

A similarly flexible adaptation of play to take advantage of both traditional and imported materials is recorded by Diane Bell in her observations of children at Warrabri settlement in the Northern Territory:

*'The main toy was a 'trickle-can', i.e. treacle can, with a wire handle which was pushed by kids. They made noises of various vehicles as they pushed. Some had wonderful additions like speedos attached to the wire coat hanger handle. Some changed gear!*

*The main game was 'knives'. Throwing a knife up and down with a flick and twist into the sand to land upright. When it landed flat, the next person had a turn.*

*Kids were involved with natural materials and always making 'little spears', little carriers, etc.'*<sup>18</sup>

Here, traditional Aboriginal games and games using European materials and imitating modern technology (cars and trucks) are part of the repertoire of contemporary Aboriginal children. Like all children they are skilled at adapting to their circumstances and adapting their circumstances to enhance their play.

#### ENDNOTES

1. An exception to the general rule of neglect of Aboriginal child life in books about Australian childhood is *Children in Australia: An Outline History*, Sue Fabian & Morag Loh, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1980.
2. Dorothy Howard, 'Marble Games of Australian Children', *Folklore*, vol. 71, September 1960, p. 165.
3. Howard, *ibid.*, p. 165-6.
4. For a discussion on the 'dying pillow' theory and its function in Aboriginal-white relationships, see C.D. Rowley, *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society*, vol. 1, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1970, pp. 102-5 and James Miller, *Koori: A Will to Win*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1985.
5. Walter E. Roth, 'On the Natives of the (Lower) Tully River', 1900, manuscript held by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra.
6. Rowley, *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society*, vol. 1, p. 68. Rowley provides a detailed account of white

attitudes and responses to Aborigines from the first days of settlement.

7. An extract from the 'Report of the Select Committee on the Aborigines', 1859, quoted in Shirley W. Wiencke, *When the Wattle Blooms Again: The Life and Times of William Barak, Last Chief of the Yarra Yarra Tribe*, Shirley W. Wiencke, Woori Yallock, Victoria, 1984, p. 44.
8. Mrs Campbell Praed, *My Australian Girlhood: Sketches & Impressions of Bush Life*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1902, p. 66.
9. Mary Gilmore, 'White Sails and Dampier's Disease', Dymphna Cusack, T. Inglis Moore & Barrie Ovendon, *Mary Gilmore: A Tribute*, Australasian Book Society, Sydney, 1965, p. 70.
10. Elyne Mitchell, *Chauvel Country: The Story of a Great Australian Pioneering Family*, Macmillan, South Melbourne, 1983, p. 16.
11. Bronwyn Davies, *Life in the Classroom and Playground: The Accounts of Primary School Children*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1982, p. 111.
12. Dorothy Howard Collection, Australian Children's Folklore Collection, Institute of Early Childhood Development, Melbourne.
13. Merle Jacomas, cited in Bill Gammage & Peter Spearritt (eds), *Australian 1938*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Broadway, NSW, 1987, p. 90.
14. R. Raven-Hart, *The Happy Isles*, Georgian House, Melbourne, 1949, p. 16.
15. Margaret J. Kartomi, 'Childlikeness in Playsongs - A Case Study among the Pitjantjara at Yalata, South Australia', *Miscellanea Musicologica*, vol. 11, 1980, p. 207. See also Margaret J. Kartomi, 'Songs of some Aboriginal Australian Children's Play Ceremonies', *Studies in Music*, no. 15, 1981, pp. 1-35.
16. Kartomi, *ibid.*, p. 205.
17. Kartomi, *ibid.*, p. 188.
18. Diane Bell, Professor of Australian Studies, Deakin University, private correspondence, 3 December 1986. See also Robertson, *Sport and Play in Aboriginal Culture - Then and Now* Salisbury College of Advanced Education Occasional Paper, Adelaide, 1975.

## LETTERS

### STILL MORE ON POGS

POGS continue to make news. Michael Finn, who reports on trademark issues in the *Writer's Digest* (USA) wrote that the game has moved eastward from California where it took hold in 1993. First it spread to Texas and Florida, and more recently into Colorado and the Northeast (*Trademark Update*, June 1995).

A quick explanation for those who didn't see the last two Newsletters. POG is the word used for discs and other products used in a popular sidewalk game that originated in Hawaii in the 1920s. The game's earliest pieces were cardboard caps from milk and juice bottles. POG is the title used by a Hawaiian bottler for its mix of pineapple, orange and guava juice.

Already a trademark battle is threatening in the US. Michael Finn noted a headline: 'Firm says group's being a PIG over popular game title POG'. He wrote that the World Pog Federation (WPF) claims it has exclusive rights to the word POG for all products associated with the game. But competitive groups are protesting. WPF officials say that their claim goes back to an agreement with the Hawaiian bottler that first used the letters POG on its bottle caps.

Michael Finn says that the surprising thing about the controversy is that no one has registered POG as a trademark for a game, although the WPF has registered POG as a juice name.

The game was 'launched' in Australia at Albert Park Primary School, Victoria, by Doug McFadden, World POG Federation Managing Director, in 1994. He marketed Trivial Pursuit and Pictionary to the world, so doubtless we will hear and see more about POG in the future.

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