



Toys as Tools for Learning & Creativity in Adult Life

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Photo Kari Hautala

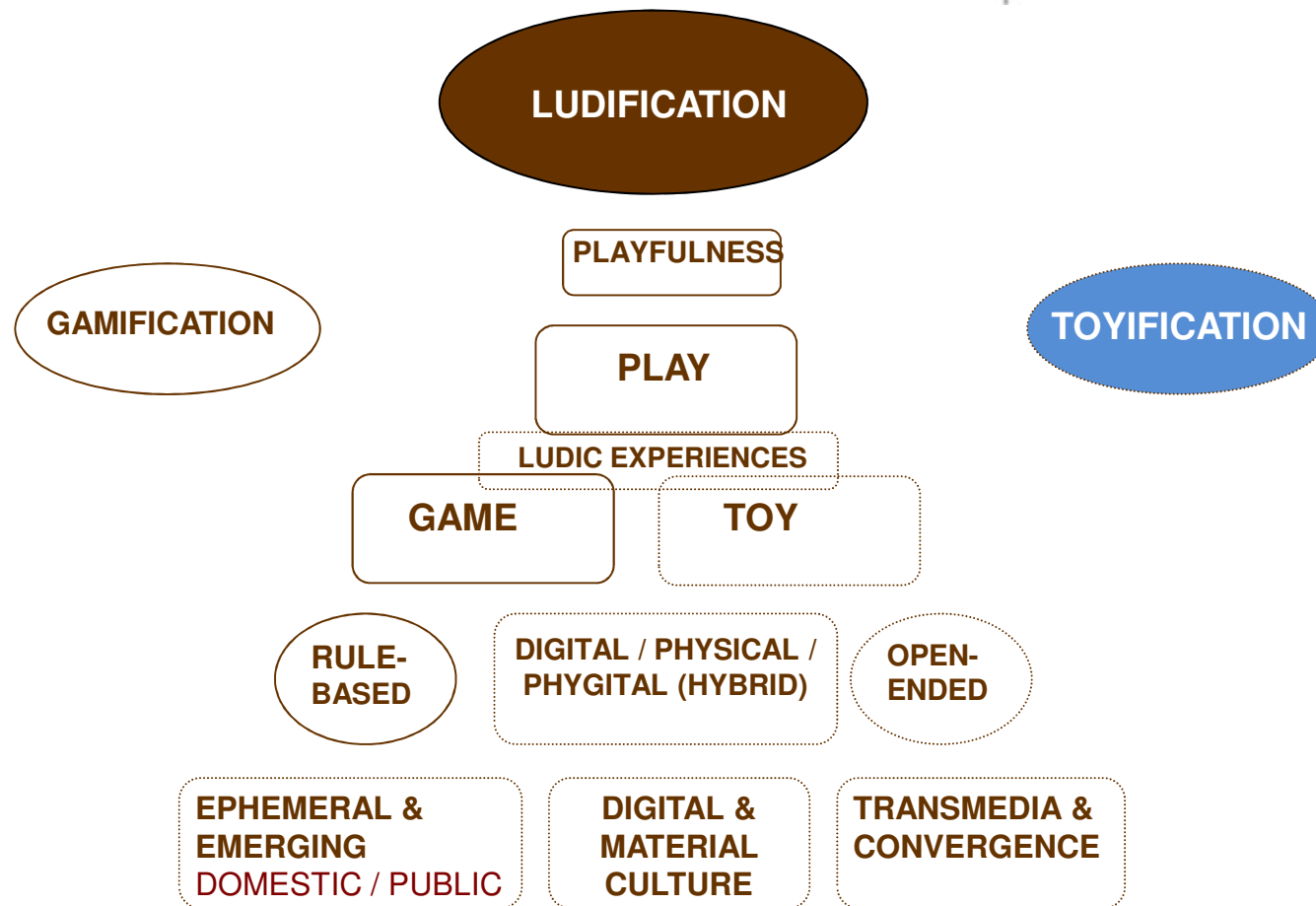


"[My favourite thing about Blythe] She pushes me to learn new skills. I learned to knit because of Blythe, and my sewing has improved no end. I love to reroot Blythe dolls, a skill I never thought I'd be able to master. She's just a magical doll..."

