

AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF POWER ON THE

PLAYGROUND

Kristen Davidson, Jarrod Hanson, Brooke Prichard, Adam Van Iwaarden

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Although only a fraction of a child's day is spent on the playground at school, a myriad of educational and social experiences happen during that time. Yet, playgrounds are a potential arena for conflict and strife. Adults in a playground supervisory position feel compelled to establish overarching rules for the safety and conduct of children on the playground. These rules are imposed either for the safety of the children or for the ease of the adults who are supervising those children (Evans, 1994). When these rules fail to prevent conflict, adults focus their attention on preventative measures. Studies that address the direct instruction of playground-related behaviors and social skills such as self-control, avoiding trouble and accepting consequences demonstrate some success (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, & Nay, 2003; Cuccaro & Geitner, 2007; Lewis, Powers, Kelk, & Newcomer, 2002). Another preventative approach is to teach formal playground games which are then reinforced through rules and adult supervision (Leff, Costigan, & Power, 2004; Visser & Greenwood, 2005). Peer negotiation is another way to ease playground tensions. Students are trained to intervene and mediate playground conflicts which lead to fewer behavioral problems (Cunningham, Cunningham, Martorelli, Tran, Young, & Zacharias, 1998). Finally, programs that support the administration and faculty in promoting and sustaining evidence-based problem solving strategies for their own behavioral situations lead to a reduction in the number of student discipline problems (Ervin, Schaughency, Matthews, Goodman, & McGlinchey, 2007; Longaretti & Wilson, 2006). Despite the wealth of information

on major playground conflict resolution, there is a paucity of research that addresses the daily interactions or disagreements and the subsequent power negotiations by children to resolve these interactions that go unnoticed by adults on the playground. When children negotiate and resolve everyday playground interactions through the use of power, the potential for further and more intense conflict may be lessened [or increased?] by these power negotiations and demonstrations of playground rule usage. The aim of this study is to describe the types of power that influence the nature of daily playground encounters and negotiations related to rules, and will be of interest to teachers, parents, educational researchers, and developmental psychologists. [good]

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Our conceptual framework lies at the intersection of socio-cultural and critical paradigms. Sociocultural theory examines the construction of knowledge through social experiences. This is an important framework for the study of rule negotiations on the playground as this is a setting in which games, norms, and rules are socially constructed, defined and learned. Furthermore, critical theory questions [examines?] the role of power in both social experiences and societal institutions. This perspective allows us to expose [examine?] the aspects of power that enter into both peer and adult-child negotiations on the playground. Therefore, we draw from research on social interactions as well as theories of power in understanding the nature of these encounters. We then use Perlman's taxonomy of five types of power in children's conflicts to understand the way that power is manifested in playground rule negotiations (Perlman, Siddiqui, Ram, & Ross, 1997).

We are using the concept of conflict interactions related to rules to help us understand the relationship between power and social? interactions on the playground. For the purposes of this study, conflict interactions are interpersonal encounters that hold the potential for disagreement

and involve the invocation of power. [Does this concept have any precedents in the literature, e.g., in Perlman et al.'s work? If so, they should be at least mentioned here and further described below. If not, you need to describe the thinking process that led you to develop this concept for use in this study.] Our playground observations centered on interactions around rules because rules exist in principle to mediate conflict interaction and the invocation (or non-invocation) of rules involves the exercise of power. In this way, rule use? provides a consistent context for conflict interactions, and the outcomes? of conflict interactions provide a context for examining the use of power by children on the playground. [My additions to the preceding sentence are an attempt to clarify your framework. Perhaps I have gotten it wrong, but from the original sentence, I was confused about what you meant.]

Existing Research Studies

Adult-imposed overarching rules on the playground, though meant to ensure the safety and well being of children, pose several constraints as well. Thomson (2007) states that adult dominated rules limit children's impromptu acquisition of knowledge as well as their ingenuity. While seen as a necessary component of playground safety, rules can hinder children's creativity and limit challenging and fun opportunities (Evans, 1994). In a study by Jordan, Cowan, and Roberts (1995), the researchers found that children are particularly resistant to complying with overbearing rules. Children test the limits of rules and are opposed to being coerced into following them. This observational study followed elementary students and documented examples of rule usage in children's interactions with other children in classroom settings. It was found that children accept some adult sponsored rules and reject others. Children also use rules strategically to exert influence over other children, which is an integral concept being addressed in the current study.

Within several developmental theories, the understanding and use of rules is a major component of the maturational process. Cognitive theorists believe that the recognition and internalization of rules is a crucial moral developmental stage (Jordan, Cowan & Roberts, 1995). Testing the limits and resisting rules, in a cognitive perspective, is merely the process children must go through to individually internalize the rules. From a socio-cultural viewpoint, rules are an artifact of society – a tool that children must learn to use properly (Jordan et al, 1995). Mastering the use of this artifact, or playground rules in this instance, occurs within a cultural or social environment and is reinforced by more skilled members of that culture. Children learn to use the playground rules by observing and interacting with adults and other children on the playground. Looking at child development and the usage of rules, Laupa and Turiel (1986) studied children's conceptions of adult and peer authority. In particular, the researchers were interested in seeing how children viewed boundaries and the jurisdiction of authority with regards to the age and the position of the person dictating the rules. The findings of the Laupa and Turiel (1986) study match those found in Jordan et al (1995) and indicate that children accept some commands and reject others based on the legitimacy of the person in authority. The factors children use to determine the validity of the command are the age of the person, their position in the institutional context, and the nature of the act being commanded (Laupa & Turiel, 1986). These findings are important for the current study as they address the concept of rule acceptance or rejection based on power relationships or positions children take in playground interactions. [good]

If the activity or game that children are engaged in on the playground is deemed safe and appropriate by adult supervision, then that activity or game is [may be?] largely unsupervised, leaving children to structure the nature of their own games. Some? Playground games, therefore,

are largely unwatched by adults, particularly if there are no major conflicts occurring. Borman (1979) found that children structure their games on an individual game-by-game basis. The rules of the game and the nature of turns being taken is dependent upon the individual players involved and does not always follow the rules of the game in general. As long as the individual players have reached a general consensus on the manner in which the game is to be played, there are few disruptions, taunts or negotiations (Borman, 1979). [Link to your study?]

