DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 348 156 PS 020 713

AUTHOR Dodd, Arleen; And Others
TITLE War and Peace: Toys, Teachers, and Tots.
PUB DATE Mar 92
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Southern Association on Children Under Six (43rd, Tulsa, OK, March 23-28, 1992).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Aggression; Cartoons; *Child Development; Children; *Childrens Television; *Dramatic Play; Parents; *Play; *Public Policy; Teachers; *Violence
IDENTIFIERS Toy Industry; *War Toys

ABSTRACT

War play is play with a toy that initiates violence or play that involves the imitation of war. War play can involve: (1) the use of toys based on television cartoon shows to imitate the action in the cartoons; (2) play with replicas of war paraphernalia or manipulatives shaped into guns; and (3) dramatic play. The negative effects on children that result from the first two types of war play include a lack of creativity and dramatic play, limited ability to work through anxiety, use of negative verbalizations, and increases in undesirable play in the classroom. Positive effects include an enhancement of children's ability to feel control. Negative effects of dramatic war play include increased aggressive behavior and negative verbalizations. Positive effects include enhancement of creativity and imagination. In dealing with children's war play, teachers and parents may ban war play entirely, adopt a laissez-faire attitude, allow war play within limits, or actively facilitate war play. Researchers have offered suggestions to parents for counteracting the negative influences of war play. Governments in several Scandinavian countries have attempted to reduce the sale of war toys. Appended materials include a list of organizations involved in maintaining public awareness of issues concerning war play and a 21-item reference list. (BC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED348156

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
[ ] Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

War and Peace:

Toys, Teachers, and Tots

Arleen Dodd, Ramona Dollins, Tara Snyder, Heidi Welch

Department of Family and Child Development

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Arleen Dodd

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS 020713

Authors' names are listed alphabetically. Each author contributed equally to the manuscript.

Running head: WAR AND PEACE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

This paper discusses the types of war play and war toys, and their effects on the social, emotional, and cognitive development of children. Relevant literature on aggression, war toys, public policy, and effects of the media are reviewed. Options and suggestions for parents and educators confronted with issues of war toys and war play are presented. A list of organizations and resources whose goal is to disseminate information to maintain public awareness of the issues concerning multiple aspects of war toys and war play is included.

War and Peace

"If we are to reach real peace . . .
and carry on a real war against war,
we shall have to begin with the children"

(M.K. Gandhi)

Consider these facts stated in "An Invitation to Join The Center on War and the Child - A New Approach to a Future Without War" (Hilburn):

Children, some as young as ten, have been used in civil war, armies of liberation, and even in international conflict in at least 20 countries worldwide.

In the war between Iran and Iraq, more than 50,000 Iranian soldiers between the ages of 12 and 15 were killed on the battlefield.

During "Patriotism Awareness" rallies sponsored by the Tennessee Army National Guard, guard members landed a helicopter on the football field of a school, fired blanks, set off smoke

bombs, and stormed the darkened school auditorium filled with unsuspecting students who were watching a film.

More than 5,000 12 to 18 year-olds in Finland were asked to name their major fears. The possibility of war was mentioned by 48% of the 18 year-olds and 79% of the 12 year-olds. In a survey of Australian school children, 68% believed that nuclear war will or might occur.

Since 1982, sales of war toys in the United States have increased more than 700%, totaling more than one billion dollars.

Our children are not sheltered from acts of violence. If they are not directly exposed, children are indirectly exposed to violence by the media, music, toys, literature, peers, and television programming. Therefore, children will incorporate aggression and violence into their play. As parents, teachers, and others concerned with the positive development of children, we must be educated on war play, war toys, and strategies for facing the inevitable force of violence in children's play.

Available on the market are war toys which support violent play. A war toy can be any type of toy which initiates violence. According to the PEACE PLEDGE UNION in London, a war toy includes all playthings which imitate objects used to solve conflict, gain power, or win through violence and whose aim is to wound or kill.

Such toys include:

1. Replicas of weapons such as rifles, machine guns, pistols, revolvers, hand grenades, bombs, etc.
2. Replicas of military vehicles, tanks, fighter planes, warships.
3. Dolls and action figures such as Action Man, Masters of the Universe, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, etc.
4. Model soldiers and items placed in a war-like context.
5. Building or model kits of tanks, military vehicles, cannons, fighter planes, warships, etc.
6. Electronic computer games with themes of war and violence.
7. Space and fantasy figures, vehicles, and games (board or computer games) (Nilsson, 1989).