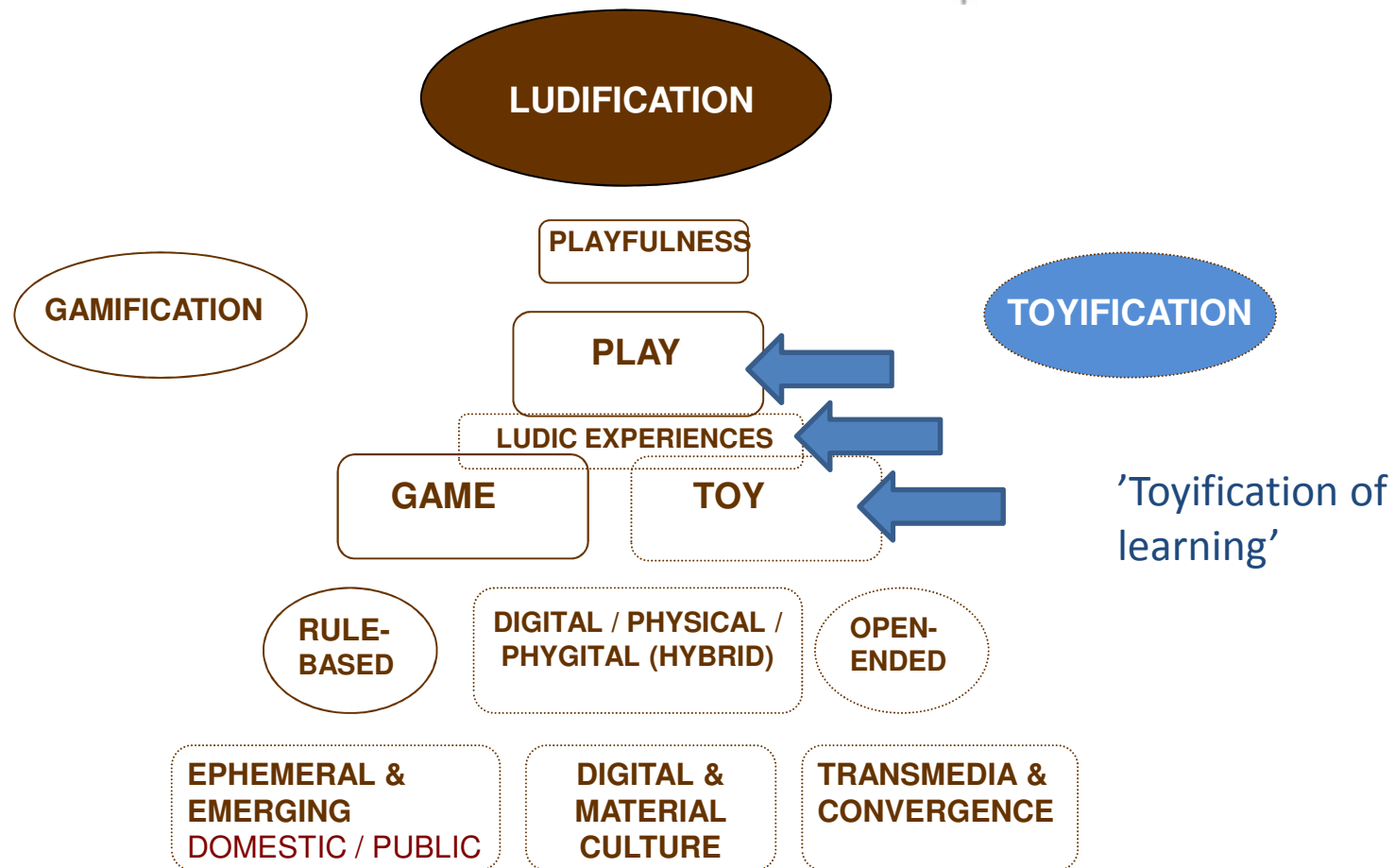
(Jane, 24, TIB)

Why MEDIA?