Goodwin (2006), in studying the rule negotiation and nature of games played by girls on the playground, used Goffman's conception of "situated activity systems," to describe games that consist of an interplay of checks, balances and negotiations that would change depending on the players involved. Goffman (1961) called these situated activities "encounters," where the interaction was characterized by the participants currently involved and engaged in the activity – including those waiting to play. The encounter ended when participants lost interest or left the game. Goffman (1961) saw these encounters as a smaller unit of social organization that was clearly embedded within the larger social, rule imposed structure of the playground. Within these unsupervised encounters, children learned to negotiate and take stances that regulated the social conduct of the game (Sanchez, 2006). As the rules of the situated encounter are co-constructed by the participants through resolution of dispute, children are learning about the concepts of fair play and respect and power? while practicing reasoning and rhetorical skills (Sanchez, 2006). This practice in negotiation and agreement, as well as participation in rule-based games, fosters problem solving strategies and develops the cognitive ability and social competence of children (Pellegrini, 1995). [Are your "interactional conflicts" different from Goffman's "encounters"? If so, how? Did you rely at all on Goffman's concept or his thinking to develop yours? If so, say so and how.]

While studying each individual encounter, Goffman (1961) found that the participants in the encounter will determine the attributes that will characterize that particular encounter. These attributes, or characteristics, are a duplicate of the larger society – the playground and even the school – and consist of things like social status, social ranking and ability (Goffman, 1961). When a playground encounter begins, participants position themselves and others based on these attributes pulled from the larger society. Children participating in the encounter or game are not passively recruited into a position or role within the game. Instead, they actively take up positions while also attempting to control the positioning of others. Leadership positions and subordinate positions may be taken up willingly, or may be placed unwillingly upon others. When participants are positioned by others into a role in which they are uncomfortable, their behavior will often demonstrate their noncompliance with these constraints and with the social identity being placed upon them (Goffman, 1961). Jordan, Cowan, and Roberts (1995) describe this as agency or the action of an individual exerting power and dominance in the placement or positioning of others into roles within the playground encounter.

In this manner, the participants involved in the playground encounter are negotiating the construction of the rules (the truths or values) of that encounter. [good] Foucault (cited in Jordan, Cowan, & Roberts, 1995) defines this truth as the values and beliefs that a society – or the playground encounter, in this context – deems acceptable, as stated by those who are in charge of saying what counts as truth. [If you are taking Foucault as your source for critical theory, you should say so explicitly. Also, you should say more to introduce critical theory (what you/Foucault mean by it) here. Also, given that you have chosen critical theory as part of your framework, it's odd that you didn't include anything from Carspecken!] Multiple forms of constraints and the variety of the participants' positions and social standings generate this truth.

Foucault (cited in Jordan, et al, 1995) argues that power is exerted by those who can best manipulate the definition of truth (or encounter rules) within the encounter. Knowledge of the rules, and the ability to use them, is a strategy for gaining power. The invocation of the rules is a weapon [tool?] children can use to carry out their agenda, to control the behavior of others, and to prevent themselves from being controlled.

In summary, research has demonstrated that the concept of rules and the usage of those rules is part of the maturation process. Along with mastering and understanding rules, children use rules strategically in order to exert influence and power over other children and to make meaning of social status, etc.?. Furthermore, these power negotiations of rules that children use in everyday interactions or encounters on the playground may serve to lessen [or increase?] potential playground conflicts.

Perlman's taxonomy of five sources of power

To frame our examination of the interplay of power in the negotiation of playground conflicts centered on rules, we are adapting the taxonomy of sources of power in children's conflicts outlined by Perlman, Siddiqui, Ram, and Ross (1997) and derived from a taxonomy created by French and Raven (1959, as cited in Perlman, et. al.). This taxonomy identifies five sources of power as used in children's encounters. [Is this taxonomy in the tradition of sociocultural theory or critical theory or both? I.e., what makes it appropriate for your purposes given your conceptual framework? The link between the theories and this taxonomy needs more discussion.] The taxonomy does not directly address the source of power in adult-child encounters outside of the parent-child relationships; our findings will address the adequacy of the taxonomy in describing sources of power in adult-child encounters outside of the parent-child context.

One source of power in children's encounters is coercion and reward. The power to use coercion and reward implies that the user of power controls resources that can be used to coerce or reward. These can include personal resources, such as the social power to disapprove, and impersonal resources, such as material rewards. The use of coercion and reward in encounters is often tied to the power differential between the parties involved. The greater the power differential with respect to coercion and reward, the more likely this source of power will be successful in resolving conflict encounters; with the result that the more powerful party will make fewer concessions, cooperate less and use threats more frequently to achieve their desired result. When the power differential is minimal, use of coercion and reward can result in power struggles. It is important to note that even when a power differential exists with respect to this source of power, the more powerful participant may not choose to utilize the power differential in an interaction. [good; this is the kind of specificity that you need to use your concepts later to make sense of your data]

Expert power is another available source of power in children's interactions. It is invoked through the use of superior knowledge or ability in a given situation. The use of expert power may be limited to domains where an adult is considered an expert, and the effectiveness of this power often rests on whether the parties agree on whether the party exercising this source of power is truly an expert in this domain, such as that found in Laupa and Turiel (1986). Among children, the use of expertise is often tied to age differences (French, Waas, Stright, & Baker, 1986).