War play is play with war toys as defined above but, is not limited to those toys. War play can consist of the imitation of war using various props such as manipulatives shaped into guns, verbalizing war-like monologue (for example, "I'm going to shoot you and my side will be more powerful than yours!"), or role-play with dolls as opposing factions.

Eventually, children will begin to experiment with war play and an objective stance is needed to effectively consider and implement appropriate actions. In order to provide awareness and options, three types of war play are presented and defined. In defining these types, positive and negative effects of each type of war play are considered followed by options and suggestions for teachers and parents and current public policy on war play as adopted by the United States and other countries around the world.

TYPES AND EFFECTS OF WAR PLAY

Three types of war play have emerged in the literature: cartoon watching/reproduction with action figures, play with replicas of war paraphernalia, and war play as dramatic play. Cartoon watching/reproduction with action figures involves watching a cartoon based on action figures (e.g. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or Masters of the Universe) and then using the action figures to replicate what is viewed on television. Play with replicas of war paraphernalia involves war toys which are replicas of the actual weapon they portray. The third type, war play as dramatic play is a more creative type of war play which does not depend solely on television stimulation or replicas of guns. In the following sections, the types of war play are presented in more detail with examples of each type of play and the positive and negative effects of the play on the emotional, social, and cognitive development of the child.

Cartoon Watching/Reproduction with Action Figures

Currently, the issue of cartoon watching/reproduction with action figures is in the forefront as a result of the deregulation of the broadcasting industry in the early 1980's. In 1984, the Federal Communications Commission reduced restrictions on the production of toys based on television shows. This allowed manufactures to produce toys based on cartoons. This action removed the clear distinction between advertising and programming, allowing thirty minute cartoons to become extended

commercial advertisements for war toys. Cartoons such as GI Joe, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, He-Man, and the Transformers are a direct result of the 1984 deregulation. Children can now buy the action figures, view the cartoon, and then imitate the acts of violence viewed during the cartoon.

In 1982, 1 1/2 hours per week of cartoon programming was related to war. By 1986, the number of hours per week of war cartoon programming had increased to 43 as reported by the International Coalition Against Violent Entertainment. ICAVE also cited that in 1985, each American child is exposed to an average of 250 cartoons per year with war themes and 800 spots specifically advertising war toys (ICAVE, 1985). This exposure time to war and violence is equal to 22 days of classroom instruction. The National Council on Television Violence measured an average of 48 acts of violence per program hour (Hilburn, 1988). Samuel Hilburn (1988), Associate Director of the Center on War and the Child believes that, "program length commercial cartoons have given the toy manufacturer a powerful promotional tool for use with an audience least able to make critical judgements-children" (p. 3).

Negative Effects:

Negative effects of cartoon reproduction with action figures are also applicable to play with replicas of war paraphernalia due to the imitative nature of both types of play. However, the effects will be discussed here in terms of cartoon reproduction with action figures. They are: lack of creativity, lack of

dramatic play, limited ability to work through anxieties, use of negative verbalizations, and increased undesirable play in the classroom (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990). Toys such as My Little Pony and Cabbage Patch Dolls have similar effects on children without the added emphasis on violence.

The nature of an action figure is to encourage the children to replicate the figure's prospective character appearing in the cartoon. Most action figures are packaged individually with their own weapons, purposes, personalities, and even names stated clearly on the package. Therefore, if a child has never viewed the cartoon the figure portrays, the packaging tells the child the characteristics of the figure. Also, the child can easily learn the qualities of a particular action figure from their peers. This results in lack of creativity and dramatic play while playing with the figures. The child merely imitates what they have seen during the cartoon or what is explained on the packaging (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1990). A study by Pearce in 1985, showed that by providing children with television, we are supplying the mind with images and sounds instead of the mind itself providing such stimulus (cited in Frost, 1986). This inhibits creative and dramatic play.

