variation where the game is played with two ropes simultaneously. (Wedra, no date)



Cornelis Holsteyn, 1640 - 1655, Touwtjespringen Spelende kinderen (serie B) (serietitel) [Engraving], RP-P-OB-23.699, Wikimedia Creative Commons



-p-08-46.118

V.E.4

Unknown, 1712, *Touwtjespringende jongen Het Kind loopt door 't Touw* [Print], Wikimedia Creative Commons



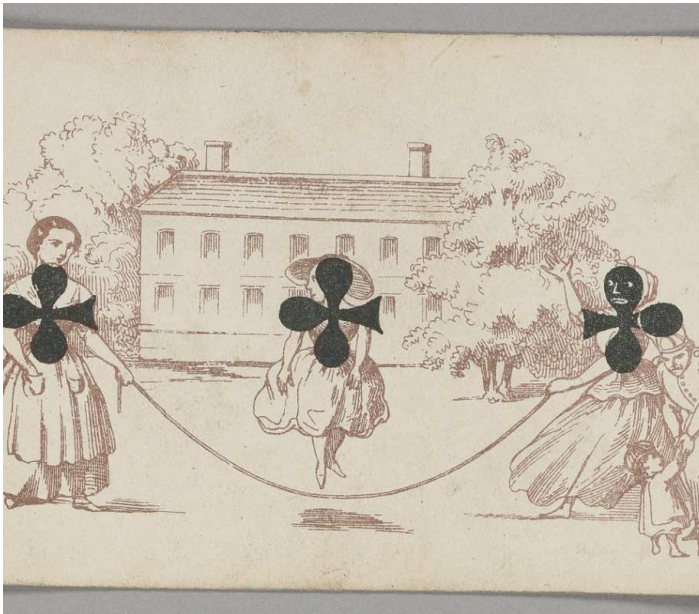
Friedrich August Mottu, 1815, Imperial Jump-rope (Le Sauter impérial, grand faiseur de tour) [Print], 2010.559, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Unknown, 1843, Jumping The Rope [Etching], Wikimedia Creative Commons



*Augustin-Amant-Constance Fidele Edouart, 1844,
Portrait of Mary Chambers Jumping Rope
[Silhouette], 1914-42-2, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian
Design Museum Collection*



E. Le Tellier, Late 19th century, Three of Clubs [Playing Card], 1955-78-14-33, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Collection



Unknown, ca. 19th century, Les Début de Bébé [Print], France, Bibliothèque Bordeaux



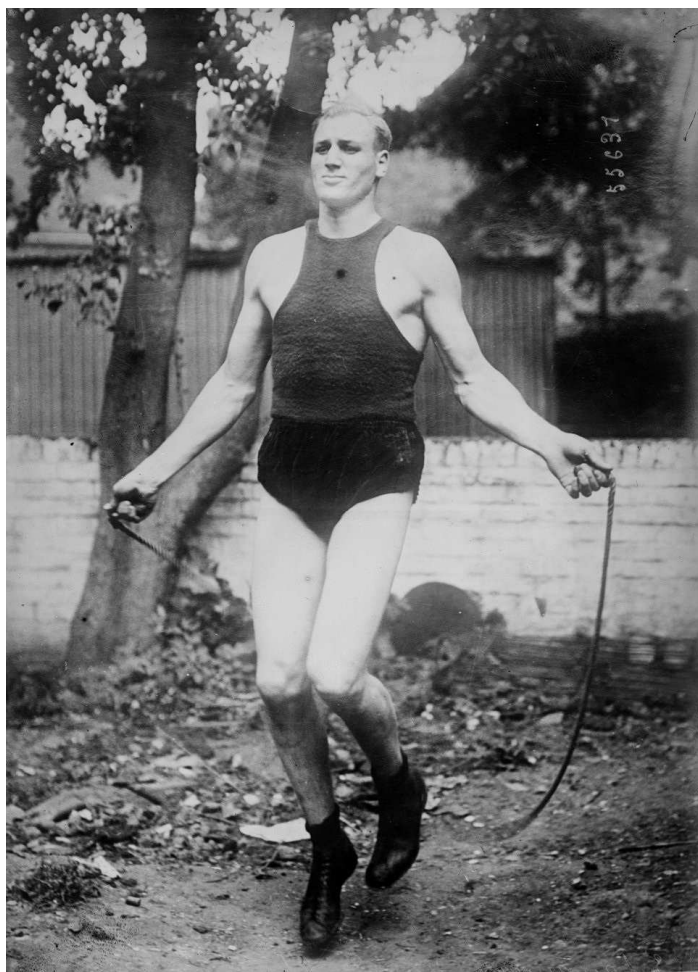
Unknown, ca. 19th century, Oh ! Le Maladroit !, France, Bibliothèque Bordeaux