Why EDUCATION?



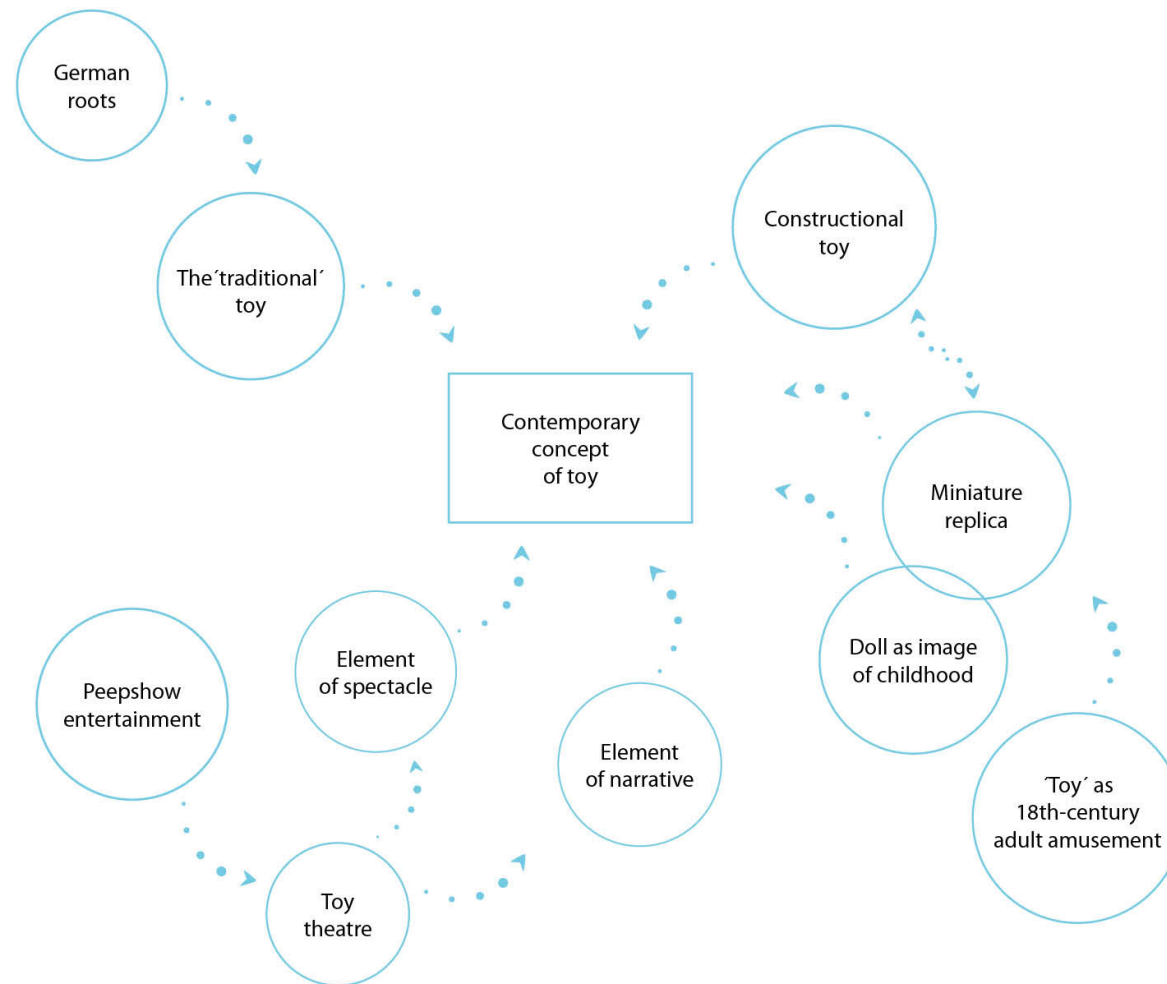
Exploring dimensions of *ludification* (Heljakka 2014)