Figures such as Barbie are also guilty of stifling creativity in our children. Barbie often comes with her own props and outfits for whichever personality the doll is portraying. Disco Barbie and Cowgirl Barbie are some examples. Additionally, in September, 1989, Mattel released a line of

Barbies representing the Army, Navy, and the Air Force. The Navy Barbie is dressed in the basic enlisted personnel uniform and the Air Force and Army dolls are clothed in officer uniforms. Mattel has sold more than 60,000 military Barbies (Hilburn, 1990c).

Watching cartoons and then reproducing the cartoon using action figures also limits a child's ability to work through her own anxieties because of the limited creativity involved while playing with action figures. As a result of watching cartoon, the child lacks in the ability to use play as a vehicle for releasing anxieties over troublesome situations or emotions (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990).

Other negative effects of cartoon watching/reproductions using action figures are the use of negative verbalizations and the increase of undesirable play in the classroom. Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1963) showed that children will imitate aggressive behavior by simply watching a cartoon model. Therefore, children exposed to action figures portrayed on cartoon shows are likely to imitate the aggressive behavior and negative verbalizations of the character. Children are learning phrases such as "Cowabunga Dude!" and "Say your prayers, Turtles!" from the Ninja Turtles and "By the power of Grayskull" from He-Man. Reinforcement from adults and peers is not needed for the verbalizations to be modeled by children.

Reinforcement is not needed for children to learn and imitate the violent nature of the figure's actions. In 1973,

Steinfeld showed that viewing violence on television led to increased aggressive behavior in children. In as little as two weeks of watching violent television, the aggressive behavior in preschoolers tripled for violent acts such as hitting, choking, kicking, and pushing. The study used eight acts of violence per television hour although, at the time of the study, iolent acts in cartoons numbered 22 per hour (cited in Frost, 1986). By 1985, this number had increased dramatically to 40 per hour (NCTV 1985). Dr. Ronald Slaby of Harvard's Center for Research on Children's Television found that war toy play stimulates higher levels of aggression. He stated that war toy play can foster aggression in previously non-violent children (cited in Hilburn, 1988).

Imitative play with action figures has a compounding effect. Play with action figures encourages children to act aggressively, reduces dramatic, imaginative play, and increases imitative play as discussed. Kolpadoff (1983) found that aggressive children are less prone to dramatic play and more prone to imitative play. Imagination and creativity are squelched not only by action figures but also as by the aggressiveness usually encouraged by the figures.

In an extensive review of literature on aggression, Parke and Slaby (1983) concluded that another negative effect of watching television violence is the passive acceptance of aggression performed by others. Children who accept this

aggression may grow up to be adults who ignore and tolerate injustices performed by others such as rape, mugging, or other acts of violence. Continual exposure to violent acts reduces the impact such an act can have on others. Violence becomes part of the conflict resolution strategy of the child. In Ireland, a land plagued by continual acts of violence, children use overly violent play and resolution strategies. For example, an article written by Peter McLachlan (1981) gave this scenario: "Within minutes of the families arriving [at the Corryneela Community Centre], . . . two groups of 12/13 year-olds from different parts of west Belfast were quickly staging a fight with penknives, presumably to show who 'owned the territory'" (p. 286).

Building on the notion that war play validates violent acts, is the two-sided nature of war play. In war play two sides are created - ours and theirs - which teaches children that there can only be one winner. Therefore, peaceful conflict resolution is not addressed during imitative war play (Nilsson, 1989). Hilburn (1988) also emphasized that during imitative war play either with pre-fabricated war toys or action figures, the use of violence is presented as an acceptable means of conflict resolution and children are given the opportunity to learn, practice, and validate violent behaviors. This programs children to ignore the dangerous repercussions of violent acts. Psychiatrist Thomas Radecki of the National Coalition on Television Violence stated that children who play with violent toys are "less likely to

protest violence and more likely to choose violence as a way to solve problems" (Witkowsky, 1986, p. 12).

Positive Effects:

Imitative play has positive effects on children as well. While cartoon reproduction using action figures limits the child's ability to release anxieties over troublesome situations and emotions, it does provide a means for the child to feel power and control during a time when they have limited power and control. Since most action figures are powerful and strong, imitating their personality as shown on the cartoon gives the child a feeling of power. This is helpful when the child is experiencing a situation in which the child has no control such as divorce, beginning school, death, or problems with peers. Imitative play can offer a situation in which the child takes on the role of the ruler and helps the child deal with the emotions and feelings of powerlessness (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990).