Unknown, ca. 19th century, Manteiga da Estrella, France, Bibliothèque Bordeaux



*Unknown, ca. 19th century, Jeune femme
jouant à la corde à sauter, France,*



*Agence Rol. Agence photographique, 1919, Entraînement [à la corde à sauter] de Fulton [boxeur américain]
[Photograph], Bibliothèque Nationale de France*



Frank L Beals, ca. 1940-1, Nunivak Children Playing Jump-Rope [Photograph], Wikimedia Creative Commons

Shove

Ha'Penny

Shove Ha'Penny has players push coins into beds completely with the heel of their hand. Some boards have bars which can be raised: if the coin moves when it is raised, this coin is discounted and not added to the score. While this game served to effectively congregate the village in pubs, the last league for Shove Ha'Penny went out of business in 2014 according to a BBC interview (*Shove ha'penny - YouTube*, no date). Making great use of coins, this game dates back to 15th century pub leisure. Though it requires skill to land coins in the necessary zones, it is very accessible and inclusive. This game can give an opportunity to connect with English tradition as well as with various age groups.



Unknown, 1941, British Workers Guard Their Work-Civilian Firefighters [photograph], England, Wikimedia Creative Commons

A group of volunteer firefighters at this Ministry of Supply factory play darts and Shove Ha'penny to pass the time whilst on their shift. According to the original caption, they are 'workmen by day, firemen by night'. (1941)



Unknown, 1944, Youth Hostel- the work of the Youth Hostel Association in Wartime [photograph], Malham, Yorkshire, England, UK, Wikimedia Creative Commons

After the evening meal, guests at the Youth Hostel in Malham enjoy a game of Shove Ha'penny in the common room. (1944)



Unknown, 1945, A Picture of a Southern Town- Life in Wartime [photograph], Reading, Berkshire, England, UK, Wikimedia Creative Commons

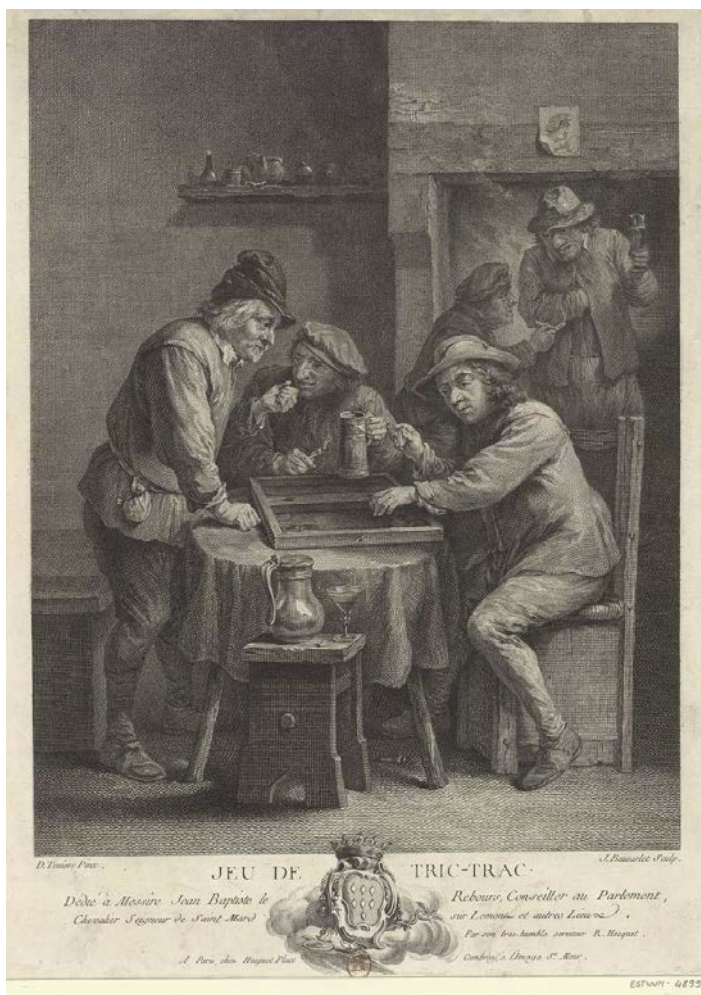
Men enjoy a game of Shove Ha'penny at the Labour Club in Reading. (1945)