The third source of power in children's conflicts, referent power, relates to the relationship the parties in conflict have with one another. This implies that conflict between friends will be different from conflicts with non-friend peers because of the more intimate nature

of the friend relationship. Pelligrini (1995) noted the flexibility of children in conflict situations was more noticeable when they were among familiar peers. Because our data collection method did not enable us to fully know the relationships between the parties involved in conflicts on the playground, this source of power will only be addressed briefly in our findings. However, because conflicts with friends are more likely to involve negotiation, compromise, conciliation, constructive communication, and explanation whereas conflicts with non-friends are more likely to show submission, disengagement and third-party intervention, we can identify how referent power influences conflicts by examining the strategies used to resolve the conflict.

The fourth source of power in children's conflicts is information power. This involves not only having information related to expert power, but also using that information in persuasive argument and reasoning. Adult use of information power is often considered advantageous for helping children internalize rules and contributing to the socialization process (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Among children, the use of information power often increases with age because of the development of reasoning skills.

The final source of power in children's conflicts is legitimate power. Legitimate power is linked to social norms and moral rules as it is based on the rights and obligations of opposing parties. This source of power is most often related to concepts of position, responsibility, reciprocity and equality. Legitimate power is related to position in that a person can have access to legitimate power because of the position he or she occupies within a social structure. For example, this would be the power a teacher would derive because she is a teacher as opposed to any other adult. Responsibility as a source of power is exercised out of a sense of obligation to act on behalf of someone. For example, children may resolve conflict in a particular way because they recognize an unfair power difference and work around that, such as defending a younger

child from being bullied by older children. Reciprocity as a source of legitimate power appears when a conflict with respect to a rule is resolved in a particular way because the parties understand that they would like to be treated in the same way as the other party, should the conflict arise again and they are on the other side. In the playground setting, it may mean that a child using a swing consents to a turn-taking process with the understanding that giving up the swing now means that someone will give up a swing for her/him in the future.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Our research questions use the lens of power to examine children's conflict interactions? surrounding rules on the playground. Our research examines the following questions: Given your conceptual framework, I would also expect you to have the following 2 research questions:

What are the conflict interactions on the playgrounds?

What are the rules that apply/are used in these conflict interactions?

- What types of power do children and adults use in conflict interactions on the playground?
- How does the use of the different types of power manifest on the playground?

[Difference between this question and the preceding one is unclear.]

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Our ethnographic research study focused on three urban elementary schools in western Denver. Munroe Elementary was in its sixth year of its Learning Landscapes (LL) playground, Cheltenham Elementary was in its third year, and Barnum Elementary had not yet received a new playground. The LL playground at Munroe suffered from lack of maintenance, with prevalent graffiti and worn paint. At Cheltenham, the playground was well maintained with no

visible graffiti. The playground at Barnum, while old, was also well kept.

Each elementary school serves between 470 and 564 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. As of fall 2006, populations at these schools are between 86-97% Latino, 0.6-7% African American, 2-4% Caucasian, 0.4-3% Native American, and 0-2% Asian. Thirty-two percent of students in Denver Public Schools are English language learners, and the schools in our study offer transitional bilingual programs for native Spanish speaking students. All three schools are gender balanced, with approximately three-quarters of students eligible for free or reduced lunch (www.cde.state.co.us, accessed November 5, 2007).

Our group conducted a total of twenty-four playground observations.¹ Two researchers conducted two open-ended, one focused, and three structured observations, and the other two researchers conducted one open-ended, two focused, and three structured observations. In all, two open-ended, two focused, and three structured observations were conducted at each of the three schools. Observations ranged from forty-five to ninety minutes in length. Two open-ended observations took place in the morning before school, with the remaining twenty-two observations occurring during lunch recess. Open-ended and focused observations were handwritten into field notebooks and then expanded, and structured observations were recorded on a matrix created specific to the area of focus. (Matrices are included in Appendix A.)

Open-ended observations were guided by the general question: ?? and used to survey the entire playground, including the actors (children, paraeducators, teachers, and parents), activities, space, and resources. Since we had an interest in the understanding and enforcement of rules, any interactions of this nature were also included in our field notes. After we completed the open-ended observations, we discussed themes that emerged from each of our notes.

From this, we focused on four areas that we had observed to be highly used yet varied in

type of play. For our focused and structured observations, we each concentrated on a specific area: swings, tetherball, four-square, and ball games (soccer, kickball, football, and basketball).² Focused observations noted the actors involved (including gender and approximate grade level or adult role, if possible), all types of activity, any noticeable rules, and any dialogue or negotiation that took place. Structured observations focused on the number of actors involved (again including gender and approximate grade level or adult role, if possible), timing of?, and the instances of rule negotiation along with the nature of the interaction. Paraeducator or teacher presence was noted throughout the observations and specifically in the social interactions surrounding rules.

As observers, we attempted to minimize the influence of our adult presence on the nature of the social interactions among the actors. To do this, we only intervened when concerned about safety, and were otherwise “minimally interactive” with children and adults? (Pellegrini, 1995, p. 46). Children’s behaviors that were clearly related to, or affected by, our adult presence (such as asking for our help or looking our way before proceeding) were noted in our field notes.

While we each focused on a specific area of play for these observations, we observed as much activity as possible in the area. Notes were taken on all actors within the setting, with those involved in rule negotiations appearing more frequently in our field notes. Through this, we were able to note behaviors that were engaged by various actors in each setting. For our structured observations, we noted the specific players that used various types of power in their interactions with others around rules.

