

PERSPECTIVES ON PLAY PSYCHOLOGY. DEFINITIONS, FUNCTIONS, AND A SHORT HISTORY

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Abstract

Game playing is often associated with pleasure and energy consumption in the case of children. Although the play is sometimes seen as the opposite of work or learning, and often trivialized, it is an instrument in the emotional adjustment and cognitive development of children. Playing also has an adaptive function, enhancing the fundamental behaviors and aptitudes of adult work. The article presents a short history of theories on play, starting from Ancient Greece (Plato), continuing through the Medieval Period (St. Augustine, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau), psychoanalysis and modern Psychology (Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky). A growing interest for childhood and its activities can be seen throughout history.

Keywords: game play; game and play definitions; functions; history of playing

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