Shut the Box

Also known as Blitz, Bakarat, Canoga, Klackers, Batten Down the Hatches, Kingoball, Trictrac, Cut Throat, Fork Your Neighbour, Jackpot, *fermer la boîte* (French), *jeu de trac* (French), *Cierra la caja* (Spanish). The origin of the game can be traced to early 19th in Northern France. However, concrete traces of the game in the United Kingdom can be found from mid-twentieth century, having close ties with pubs in England. (*Shut the box - Online guide*, no date)

It is a game of dice for two or more players, tiles are all turned upwards at the start and then close as each player take turns to roll the dices. Numbers rolled are combined to eliminate numbers on tiles. Player chooses which combination of tiles is flipped over. (*The Rules / Instructions of Shut the Box*, no date)

There is a good example of a social, public space and so there is no surprise that the game can involve gambling as a variation to an otherwise 'unproductive' activity.



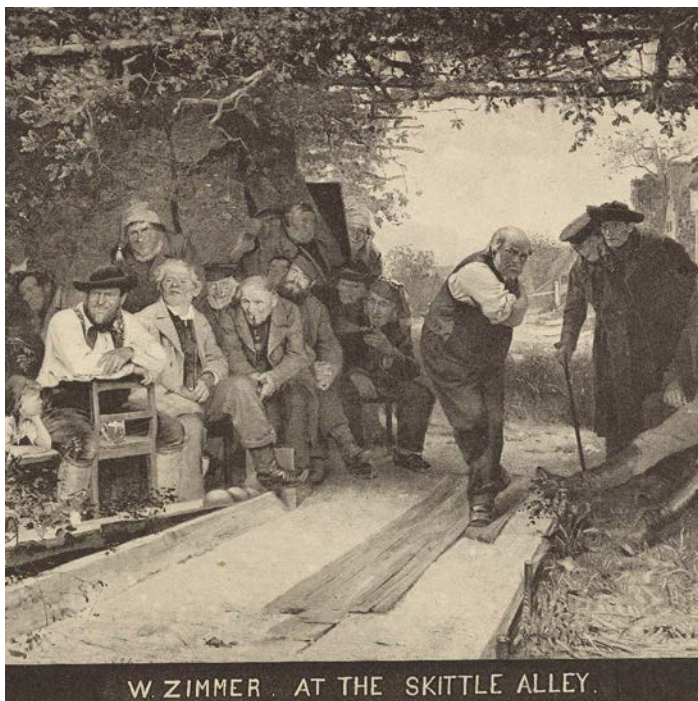
Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Beauvarlet, Jacques Firmin, 18th century, *Jeu de Tric-Trac* :
[estampe] / D. Teniers Pinx. ; J. Beauvarlet Sculp,
Bibliothèque nationale de France

Skittles

Skittles, or known in its more traditional form as Ninepins, is an old lawn game, popular in British pubs. The aim is to throw a wooden or rubber ball at the pins arranged on the ground so that you knock as many down in the fewest throws.

As a form of bowling, the origins of skittles dates back as far as ancient Egypt around 5000 BC. Instead of designated bowling balls, the Egyptians used stones to knock over objects. (*Skittles | game | Britannica*, no date)



W. ZIMMER . AT THE SKITTLE ALLEY .

Unknown, Late 19th century, W. Zimmer - At the Skittle Alley [Collotype], 85.XP.360.100, The J. Paul Getty Museum



Charles Émile Jacque, 1846, *The Ninepin Players*,
1927.3650:dup1, France, Art Institute of Chicago



LES QUILLES
A voir camper ce gros garçon Mais vû sa taille, il est constant
l doit passer pour vn Samson qu'on ne scauroit dire pourtant
parmy ces autres petis drilles, qu'il soit grand abbateur de Quilles.

BIBLIOTHEQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON - F198000539

Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 1657, Les Quilles [Engraving],
Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon



BIBLIOTHEQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON -

Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 17th century, Le jeu de quille et de l'escarpolette [Engraving], Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon

Spinning Top

This play object has a name in many languages including: *Top* (English), *Teetotum* (English), *Trompo* (Spanish), *Peonza* (Spanish), *Dreidel* (Yiddish). A variation known as a Button whirligig (English); buzzer (English) pinwheels, buzzers, comic weathervanes, gee-haws, spinners, whirlygigs, whirlijigs, whirlyjigs, whirlybirds, or plain whirly consists of a Central disc revolved until string holding it is well twisted. (Pack, L. H. 2013). The material of the spinning top, the earliest found in Ur in 3500 BC Middle East, has changed through the centuries. Terra Cotta tops have been found in Turkey 3000 BC and there is evidence of wooden tops from 2000 BC Egypt. (*Toy History - Antique Toys, Collectible Toys, rare toy memorabilia, old wood toys, Christmas party games*, no date). The top is spun to begin with. Then, it wobbles and eventually rises to a vertical position while spinning. The use of spinning tops is now quite varied. Some have symbols and act like dice for use in rituals and gambling. For example, in the Jewish tradition Hanukkah where a dreidel is spun, each player begins with equal amounts of playing pieces to bet with e.g. money, nuts (*How to Play Dreidel | My Jewish Learning*, no date). The string is then tightened and loosened so the string unwinds. This causes the disc to rotate at a very fast rate and make a buzzing noise. Some trace the play object to ancient China. (*Leishman, G. J. 2006*)



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Unknown, 1792, *La Toupie d'Allemagne* [Print], Bibliothèque nationale de France



Unknown, 1905, Top, GH003606, Open Artstor: Museum of New Zealand - Te Papa Tongarewa



Unknown, ca. 1970, Spinning Top, GH024315, Open Artstor: Museum of New Zealand - Te Papa Tongarewa

The top was spun by winding a string around the centre and then releasing it in a single throwing motion. Throughout history both children and adults have enjoyed spinning tops. The earliest examples in New Zealand were played with by Maori tamariki (children) prior to European settlement. Overseas, clay tops have been discovered in many archaeological sites including examples discovered at Troy that date to 3000 B.C., and Egyptian, Greek and Roman tops have been found dating from 2000 B.C. to 27 B.C.



Unknown, 2017, Juego de trompo [Photograph], Colombia, Wikimedia Creative Commons



Bouzonnet-Stella, Claudine, 1657, La Toupie [Engraving],
Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon

Shuffleboard

Dating back to 15th century England, Shuffleboard (also referred to as Deck shuffleboard; floor shuffleboard, *tejo* (Spanish), *jeu de palets* (French)) is well known for its inclusivity of all ages and abilities. It can be played on a choice of concrete or vinyl courts depending on how able you are to maintain them. A cue is used to make the disc (4 per player) glide along the surface into the scoring zone. A player's foot must not go behind the first line of the court otherwise points are not scored. Play continues till a player reaches a certain, agreed score. The game involves strategy as attack and defence are combined! (*Shuffleboard*, 2013).



*Unknown, ca. 1950, Greta Garbo Shuffleboard
[Photograph], Wikimedia Creative Commons*

*Swedish actor Greta Garbo playing shuffleboard on board
of a Svenska Amerika Linien passenger ship.*



Unknown, ca. 1955, Men and women playing shuffleboard on the Unity House courts [Photograph], 5780pb41f20dp400g, Cornell: International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Photographs

Yo-Yo

The Yo-yo may have a significant imprint in English culture but its name actually is Filipino in origin (Tagalog). This play object (named a Bandelore in England) was aimed more at the English aristocracy of the 18th century. That said, it is depicted in Greek pottery dating back to 500 BC.