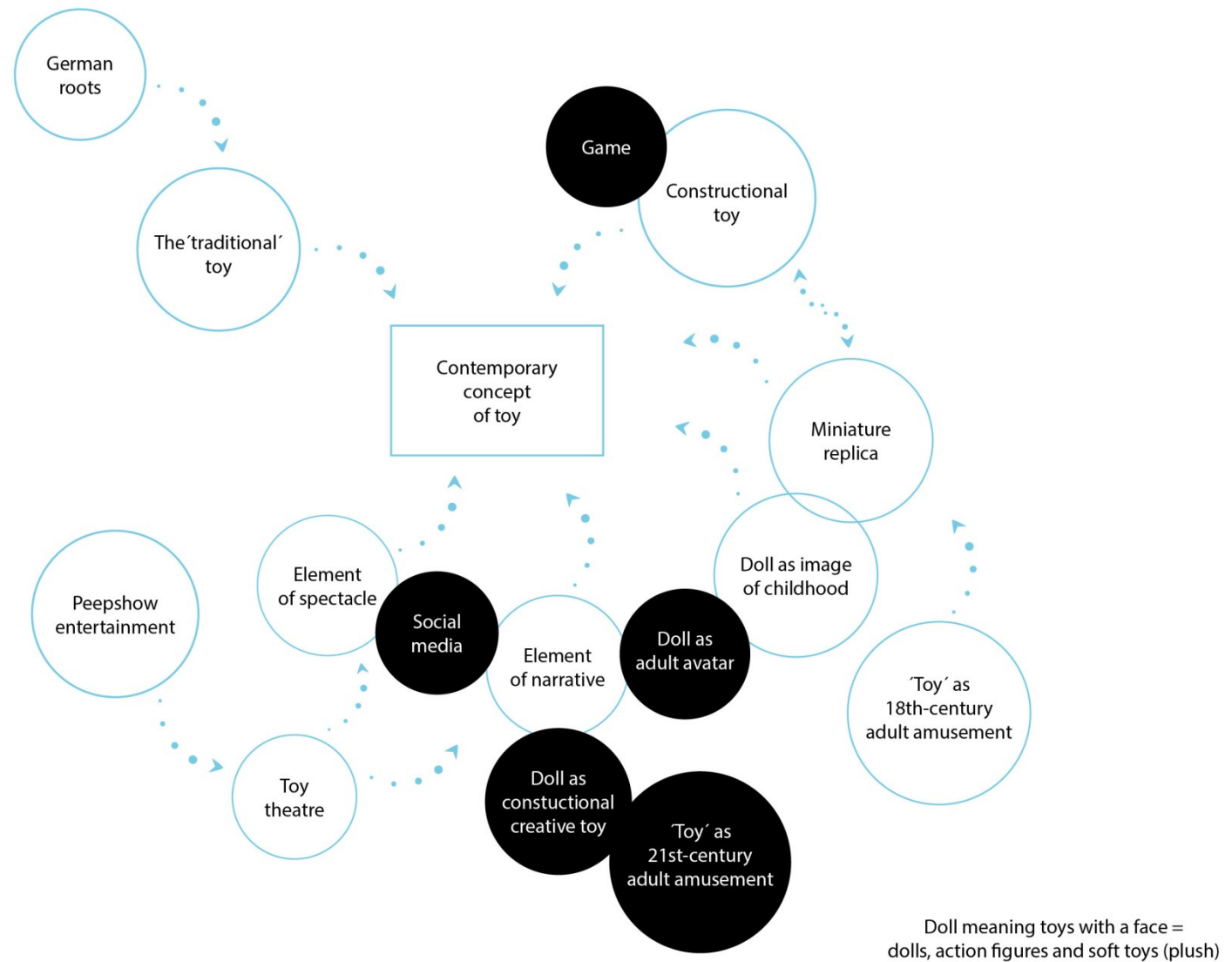
Exploring dimensions of *ludification* (Heljakka 2014)

*Toys cannot fully determine actions or thoughts,
they are themselves the focus of play – a dynamic
activity used to rehearse, interpret and try out new
meanings as well as products of complex social
relations.*

(Attfield1996)



Fleming, Dan (1996)
Powerplay, Toys as popular culture. Manchester University Press.