Expanded field notes were written either immediately after the observation or within six days following the observation. Field notes were peer-reviewed among the four researchers, and convergent themes were discussed. Concerns and limitations of our observations were also

noted, which included the thickness of our notes, the occasional lack of activity at an area of focus, and the difficulty in gathering sound data amidst continually shifting playground activity. However, as the study progressed and we became more skilled at playground observation, we were more confident in our ability to accurately capture the data of interest in this setting.

Additionally, we each wrote in journals one to two times per week in order to capture our subjective feelings related to our observations. This allowed us to note our perceptions, compare schools, and make connections to qualitative research methods. We also recorded any concerns with the quality of our data or our role as observers. Finally, each investigator conducted one interview of thirty to sixty minutes in length. Two female elementary school teachers (fourth and fifth grade), one mother of three elementary and middle school children, and one fourth grade boy were interviewed.³ The topics focused on describing what the rules of the playground were in each of the participants' experiences, as well as their perceptions of the understanding and enforcement of these rules. Limitations that we noted for our interviews included concerns that our interviewees were not able to completely or accurately represent their knowledge because...?, as well as the difference in background characteristics of these participants compared to those at the schools which we observed. However, the similarity of the interviewees' playground experiences with those found in our observations suggests the possibility for generalization of our findings with the support of additional data.

METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The methodological approach to data analysis we used is based on Carspecken's (1996) critical ethnographic framework. Each researcher performed reconstructive analyses on the expanded field notes from their open-ended and focused observations. This process involved first establishing our initial interpretation of the observed events, including identification of possible

codes to classify different types of interactions and the reconstruction of meaning fields to specify possible interpretations of those interactions. These preliminary reconstructive analyses were then augmented by identifying the temporal and paradigmatic horizons that foreground and background the interactions. [Because reconstructive analysis may be unfamiliar to many (other) readers, it would be helpful here to list the steps of Carspecken's procedure that you used and to refer to your attached reconstructive analyses to illustrate how the procedure was done.]

Our reconstructive analyses were peer-reviewed among the four researchers, and convergent themes of power, rules, and negotiations were discussed further. Concerns and limitations of our reconstructions were noted, as well as possible evidence that would refute or question our theories or the effectiveness of our conceptual framework.

FINDINGS

Negotiation of the Rules by Children

Our analysis of the data indicated that the children on the playground primarily exhibited legitimate, coercion and reward, and expert power, with very little use of referent and information power. Adult use of power also centered on expert, legitimate, and coercion and reward power, with little use of information power and no use of referent power [not entirely clear to me how you could have distinguished referent power from legitimate power in your data (if one measure of legitimate power is one's social position and the rights afforded it)]. It should be noted here that the dynamics of the playground made it difficult to apply accurately the taxonomy of power, and we found that, in some instances, there appeared to be multiple types of power being displayed. These difficulties and limitations will be discussed in greater detail below.

By far the most common form of power exhibited by children on the playground

concerning rules was legitimate power. Of 396 total instances of children negotiating the rules with each other, 250, or 63%, involved legitimate power. Slightly more of children's negotiations involved legitimate power when a playground supervisor was present (61 of 87 encounters, or 70%) than when play was unsupervised (189 of 309 encounters, or 61%). This type of power derives from the recognition of the rights of others and is often based on the ideas of reciprocity and equality. Thus, when the enforcement of a rule is accepted by those involved, even if it is not in their favor, there is an expectation that the rule will be applied when it does benefit them. Likewise, both sides will accept a rule that is perceived to be fair and unbiased. In our study, the negotiation of play among children often referred to these agreed upon rules as a means of maintaining fairness. At times, children established which rules would be used in a game at the outset. For example, in one series of tether ball games, five boys collectively played and acted as alternating judges who established the rules prior to the beginning of each game and enforced them during play [use past tense when describing your data]:

Ropies violations are called by those waiting, who collectively act as the "judge." At the end of the first game, one of the players appeals to the other boys, "He did ropies! Give me the ball, give me the ball!" The boy's pleas are ignored by the three judges and he loses his turn. Before the second game begins, the boys all agree that ropies are now permitted. One of the boys that is waiting (a "judge") tells the boy who had already been playing, "You better do it [ropies] now. It's okay." During the third game, there are no ropies allowed. The rules of the fourth game are no ropies, but grabbing the ball to stop it appears to be okay. This leads to two conflicts where ropies are called (once on each player). The game continues after the boys reiterate and finally establish an emphatic, "No Ropies!" rule that is not to be broken again in subsequent games.

The boys' interaction demonstrates that they have an understanding of the traditional rules of tetherball, particularly of the "no ropies" rule. The legitimacy of this rule is negotiable prior to the beginning of a game based on what the judges decide the rules will be, but they are set once

agreed upon. A player can appeal to the judges if he feels he has been wronged, but this does not mean they will listen to an argument that is contrary to the predetermined rules. [good use of example and interpretation]

This scenario shows an evolution in the boys' use of the rules. At first, the ability to determine which rules would be followed and which of them would be ignored allowed them the space to break rules which had previously constrained their actions. This redefinition allowed them to violate traditional rules in a context of legitimacy. However, overuse of the modified rules and confusion over their definitions caused further conflict, confusion, and disruption of the game. This eventually led to the collective decision to redefine the rules in a more traditional, predictable fashion, which allowed them to manage the game more efficiently. [A couple more excerpts to illustrate this pattern would strengthen the validity of your claim here.]

