The miracle of play as language

Human intelligence builds on three remarkable capacities, constituting the basics of language, as well as of play:

1. to oscillate rapidly between proximity/closeness and distance: to be here and at the same time know something important of an object out there
2. to relate similarity and dissimilarity/difference: to compare similarity of objects
3. to be able to do this in two dimensions: space and time

To master these three at the same time in their relatedness is to build, and master, a universe of representations, a universe of discourse. Without them, there is no capacity to take in and handle variety, abstract and generalizing thought. Thus no human intelligence. To master the three also is to live in a social world of relations. None of them is inborn in the genes or DNA, although these are needed as prerequisites. They are born through basic sociality: to notice events at more than one place, to be present in two places (or more). This sociality prepares for symbols, which produce both play and language.

Play preparation during pregnancy:
The first signs of sociality in the fetus are the same signs as in role play: responsiveness to signals from the external world: Play with the pregnant stomach rhythmically as a drum, and the fetus will respond, thus relating two events in time. Read a saga, and sing a song, and the fetus will notice the emotional character of your voice. This is neurological preparatory work for the three capacities above. But it also builds the brain, and thus cognitive capacity. All this relates play to incipient language: the above points (1), (2), (3) govern and develop both – already in the uterus.
The nursing situation for the baby illustrates: Your responsive babbling with the baby is a further cultivation of the fetus’ capacities to create play. It is the dawn of responsive language and of role play. Thus play and language develop human responsive intelligence: Play is a prerequisite for a human constructive rational world. Play is never waste of time, it is the construction of a functioning universe.

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