Imitative play also allows language development, role taking ability, and allows children to practice playing with rules. Jean Piaget, a well known cognitive development theorist, considered play to be a tool children use to assimilate reality into their own cognitive processes. They accomplish assimilation through role-taking, playing with rules, and using language they have already acquired (Miller, 1989).

Both younger and older children can use imitative play as a means for introducing types of play into their current play

schemes. Younger children can use imitative play as a precursor for imaginative dramatic play while older children can use imitative play to introduce play activities (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990).

Play with Replicas of War Paraphernalia

A second type of war play is the play with replicas of war paraphernalia such as guns, lasers, and miniature replicas of army men. This type of war play is similar to cartoon reproduction because both are imitative types of play. Additionally, play with replicas of war paraphernalia is play which serves no purpose other than being aggressive and violent for the sake of being aggressive and violent (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990).

Negative Effects:

Like play with action figures, play with replicas of war paraphernalia results in lack of creativity, lack of dramatic play, limited ability to work through anxieties, the use of negative verbalizations, and increased undesirable play in the classroom (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990). Play with replicas of war paraphernalia is another form of imitative play. Although children usually do not have a concrete character to imitate when using pre-fabricated war toys, those characters can be models of how to use the weapon. Therefore, play with replicas of war paraphernalia have the same negative effects as war play with action figures.

Positive Effects:

When used imitatively, play with replicas of war paraphernalia can have the same positive effects as play with action figures. Pre-fabricated war toy play can allow children to practice role taking ability and playing with rules, foster language development and can be used as a precursor to new types of play. It also provides children with an opportunity to take on the role of power and control which is an excellent vehicle to work through anxieties over situations which the child has no control.

War Play as Dramatic Play

War play used as dramatic play is a third type of war play. Dramatic play is described as pretense play where the child is in the "as if" mode. The child uses objects as symbols in a way that differs from the object's original intent, creates objects using constructive materials, and establishes roles, characters, dialogue, and rules that are open to change (Rogers and Sawyers, 1988). Dramatic war play would involve play without prefabricated props such a replicas of war paraphernalia or action figures. Dramatic play is also without predetermined plots found on television or action figure packaging. Through dramatic play, a child may imitate the role of GI Joe, but uses a stick or paper towel roll for the gun rather than a special GI Joe Gun which looks basically like a machine gun. With dramatic play, arts and crafts can be used as well as the child's

imagination and creativity. The child can create their own toys as well as creative scenarios.

Negative Effects:

Like the types of war play previously discussed, dramatic war play has both positive and negative effects. On the negative side, dramatic war play leads to violent and aggressive behavior, negative verbalizations, and presents violent conflict resolution as acceptable. As with all types of war play, dramatic war play allows children to learn and practice violent behavior and become insensitive to violence. Since the enemy or the bad side is evil, war play presents that violence is an acceptable means of conflict resolution.

Positive Effects:

The benefits of dramatic play are many and, therefore, dramatic war play offers the same positive effects. First, it plays an important role in development. Second, it leads to creativity and imagination. Children use dramatic play to invent what could be while imitative play just rehearses what is. Third, dramatic play allows children to play with their own ideas and creations. While television inhibits creativity, dramatic play builds imagination. With dramatic play, the mind is providing itself with symbols and sounds rather that relying on a medium such as television to provide the stimulus.

OPTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

All types of war play, regardless of the positive effects, are coupled with negative aspects affecting both the cognitive and behavioral developmental levels in children. Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1987) outlined four options to help teachers' and parents' efforts to foster positive development and attitudes in children. These four approaches are detailed below.

Option 1: Ban War Play

This option is based on the belief that "guns hurt people - we don't even want to pretend to hurt people" (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1987, p. 44). A large proportion of teachers choose to ban war play considering this sociopolitical view which is that war play promotes the genesis of militaristic attitudes. Additionally, teachers insist that the banning approach eliminates the discipline problems that typically follow from children's involvement in war play.

The developmental view does not support a ban on war play. According to this view, war play is essential in meeting a child's need to understand the images and content of war. The developmental view also suggests that children develop a sense of guilt when war play is not allowed. That is, children view the ban as a suggestion that their play is bad.