The next most common type of power used by children on the playground was coercion and reward. Our analysis found 70 instances of coercive power being used out of 396 negotiations among children, or 18%. Use of coercion and reward was similar in frequency with or without a playground supervisor present (16% and 18%, respectively). Children most often used coercion rather than reward, and coercion took the form of both verbal and physical coercion. In a four-square game, a larger boy hit the line with his shot and, under the rules, he would be out. However, after hitting the line, he immediately said, "I'm not out. Do over." No one argued with him and instead they all just looked down. The game continued. The announcement that he was not out was a tacit acknowledgment that he was in fact out and was an assertion of coercive power to interpret the rules in his favor. In this instance, the coercion was possibly physical, due to his size, and verbal through his announcement of his interpretation of the situation, [and might have been social too, e.g., he holds a high social status for some reason.

although it's not likely you would know this].

Another form of potential coercion that occurred on the playground was through ignoring the rules. The example in the preceding paragraph indicates an announced disregard of the rules.

There were several instances similar to the following relating to a four-square game:

As the game progresses, the server hits the ball twice in his court. A boy who is standing on the outer line of the court waiting to play says, "No hit. You're out." The server ignores him and serves again. None of the players in the game respond to the boy in line. They continue to play the game after the server serves.

Instances like these when rules are ignored are a likely display of coercive power. The ability to successfully ignore the rules was demonstrated only by a few children, and a power differential in their favor was evident. Although the extent and source of this power differential was not always fully known, they were typically noted in the presence of children that were larger, older or more socially dominant, and usually male (although this was not always the case). Through ignoring the rules and daring others to challenge, these children are coercing others into a particular application of the rules. While there may be other power types involved in the coercive act, such as expert power, the underlying type of power is coercion. [good]

Children displayed expert power in their rule negotiations with almost the same frequency as coercion and reward. The use of expert power was noted in 62 of 396, or 16%, of encounters. Expert power involved someone with expertise either in knowledge or skills exerting power to enforce the rules. The following example demonstrates the use of expert power by children on the playground:

Two older boys, the same age as the two girls who are playing tetherball, approach the tetherball area, and tell the girls, "No ropies!" The two girls play for about a minute and do not finish the game they are playing before one of the boys takes a turn. The other boy stands on the edge of the circle and takes the role of the judge – enforcing the occasional breakage of the rules.

As this excerpt illustrates, certain students would step into the role of expert, or assert

their position as expert, and enforce an interpretation of the rules. Furthermore, when a certain child consistently enforced the rules throughout a particular game, and the other children accepted his or her leadership, we noted the child as using expert power. This child acted as a "keeper" or "knower" of the rules for the group. The following example illustrates this expert power in an unsupervised football game among second grade boys:

Nine boys gather on the field. They discuss the total number of people who are playing. The short-haired boy says, "We need somebody else." All boys leave to go get someone else to play and return with another boy. The short-haired boy says, "I'm the coach." The tall boy mimics, "I'm the coach." The short-haired boy orders, "Line up, line up!" to the other boys so that the coaches can pick teams. The tall boy announces, "I go first!" The short-haired boy responds, "No, I go first," and proceeds to pick his first team member. Once the teams are chosen, they separate. The short-haired boy runs back to the center of the field, and all of his teammates follow him.

After one play, the short-haired boy runs to the playground shelter. All of the boys on both teams follow him. He pauses there for a moment, then runs back to the field. The boys again follow him back. The game starts again, and one boy tries to tackle another. A teacher yells, "I don't think we're tackling!" The short-haired boy runs toward a play structure, says "That's for little kids," (referring to the rule of no tackling), and all of the children follow him.

The example of the short-haired boy's role in the football game illustrates his status as a leader in this game. His response to the teacher's interjection of a rule that he did not agree with could even be questioned as a tension between his comfort in his role as expert in the game interrupted by a higher authority. However, what is clear in this observation is the children's acceptance of his role within the group.

The least common types of power observed in children on the playground were information and referent power. Each of these forms of power were used in only 2% of children's rule negotiations. Most commonly, information power was displayed through naming of the rules and the acceptance of the application of the named rule by others. For example, in a four-

square game, the use of information power involved a player pointing out exactly where the ball hit in relation to a line as a way to provide evidence for her argument that she was not out. In kickball, an example of information power was the assertion that a ball thrown at a baserunner that hit him in the head was a “headshot” and did not result in an out. On their face, these instances may not appear as reasoning or persuasion, but we posit that these are examples of information power on the playground. Often, reasoning in the fast-paced playground setting involves identifying the application of the proper rule to a particular event. [good]

As the identification of referent power requires an understanding of the relationships between the parties involved in the conflict, it was difficult to identify relationships among actors with certainty in our observations. In some instances, however, a prior relationship was explicitly referenced, making it possible to identify the use of this power type. For example, in one game of four square, a boy is called out and then proceeded to throw the ball at a girl who called him out. He then walks away to a nearby tetherball area and begins to play by himself. A short while later, another girl walks over to him, "grabs the ball away from him by the rope and swings it up and around the top of the pole. She walks back to the four square court and yells to the boy, 'She broke up with you a long time ago, okay.' The boy says, 'Who cares,' and keeps playing by himself." This explicit reference to a prior relationship helps to explain both the boy's and girl's actions during the conflict, as well as his resistance to the other girl's use of legitimate power in calling him out. [good]

On the whole, children seemed to point to the legitimacy of established rules in the four areas of the playground that we observed: swings, tetherball, four-square, and organized games. Acceptance of these was either negotiated among children individually or as a group, or enforced by one or two children who acted as "experts" within each game. When the agreed

upon rules were disputed, children resorted to coercion and reward. It is interesting to note that while conflict mediation programs seem to promote a "referent" use of negotiation in teaching discourse methods that acknowledge each person's interest in the situation, this type of power was almost non-existent in children's natural interactions with each other. [interesting point]

Enforcement of the Rules by Adults

Adult playground supervisors displayed power in 99 instances compared to 396 times for children. The finding of fewer displays of power by these adults is consistent with the limited number of supervisors on the playground compared to children. Adult supervisors most frequently displayed expert power, followed by legitimate power, coercion and reward, and information power. The use of referent power was not observed in enforcement of rules by adults.