Re-development of Fleming's thinking by Heljakka, 2011.

ONGOING RHETORIC

CHILDREN = TOY PLAYERS

ADULTS = TOY COLLECTORS

Fashion dolls are dolls primarily designed to be dressed to reflect fashion trends. They are manufactured both as toys for children to play with and as collectibles for adult collectors.

Wikipedia definition

see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fashion_doll

A **collectable** (**collectible** or **collector's item**) is any object regarded as being of value or interest to a collector (not necessarily monetarily valuable or antique).

There are numerous types of collectables and terms to denote those types.

Wikipedia definition

see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collectable>

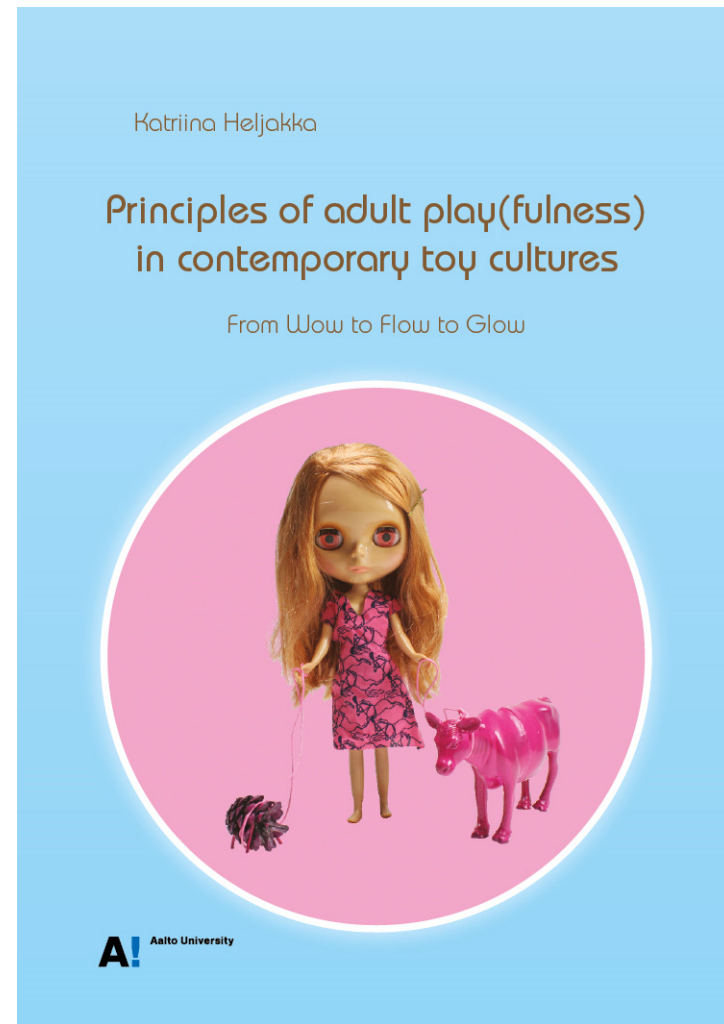
Toymakers can try to boost growth in other ways. One option is to reach out to new demographics. Big kids are often neglected. In Japan over 20-year-olds made up 23% of total sales in 2011. But only 3.5% of American toy buyers were buying for themselves last year.

There is untapped potential here. Three years ago, David Beckham revealed that he had built the Taj Mahal out of Lego; sales of that kit spiked by 633% in just one day.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/schumpeter/2013/09/toy-industry>

Player types profiled

- Toy collectors
- Toy designers
- Artists toying
- 'Everyday players'



focus on
contemporary toys
with a *face*

When you see the nose,
eyes, forehead and
when you are able to
describe them, you
relate to the other as if it
is an object. The face is
meaning...The face talks

(Levinas [*Ethics and
Infinity: Conversations
with Philippe Nemo*]
1996, 73—74).