A yo-yo is a toy that has two disks connected together where a long string rests in the middle. The string winds, unwinds, and rewinds, while attached to the player's finger.

Not only has the yo-yo developed in terms of its accessibility, the materials used in its production have changed. The Greeks made the discs from terra cotta while the French were ivory and brass. American and Fillipino cultures made use of wood, but it was the US that began to use plastic discs in the late 1960s. (Yo-yo | *Encyclopedia.com*, no date)



Unknown, 1770, Lady with a Yo-yo Northern India (Rajasthan, Bundi or Kota) [Painting],

This painting belongs to the extensive genre of paintings depicting lonely women who must amuse themselves while their lovers are away. It shows a woman playing with a string toy that is similar, but not identical, to a Western yo-yo.



Unknown, 1791 Yo-Yo Banelore [Illustration], France, Wikimedia Creative Commons

A depiction of a woman playing with an early form of the yo-yo, or "Bandalore" (as it was called in England then), from a French fashion journal, 1791.

reflections

Oreoluwa Ijinigba

Being part of Generation Z brings to mind the mastery of digital and technology and software for social connection and play. However, being one of the older individuals of this generation has meant I can also identify with a time before playing behind a screen. So one of the main values I now hold thanks to this placement is the memory 'imprinted' on my mind by play objects which date a while back.

My interest in fair and equal play prompted me to submit my application to this UROP project. Learning about structured (Ludus) and spontaneous (Paideia) play began to align better with my initial beliefs about play, especially when reading about what the results of play should be. Contrary to popular belief, many experts who have written about play such as Rodrigo Perez de Arce indicate that play should be unproductive in order to bring about intergenerational connection.

What surprised me was that the research focused on adult play. I entered this project with the firm belief that young people see play far removed from the 'adult world' of work and politics, as suggested by the boycott of schools (and, effectively, play time) to take part in climate change strikes last year. This placement has taught me that this is a mindset worth changing because adults need to be made aware that there is no shame in prioritising ludic activities as highly as our professional lives. In addition, the rise of mental health awareness has shown the negative effects of poor intergenerational mixing on loneliness and isolation which I now believe can be alleviated by play in public spaces.

Personally, being a member of the Our Lady of Peace (OLOP) table tennis club in Lower Earley gave me first-hand experience with the advantages of welcoming all generations to play. I quickly realised that friendly matches were not easy or guaranteed wins against the more senior members of the club. It had taught me to keep an open mind about how universal popular games can be as it can be easy to become caught in your own bubble, assuming that only your generation can participate. Upon reflection, I have been reminded that adults don't suddenly forget what games are or how to play them!

For this reason, I have enjoyed tracing the history of play forms and objects which have had an impact nationally as well as worldwide. In fact, I believe that the more substantial the history of a play form (for example jacks), the more likely the public will decide to interact with it in a public space such as a common. This can open doors to experimenting with the scale of the play form. such as coming up with creative design tactics to re-imagine and re-create age-old games for all to play together.

References

Basic Diabolo Tricks, Instructables. Available at: <https://www.instructables.com/id/Basic-Diabolo-Tricks/> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

BOYER, A. (1715) *The Royal Dictionary Abridged ... The Third Edition, Carefully Corrected and Improv'd, Etc.* D.&J. Brown.

Blindman's buff | game (no date) *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/blindmans-buff> (Accessed: 22 July 2020).

Catching Seven Pieces (no date) *Activity Village*. Available at: <https://www.activityvillage.co.uk/catching-seven-pieces> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

Cup and Ball (no date) *National Museum Wales*. Available at: https://museum.wales/traditional_toys/cup_and_ball (Accessed: 2 July 2020).

hide-and-seek | Definition, Rules, & Facts | Britannica (no date). Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/hide-and-seek-game> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

'*History and rules of the game*' (2013) *Frankfield Pétanque Cork*, 27 May. Available at: <https://frankfieldpetanque.com/history-and-rules-of-the-game/> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

History of diabolo playing in China (no date). Available at: <http://english.visitbeijing.com.cn/a1/a-XCXW2OC1280C74F5A6DA88> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

Hopscotch | Play Encyclopedia (no date). Available at: <https://www.pgpedia.com/h/hopscotch> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

'History of Kites' (no date) American Kitefliers Association (AKA) - Kites, Kite Flying, Education and Community. Available at: <https://kite.org/education/history-of-kites/> (Accessed: 2 July 2020).