When adults supervised the children's play, they typically took the role of expert in mandating and enforcing the rules. In supervised play situations, 186 instances of rule negotiation were observed, and the adults enforced 99, or 53.2%, of these encounters. Adult supervisors often acted as a "referee" for games, where children's own negotiation of rules was minimized. The following example of a fifth grade soccer game led by the physical education teacher shows how conflict is non-existent, but children are not involved in rule negotiation:

Children sign up each morning if they would like to play soccer that day at recess, and the physical education teacher picks teams. When the children arrive on the soccer field, he announces the teams. He begins the game by dropping the ball. Twice, he reminds children of the "no hands" rule when they touch the ball. After each goal is made, he announces that the goalie kicks the ball to reinitiate play. When a child pushes another in making a goal, he says that there is "no pushing, the goal doesn't count." When new kids arrive on the field and want to play, he has the children gather to reassign teams. During this game, the children did not participate in a single rule negotiation nor question the teacher's judgment.

At times when the children's knowledge of the rules could not be assumed, the teacher's

assertion of the rules onto the activities can be seen as his/her use of expert knowledge to control the activity. For example, in an interaction in a game of tetherball in which several older children had taken over the space from younger children, a teacher was sought out to mediate the situation.

The teacher tells them, "I don't want to tell you what's fair. I want you to tell me." The older girl who was playing before the teacher arrived says something inaudible to the teacher, who retorts, "If you don't like the rule, we should see what you can do about changing it. No ropies. After two turns, someone else plays." The teacher turns around and walks away.

The teacher wants the kids to work out the problem, but ultimately refers them to the existing rules of the game. These rules are seen as existing outside of her power to change them and indifferent to conflicting conceptions of what is "fair" in the situation. The rules are the rules, and she explicitly details which of them are applicable to the situation and that she expects them to follow. □

Adult supervisors used legitimate power in 32 of 99 instances of rule enforcement, or 32% of the time. The rules enforced with this type of power may not have varied from those used in the role of an expert, but these were seen as being a participant who shared in rule negotiations with children, instead of the sole enforcer of the rules during children's play. For instance, a teacher who asked children to bring in the soccer balls and cones when it was time to go in was reminding the children of a playground rule that was natural to his position as the person who gathered the equipment. In another case, when a physical education teacher asked the children whether or not they wanted to play their soccer game with a goalie, the teacher was a participant in rule negotiation, rather than the expert who solely determined and enforced the rules.

Sometimes, the rules enforced by adults seemed to be the established rules of the

playground that were not being enforced by students. In these instances, teachers can be seen as exerting legitimate power over the children's resistance to the rules, rather than utilizing expert power to correct a deficit of knowledge. For example, teachers enforced rules requiring students not to linger in the vicinity of the swings, requiring students to swing actively instead of sitting idle, talking, and prohibiting jumping out of swings.

While expert and legitimate power dominated adult supervisors' means of rule enforcement, coercion and reward was used in 9 of 99, or 9%, of instances. Again, this type of power was sometimes difficult to distinguish without any knowledge of the adult-child dynamic between the participants. However, it was clear that at times a fear of punishment or hope for reward was involved in the adult enforcement of rules. An example of adult use of coercive power can be seen in one situation in which a white, male teacher interacts six Hispanic boys playing a game of soccer in the basketball courts.

"He stops near the boys and talks to them. I cannot hear what he says, but the boys disperse, grumbling. One boy kicks the ball very hard and it flies past me and disrupts the 4-square game I was just watching. Immediately, the 6 boys take off running and laughing. The teacher yells at the boy who kicked the ball, "Why don't you go get that ball." The teacher glances at me and walks past, shaking his head. The boy who kicked the ball did go get it and took it out to the field where the other boys had gone. He was laughing the entire time."

In this situation, the teachers' comments are not spoken as a question, but as a threatening imperative – meaning you need to go get that ball now. Although the boys act flippant about the situation by laughing, they ultimately conform to the demands of the teacher and retrieve the ball. Their continued laughter suggests that they do this not out of respect for the rules, but in order to avoid further confrontation or punishment.

Playground supervisors displayed the use of informational power in only 5 of 99, or 5%, of encounters. Teachers sometimes used informational power by asking students questions about

the rules as in the following example:

A teacher approaches the swings just after a student has jumped out of the swing and says, “Diego, what’s the rule about jumping off?” Diego responds inaudibly. The teacher says, “It was an accident,” with the tone of her voice questioning the veracity of Diego’s assertion.

In another instance, a teacher asked a group of boys playing football, “Are we playing tackle football?” By using questions, the teachers were engaging in reason with the students requiring them to identify the rule as being valid thereby ensuring its application.

The lack of the use of referent power by adult supervisors may reflect the focus on the interests of the children in following the rules on the playground. It is again noteworthy, however, that conflict mediation programs are designed to encourage a method of discourse that was not modeled by adults in our observations. [good use of frequencies from structured observations together with evidence from open-ended and focused observations]

Influences of the Presence of Playground Supervisors

The most notable difference in children's displays of power based on the presence or absence of adult playground supervisors was in their use of expert power. When an adult was present, children used expert power in only 8% of their rule negotiations. However, when play was not directly supervised, children exhibited expert power 18% of the time, more than double that observed with direct supervision. As adults most frequently used expert power, it appears that they assumed this position when present. However, when children were left to manage the rules on their own, they more frequently looked to one or two children who stepped into the role of expert.