There is evidence that more and more adults are interested in object play: They both collect toys and conduct different activities with them alone (solitary play) or together with like-minded peers (social play).

Findings of adult play(fulness)

INVESTMENT & ATTACHMENT:

- Identity work; toy as a 'mini-me'
- Avatarial relationships; toy as extension

MANIPULATION:

- Adult toy play as a form of **object play**



TOYS & LEARNING

From educational toys to self-educating and tutoring players

Educational toys

An educational toy should educate. It should instruct, promote intellectuality, emotional or physical development. An educational toy can teach a child about a particular subject or can help a child **develop a particular skill**. The key difference is the child's learning and development associated with interacting with the toy.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_toy

Complexity in play correlates
with age.

(Sutton-Smith 1997, 42)





photograph as evidence, camera as a toy



yle

UUTISET | AREENA | TV | RADIO

Hae Yle.fi:stä



Svenska Yle

yle

AREENA

TV

Radio

Hae ohjelmia



A-Ö

Ohjeet ja palaute

Yle Arenan



Kaikki ohjelmat

Suorat

Sarjat ja elokuvat

Viihde ja kulttuuri

Dokumentit ja fakta

Uutiset

Urheilu

Lapset



Prisma Studio

Jakso 17/34 Kesto: 27 min

27 pv jäljellä

Lisää samankaltaista



Strada:
Elokuvas kasvatus
palaa 1800-luvulle

collecting

creating displays



Photoplay

toy tourism

customizing

sharing play online (and offline)

avatarial play





Blythes at adult play date, 2014

CREATIVE TOY PLAY

Practices *beyond*
collecting

MATERIAL AND VISUAL



SOLITARY AND SOCIALLY SHARED



"Object practices", such as modelling, collecting, making and modifying, bring to the fore "the **physcial artefacts and processes** by which popular culture both remembers and recreates itself"

(Rehak 2013, 43 in Gerargthy 2014)

what are the play practices?