In response to the debate between developmentalists and teachers on the issue of banning war play, Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1987) provide a suggestion that is important to consider;

when adults define war play based on their own political beliefs, they are forgetting the meaning of war play in children's lives and the ways in which political concepts begin in children's minds.

Option 2: Laissez-faire Approach to War Play

Adults who follow to this option permit children to engage in any type of play they wish. Children who choose war play are neither encouraged nor discouraged. One positive outcome of this approach is that children have the sense that their teacher or parent accepts the play that they enjoy.

Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1987) suggest that the laissez-faire approach does not adequately consider children's needs or the responsibility of teachers. It is possible that children's needs will not be met if teachers do not take on an active role in children's play choices. Additionally, issues of safety need to be considered when children are permitted to solely develop their own play.

Option 3: Allow War Play, with Specific Limits

This "middle of the road" approach attempts to address both developmental and sociopolitical concerns. Adults following this approach allow war play, but enforce limits on the location of the play, the materials allowed in the play, and the social interactions permitted. Children therefore may use war play to satisfy their needs, but only in a safe environment. According to Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1987), this approach is inadequate due to

the restrictions that are placed on the adult's role in facilitating play and children's political concepts. When adults allow war play and enforce specific limits, they are not taking an active role in facilitating play.

Option 4: Actively Facilitate War Play

This approach calls for adults to allow children's war play and to serve as active facilitators in the play. By facilitating the play the adult aids in fostering children's development and political knowledge. This approach affords children the opportunity to work through developmental issues via play. The adult is allowed the opportunity to have an impact on the quality of play. Using this approach, the adult serves as an instrument of political socialization. That is, the adult aims to guide the child's conception of enemy/friend at the child's developmental level and interest level.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1987) offer several suggestions for parents when faced with the issue of war play. Parents should frequently discuss violence, war play, and war toys with their children. Parents' personal feelings concerning violence and guns should be made clear to their children. It is also important for parents to afford their children frequent opportunities to experience cooperation and nonviolence.

Carlsson-Paige and Levin offered additional suggestions in 1990. They encourage parents to discover their child's political

and social values and what these values mean to the child. Additionally, exposure to violent stimuli and pre-fabricated or literal war toys should be limited. Parents should also discuss the content of television programs with their children. Carlsson-Paige and Levin suggest that parents limit what children view on television; however, parents and children should have the opportunity to negotiate these limits.

Parents often develop successful ways to deal with the issue of war play. Pat Young, an Oklahoma mother faced with the problem of war play, offered an approach that is challenging and innovative. Her approach is explained below.

> Whenever I witnessed my sons playing "war" with their friends, I would simply pick up several of the "injured" and "dead" soldiers and begin to describe their wounds and to explain about the loved ones back home. I wanted my children to think of soldiers as individuals with personalities and loved ones whose lives would be affected by the death or injury of the soldier (Hilburn, 1990b, p.6).

Hilburn (1988) agreed that parents should openly discuss the actual repercussions of war. He suggests that parents assist children in gaining an understanding of the consequences of the war games they play. Richard Parker, Ph.D., executive director of Center on War and the Child, also encouraged parents and educators to help children understand the negative effects of violent toys and games. He believed that, "We can accomplish a great deal through classroom discussion and [illegible]ace curriculum that includes information on the harmful eff[illegible] of watching violent programs and movies and of playi[illegible] toys and video

games having violent themes" (Hilburn, 1990a, p.7).

Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1985) outlined five ways for educators to foster children's understanding of war and peace. One principle of a peace education curriculum is to provide children with the materials necessary for them to express ideas and develop concepts. This includes providing "open-ended" materials which children can use for unique, individual purposes. Second, children should be encouraged to develop a positive sense of self. One way to accomplish this is to provide children with options on what they can do in the classroom.

A third suggestion for developing a peace education curriculum is to help children learn cooperation skills and thus resolve conflicts without violence. In New York, a teen-age boy dressed in rambo style clothing was arrested after shooting and killing his parents and younger brother after an argument over school attendance. In another incident, a young boy around the age of ten shot and killed his next-door neighbor after she said she could beat him in Nintendo. Cooperation and conflict resolution can be facilitated by teaching children how to foresee the consequences (both positive and negative) of their actions on others.