Leishman, G. J. (2006) Principles of Helicopter Aerodynamics with CD Extra. Cambridge University Press.

London Bridge | children's singing game (no date) Encyclopædia Britannica. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/London-Bridge-childrens-singing-game> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

No. 7 Fly a kite (no date) National Trust. Available at: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/no7-fly-a-kite> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

Pack, L. H. (2013) Appalachian Toys and Games from A to Z. University Press of Kentucky.

How to Play Dreidel | My Jewish Learning (no date). Available at: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/how-to-play-dreidel/> (Accessed: 22 July 2020).

Quick, P. S. (2014) 100 Playground Games for Children. Andrews UK Limited.

'Research – UNBOSI' (no date). Available at: <http://www.unbosi.org/research/> (Accessed: 6 July 2020).

The Rules / Instructions of Shuffleboard (no date). Available at: <https://www.mastersofgames.com/rules/shuffleboard-rules.htm> (Accessed: 6 July 2020).

Shove Ha'penny - Online Guide (no date). Available at: <https://www.tradgames.org.uk/games/Shove-HaPenny.htm> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

shove ha'penny - YouTube (no date). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AA4y5gakofU> (Accessed: 21 July 2020).

Shuffleboard (2013). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R74yolowFPs> (Accessed: 22 July 2020).

Shuffleboard History (no date) Shuffleboard.net. Available at: <https://www.shuffleboard.net/history.html> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

Skittles | game | Britannica (no date). Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/sports/skittles> (Accessed: 22 July 2020).

Shut the box - Online guide (no date). Available at: <https://www.tradgames.org.uk/games/Shut-The-Box.htm> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

The Rules / Instructions of Fivestones and Jacks (no date). Available at: <https://www.mastersofgames.com/rules/jacks-rules.htm> (Accessed: 6 July 2020).

The Rules / Instructions of Marbles | How to Play Marbles (no date). Available at: <https://www.mastersofgames.com/rules/marbles-rules.htm> (Accessed: 6 July 2020).

The Rules / Instructions of Shove Ha'penny (no date). Available at: <https://www.mastersofgames.com/rules/shove-hapenny-rules.htm> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

The Rules / Instructions of Shut the Box (no date). Available at: <https://www.mastersofgames.com/rules/shut-box-rules.htm> (Accessed: 29 June 2020).

Toy History - Antique Toys, Collectible Toys, rare toy memorabilia, old wood toys, Christmas party games. (no date). Available at: <http://www.woodentoys-shop.com/toy-history-toys-games.php3> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

Wedia (no date) English expressions with the word “Dutch”, lamExpat. Available at: <https://www.iamexpat.nl/expat-info/dutch-expat-news/english-expressions-word-dutch> (Accessed: 22 July 2020).

Yo-yo | Encyclopedia.com (no date). Available at: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/sports-and-everyday-life/games/games-and-hobbies/yo-yo> (Accessed: 22 July 2020).

An abstract watercolor painting in shades of blue, yellow, and brown. At the top center, there is a rectangular shape that resembles a window or a doorway, rendered in a darker blue. The rest of the painting is a textured, layered composition of various colors, suggesting an urban environment or a complex architectural space. The overall style is expressive and painterly.

This UROP project is part of a longer-term practice-led research project that aims to investigate theories and methods of urban commoning through small ludic interventions and playable spaces. It will explore their potential for enabling new forms of commons in the city by temporarily transforming urban spaces into playable-spaces for intergenerational socialisation in the 21st century.

Drawing on Dr Penélope Plaza's urban activism in Caracas, Venezuela as co-founder of CollectiVoX and active member of the playful protest collective Ser Urbano, this UROP placement offers the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to research by carrying out a historiographical survey of traditional and contemporary forms of 'analogue' play that bridge cultures, generations and abilities.

The UROP student will produce an illustrated catalogue of play-forms, play-objects and play-spaces drawing on Caillois categories of Paidia (spontaneous play) and Ludus (structured play).

School of Architecture, University of Reading