Toy design

Manipulative (*object*) play

Modding

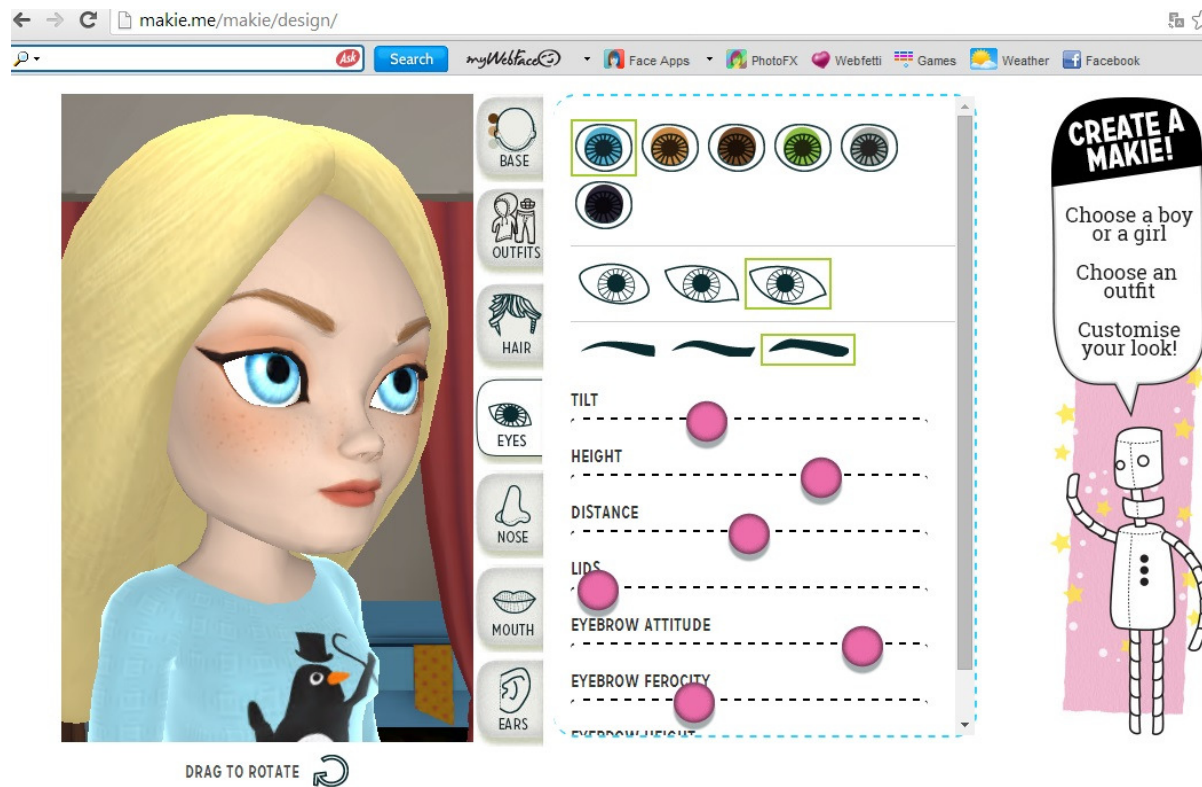
Narrativization

Identity play

Locative play

Toy design

e.g. Makie doll



Object play

- Sensory play
- Manipulative play
- Toys *affording* action



Modding

Customization, personalization

Transformative uses add new insights and meaning to the original work.

(Tushnet 2007)



Narrativization

- **World building** (*displays, dioramas, doll houses*)
- Re-mixes/mashups
- Photoplay as **visual communication**