The fourth principle of peace education involves assisting children in learning to appreciate the cultural differences among people. This can begin by introducing children to the similarities and differences in tradition, language, music,

clothing, etc. among the cultural groups represented in the classroom.

Lastly, Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1985) suggest that teachers encourage children to expand their individual concept of war and peace. One way to do this is by engaging children in activities that make the concept of peace as concrete as possible. For example, teachers could play soothing music and encourage the students to talk about what the music causes them to feel or think.

POLICY

A concern for children's play environments exists at a national level in several Scandinavian countries. Government, businesses, and parents all share the responsibility of establishing a healthy play culture. In Sweden, the Swedish Council for Children's Play, the National Board for Consumer Policies, and toy trade organizations joined forces to create a developmentally sound play environment for children. These organizations reached an agreement to end the advertising and sale of war toys. Participation in the agreement process was voluntary. A comparable voluntary agreement has been established in Norway (Carlsson-Paige and Levin, 1990).

Finland has also taken a giant step in reducing the availability of war toys with the Finnish Agreement Against War Toys. The Agreement, enacted in 1987, was designed to halt the manufacturing and sale of war toys. The National Board of

Commerce and Industry, the National Board of Social Welfare, and the Entrepreneurs for Toy and Hobby Equipment Manufacturing signed the Agreement. The elements of the Agreement are listed below:

(1) The development of a toy and play culture is the goal of the parties to the contract.
(2) War toys that negatively affect the development and well-being of children are not to be manufactured, imported, or sold by the Entrepreneurs for Toy and Hobby Manufacturing associates.
(3) The parties to the Agreement will encourage (a) research and information that facilitate the development of a toy and play culture, and (b) home-directed counseling and guidance.
(4) A working group shall be established by the National Board of Social Welfare. The goals of the working group shall be: (a) to encourage cooperation among the parties to the Agreement, and (b) to aid in answering questions concerning the Agreement.
(5) On January 1, 1987, the Agreement shall be officially enacted.

The Agreement is to be revised in three-year intervals (Moore, 1988a).

Unfortunately, little public discussion has erupted in the United States about the American play culture and the role of war toys in this culture. According to Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1990), such discussion is blocked by political and economic forces present in American society. Many citizens of the United States are lobbying for minimal governmental regulations on business and society, however, defining minimal is difficult. The issues of freedom versus encroachment of another's freedom have caused conflict in the deregulation process. For example, the First Amendment and "freedom of expression" have been used to

justify the deregulation of children's television. However, Carlsson-Paige and Levin believe that this justification is not appropriate when applied to children. That is, the First Amendment protects the manufacturers' expression of ideas, but not the children's expression of ideas. Carlsson-Paige and Levin stressed that "... children's creativity, concepts, and imagination are severely impeded by the unrestricted free expression ideas of the manufacturers" (p. 129).

Representatives from the American toy industry in general feel that war toys are not detrimental to children's development. According to Donna Datre of the Toy Manufacturers of America, "... I don't see anything wrong with reinforcing a theme of good versus evil. Besides, nobody is forcing [people] to buy a toy they consider objectionable. Freedom of speech is what makes America such a wonderful country" (Witkowsky, 1986, p.12).

The good news is that the war toy industry is not all-powerful. Several incidents have proven that public action is still a viable route in confronting social issues such as war play. For example, public demonstrations and a large-scale letter writing campaign against the Coleco Industry's Rambo doll resulted in the comapany's decision to withdrawal the doll. The terrorist Rambo doll, predicted to sell well, was responsible for only 5% of Coleco's net sales (Hilburn, 1988). In Sweden, municipalities joined in a boycott against BRIO, the largest manufacturer of war toys in Sweden. "Big Boycott against BRIO'S

war figures and monsters" is what a headline read in the fall of 1987. Although the company manufactures both war toys and non-violent toys, the boycott included all products produced by BRIO. The reason: BRIO manufactures WAR TOYS in addition to many "good" products (Moore, 1988b).

There is more good news for anti-war toy advocates in the United States. Results from the February 1990 American International Toy Fair showed that gun sales in 1989 were 12.5% lower than they were in 1988 (Ford and Ford, 1990). Groups of concerned parents, educators, and citizens have joined forces to establish organizations whose aim is to educate the public about concerns and issues surrounding war toys and war play. Listed below are several of these organizations whose goal is to disseminate information to maintain public awareness of the issues concerning multiple aspects of war toys and war play. Increased public awareness is needed to assure that parents and educators are making informed decisions about the role of war play and war toys in the lives of their children.