Moreover, children's use of legitimate power decreased from 70% to 61%, use of coercion and reward increased from 16% to 18%, use of referent power decreased from 6% to 1%, and use of information power increased from 0% to 2% in the absence of adult supervisors

compared to in their presence. (See Table 1.) [Interesting numbers!]

Table 1: Types of Power Used in Rule Negotiations by Children and Adult Playground Supervisors.

Use of Power	Legitimate	Coercion & Reward	Expert	Information	Referent
Child Enforced (<i>N</i> =396)	63%	18%	16%	2%	2%
Adult Present (<i>N</i> =87)	70%	16%	8%	0%	6%
No Adult Present (<i>N</i> =309)	61%	18%	18%	2%	1%
Adult Enforced (<i>N</i> =99)	32%	9%	54%	5%	0%

Note: Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding.

Variations in School Sites

Across school sites, there were no clear patterns in the use of power at the two schools with new Learning Landscapes playgrounds (Munroe and Cheltenham) compared to the school without a new playground (Barnum). However, there were distinct trends in the types of power at each individual school. Table 2 shows the use of power by children in all playground rule negotiations by school. While legitimate power was most frequently used at all schools, it is clear that children at Cheltenham used legitimate power more often than children at the other schools, children at Barnum used coercion and reward more frequently than at the other schools, and children at Munroe used expert power more frequently than the other schools.

Moreover, use of power varied whether or not an adult directly supervised play. While children at Munroe and Barnum used legitimate power in about half of negotiations without an adult present (51% and 53%, respectively), children at Cheltenham used legitimate power 83% of unsupervised time. When an adult was present, children at Munroe increased their use of legitimate power to 74%, children at Barnum decreased their use to 42%, and children at Cheltenham maintained about the same use at 81%.

Adult use of power also varied by school. In enforcement of the rules, adults at Munroe mostly used legitimate power (50% of the time), while adults at Barnum and Cheltenham most often used expert power (69% and 49%, respectively). Likewise, expert power was second in frequency at Munroe (28%), while legitimate power was second in use at Barnum and Cheltenham (14% and 41%, respectively). Despite the variation in frequency, expert and legitimate power were together the most prevalent in adult enforcement of the rules at the three schools.

It is also interesting to note the difference in the frequency in which rule negotiations occurred depending on the rate of direct adult supervision at each school. At Cheltenham, where the rate of supervision was highest, at 46%, the use of legitimate power by children was prevalent, and the use of coercion and reward was the least of the three schools, at 8%. At Barnum, with a 37% rate of direct adult supervision, coercion and reward was second most frequent use of power, at 28% of the time. At Munroe, with the least direct supervision at 28%, expert power was the second most frequently used type of power, in 26% of negotiations. These do not coincide with the types of power used by adults at each school, but represent distinct types of playground communities that we sensed in our observations. It also indicates that less than half of playground interactions are directly supervised by an adult at these schools, which suggests an environment that lends itself to socio-cultural learning among peers. [good]

Table 2: Types of Power Used by Children in All Rule Negotiations by School.

Use of Power at Each School	N	Legitimate	Coercion & Reward	Expert	Information	Referent	Direct Supervision
Barnum (no LL playground)	185	51%	28%	15%	3%	3%	37%
Cheltenham (2 year old LL playground)	178	83%	8%	9%	0%	1%	46%
Munroe (5 year old LL playground)	134	54%	16%	26%	2%	2%	28%

Note: Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding.

LIMITATIONS

The application of the typology to the playground exposes its limitations. The typology does not function well in a setting where there are more than two parties involved. On the playground, especially in team games, encounters over rules involve two teams or, at the very least, there is a team that shares the same interest as the person directly involved in the encounter. Take the following occurrence from a kickball game as an example:

A girl kicks the ball, and it rolls slowly into the infield. She runs toward first base. The ball is thrown at her, but narrowly misses (from the observer's vantage point). The boy who threw the ball at her says, "It touched her arm! It touched her arm! She's out!" A boy on the girl's team says "It missed her by that much!" while he holds his hands out about 6 inches apart from one another. She stays on base.

In this instance, it is difficult to tell whether the ultimate result that the girl is safe on base comes from the assertion of power by the boy on her team, on her possible use of coercive power in ignoring the assertion of the player on the opposing team or on a group power possessed by her team as a whole. [good!!] The emphasis on the group characteristic of peer relationships among children (D'Amato, 1993), is not addressed in a typology that assumes power to emanate from individual interests. This is particularly acute on the playground, where games are often repeated daily among similar groups of children.

We also note that our observations made certain types of power especially difficult to discern. For example, the expectation of reciprocity in legitimate power, the temporal role of expert, the fear of punishment in coercion, and the mutual interests or relationship within referent power are sometimes unspoken and may be understood by participants but indistinguishable to an outside observer. This leaves open the possibility that there were non-observable or overlapping power dynamics occurring when rule negotiations appeared to occur without

dispute. [good] For example, in observing kickball, most of the instances when a student would be called out seemed to be accepted by both sides without disagreement because the application of the rule was clear, with an expectation that an equally clear application of the rule would occur in similar instances in the future. However, other power dynamics may be at play when applications of the rule that are not particularly obvious are accepted. In an instance that we interpreted as an obvious application of the rule accepted through legitimate power, there may have been unspoken coercive power at play if a player feared challenging the application of the rule because of a fear of negative consequences for him or her. Future studies that track the relationships of various participants on the playground could provide a clearer picture of the types of power used by taking social dynamics into account.