Photo Kari Hautala

Identity play

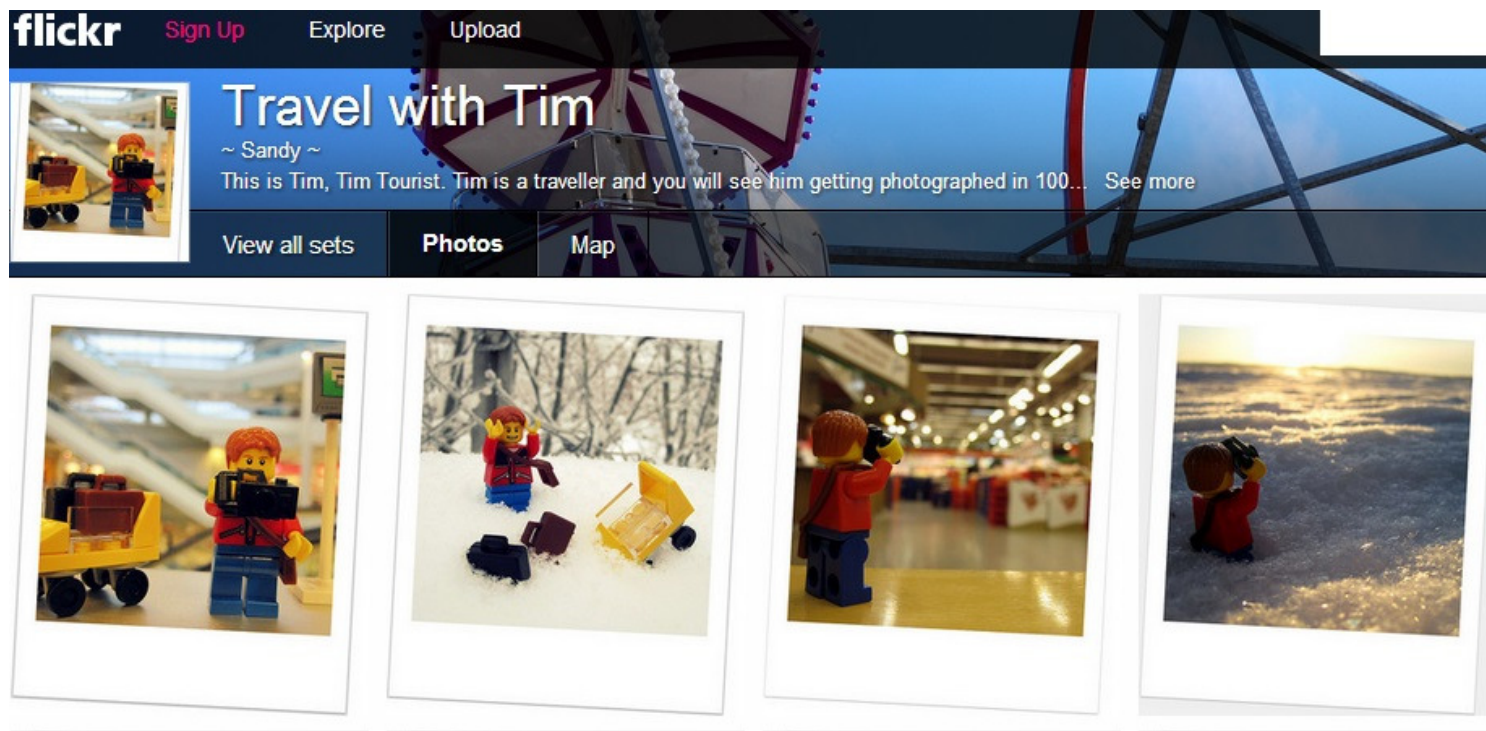


COSPLAYING



Locative play

Toy tourism + Photoplay



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/hiekkaliivi/sets/72157623063905369/>

PLAY PATTERNS

Collecting
Customization
Creating stories (narrativization)
Cosplaying
Communicating



what contributes to the play practices?

E.g. creativity in *photoplay* is a result of:

- Finding the right **toy**
- Discovering the right **accessories**
- Getting to the right **environment**
- And doing all this in the right **circumstances**
(time, playscape and mood all play a role)

how do the play practices serve the players?

- Solitary play enables **self-realization**
- Once executed in public it is also **performative**
- Once documented it contributes to the formation of **play knowledge**
- Once shared, it **becomes communicable** to others
- Once circulated play becomes **perceived** and

invites to *more play*

An educational toy can teach a child about a particular subject or can help a child **develop a particular skill.**

The key difference is the child's learning and development associated with interacting with the toy.

how are the ADULT players building their skills?

- Solitary play enables learning *with and through* the toy and e.g. the camera
- (Offline) Social play contributes to learning from other people's toy play
- (Online) Social play means that active players are tutoring each other to discover and contest their manipulative and storytelling skills and to share their toy play experiences with each other



Hae



Kati



Kati Heljakka



Kutsu

Toy Research

Siirrä Pin-lisäyksiä

Muokkaa taulua



Lisää Pin



a new project for M and M. We are hoping Santa brings M her first Blythe so we can get started!!

Lisätty kohteesta:
weheartit.com



► TOISTA

How to Blythe doll head opening

CHANEL

31, RUE CAMBON

Google Image Result for
s3.hubimg.com/...

Lisätty kohteesta:
thezhush.blogspot.com



E palvelusta Etsy

Blythe Dress. Blythe. Blythe clothes/Blythe vintage style/ dotted swiss Blythe...

Blythe Dress. Blythe. Blythe clothes TheDollsDresser. \$15.96, via Etsy.

Lisätty kohteesta:
etsy.com

why does adult toy play happen?

WOW

Amazement feeds curiosity

FLOW

Joy of playing contributes to happiness

Exploration leads to skill-building

Storytelling enables a dialogue with (pop) culture

Self-reflexion allows development of identity

GLOW

Materials are created and transformed in play

The once ephemeral becomes tangible

Adult toy owners are not
only

COLLECTORS



BUT (ALSO)

**CREATIVE &
CONTINUOUSLY
LEARNING
PLAYERS**





Photo T. Sinkkonen, 2015

Thank You!

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