Organizations and Resources

Action for Children's Television (ACT)
20 University Road
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 492-1764

Center on War & the Child
P.O. Box 487, Department F
Eureka Springs, AR 72632
(501) 253-8900

Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR)
23 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 876-6620

International War Toys Boycott
Deb Ellis
9 Melbourne Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M6K 1K1
Canada
(416) 533-9507

National Coalition on Television Violence (NCTV)
P.O. Box 2157
Champaign, IL 61825
(217) 384-1920

Parenting for Peace and Justice
Institute for Peace and Coalition
4144 Lindell Blvd. #122
St. Louis, MO 63108

"Stop War Toys Campaign"
War Resisters League/New England (WRL)
P.O. Box 1093
Norwich, CT 06360
(203) 889-5337

Toys for Peace
Sue Spencer
2401 Second Street, #101
Eaglepass, TX 78852

References

Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. A. (1963). Imitation of film-mediated aggressive models. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 66(1), 3-11.

Carlsson-Paige, N., & Levin, D.E. (1985). Helping young children understand peace, war, and the nuclear threat. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Carlsson-Paige, N., & Levin, D.E. (1987). The war play dilemma. New York: Teacher's College Press.

Carlsson-Paige, N., & Levin, D.E. (1990). Who's calling the shots? How to respond effectively to children's fascination with war play and war toys. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers.

Ford, N., & Ford, J. (Ed.). (1990, October). Parenting for Peace and Justice: Newsletter No. 46. (Available from the Institute for Peace and Justice, 4144 Lindell Blvd. #122, St. Louis, MO, 63108)

Frost, J. L. (1986, August). Influences of television on children's behavior: Implications for war and peace. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Association for the Child's Right to Play Seminar, Birmingham, England.

Hilburn, S.C. (Ed.). An Invitation to Join the Center on War and the Child. (Available from Center on War and the Child, P.O. Box 487, 35 Benton St., Eureka Springs, AR, 72632)

Hilburn, S.C. (Ed.). (1988). The Arms Race in Your Neighborhood.

(Available from Center on War and the Child, P.O. Box 487, 35 Benton St., Eureka Springs, AR, 72632)

Hilburn, S.C. (Ed.). (1990a, Spring). War Child Monitor International. (Available from Center on War and the Child, P.O. Box 487, 35 Benton St., Eureka Springs, AR, 72632)

Hilburn, S.C. (Ed.). (1990b, Summer/Fall). War Child Monitor International. (Available from Center on War and the Child, P.O. Box 487, 35 Benton St., Eureka Springs, AR, 72632)

Hilburn, S.C., (Ed.). (1990c, Winter). War Child Monitor International. (Available from Center on War and the Child, P.O. Box 487, 35 Benton St., Eureka Springs, AR, 72632)

International Coalition Against Violent Entertainment. Press Release, November 27, 1985. P.O. Box 2157, Champaign, IL 61820. Tel: (217) 384-1920.

Kolpadoff, M.H. (1983). The relationship between aggressive behavior and imaginative play skills in preschoolers. Dissertation Abstracts International, 44, 1241-B.

McLachan, P. (1981). Teenage experiences in a violent society. Journal of Adolescence, 4, 285-294.

Miller, P.H. (1989). Theories of developmental psychology (2nd ed.). New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Moore, R.C. (Ed.). (1988, April). Play Rights. (Available from the International Association for the Child's Right to Play, Euston Road, London, NW1 3AL, U.K.)

National Coalition on Television Violence. N.C.T.V. News 6 (May-June 1985).

Nilsson, N. (1989). Do children need to be introduced to violence? The use of toys of war and violence. Paper presented at the International Conference on Early Education and Development, Hong Kong.

Parke, R. D. & Slaby, R. G. (1983). The development of aggression. In P. H. Mussen (Ed.), Handbook of child psychology (pp.547-641. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Rogers, C.S., & Sawyers, J.K. (1988). Play in the lives of children. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Witkowsky, K. (1986, April/May). Up in arms over guns in toyland. Mother Jones, p. 12.