Likewise, in assuming the use of expert power, it was sometimes unclear whether the ultimate interpretation of the rule was due to true expert status accepted by the children, or whether coercion was involved, or whether it was simply a statement of legitimate power that was shared by all. In addition, it was difficult to tell with a teacher whether there was any exercise of coercive power. Even if a teacher does not threaten punishment for lack of conformity to the rules, his or her position as teacher confers the authority to impose such a punishment. Therefore, a teacher who enforces the rules using information power may background the coercive power, but it is impossible to tell whether the student is responding to the legitimate power, informational power or coercive power. Again, studies that include a more in-depth analysis of the teacher-student dynamic may be able to more accurately determine sources of power used in a given playground situation. [Excellent discussion of limitations and possibilities.]

DISCUSSION

Through the initial analysis of our observations, definite patterns in the use of certain types of power began to emerge. As we began to revisit our research questions in light of our observations, more intricate patterns across the three schools became apparent as well, which was discussed briefly and quantified previously. We now turn to a discussion of how our findings related to the current research that formed our conceptual framework, as well address and expand upon answers to our research questions. Again, our research questions use the lens of power to examine children's relationships on the playground surrounding rules. Our research examines the following questions:

- What types of power do children and adults use in conflict interactions on the playground?
- How does the use of the different types of power manifest on the playground?

To fully understand what types of power are used by children and adults on the playgrounds, it is necessary to first return to Foucault's assertion that "the truth," or "the rules" in the case of this study, is generated by multiple forms of constraints and differences in the participants' positions and social standings, and that power is exerted by those who can best manipulate the definition of the rules within the encounter (cited by Jordan, et al, 1995). In the case of the playground, the type of power we observed in use was very much dependent on the context in which it occurred, including the school where it occurred and whether or not an adult was present. These contexts determined the nature of the power structures, i.e. who in the encounter had the ability to determine the rules, which in turn determined what type of power was used. [good]

Legitimate power was most commonly used on one particular school playground (see

Table 2, row 2). It is possible that the overarching school environment, the school's rule structure and their relationship to playground interactions had an impact on the frequency of the use of this power at this school [Cheltenham]. However, the design of our study did not allow us to fully evaluate this context beyond noting the disproportionate use of legitimate power here by both children and adults.

Across all schools, legitimate power was more commonly used in the context of adult presence. Here it is possible that the teacher's authoritative and representative position situated within the overarching rules of the school was used to influence the rules that were followed, the order of turns, and the resolution of conflicts. Teachers acted as authority figures that enforced the rules, and students were positioned as followers of the rules. This is consistent with Goffman's (1961) description of participants – including adults and children - positioning themselves and others based on the attributes of the larger society, including the designation of leadership and subordinate positions. Our observations of children conforming to rules in these contexts based on the legitimacy of the person in authority also corresponds with the research done by Laupa and Turiel (1986) and Jordan, et al, (1995). Their findings, and our own, suggest that the manifestation of legitimate power is typified by the acceptance of rules, and explicit and implicit reference to them during an encounter. [good]

In the observations in which there was no adult present and legitimate power was used, the power structure was characterized by the preeminence of the rules of the game and children positioning themselves and others in subordination to them, which again was a reflection of the larger society (Goffman, 1961). However, unlike the context of adult presence, the rules were sometimes viewed as mutable and interchangeable. Children showed an ability to individually structure their games using different rule sets. This is consistent with Borman's (1979) findings,

with the exception that a general consensus did not always result in fewer disruptions or decreased need for negotiation. Rather, the children renegotiated the rules in order to find a new legitimate order that would work for them, or resorted to the use of another type of power. In an interview, a similar observation was made by the mother of four children. She noted that in games

“like 4-square, there are some rules handed down by adults teaching kids 4-square, and then the kids do make up their own rules. And then when they get together to play, they’ll say, well we’re going to play with this but we’re not going to play with this rule, you know we’re going to play with these basic rules, but if it hits the line it’s in, or if it hits the line, it’s out, they have certain things that they can kind of make the game their own (*inflection*) within a certain parameter (*inflection*) and with the sports, they just, I think what kind of drove the teachers to say, you can’t play anymore, is the hot-headedness of some of the kids who had to have it in one way, and maybe couldn’t negotiate.

The observations of this mother and our own agree with Sanchez’ (2006) findings that, through unsupervised encounters, children learn to negotiate and regulate the social conduct of the game through the co-construction of rules. When not in the direct presence of adults, the manifestation of children’s use of legitimate power is typified by both the acceptance and adaptation of the rules. [good]

Coercion and reward power is the children’s second most commonly used type of power on the playground; although coercion was used almost to the complete exclusion of reward. This power type was most evident in contexts where an adult was not present and when legitimate rules or power were being questioned, either by the subject of the use of power or by the user. The subject of the power use was usually first confronted with the attempted use of legitimate or expert power, which failed to deliver the desired action or reaction in the subject. Subsequently, a coercive use of power would be implemented in order to bring about the desired results. For example, using physical intimidation to get a player who is, by rule, out to actually leave the

game is consistent with the assertions made in Jordan, et al, (1995) that children will test the limits of rules and resist being coerced into following them. Here, however, the ultimate enforcement of the rules is being carried out by the children, not adult authority figures. Thus, at certain times when adults were not present, children's use of coercion and reward power manifested itself in the acceptance and enforcement of resisted rules.

However, when the user of coercion and reward power confronted a legitimate rule, the act was manifested as resistance to the rules. Quite often this resistance would come in the form of flagrantly ignoring or breaking a rule in order to stay in the game or in a position of power in the game (e.g. server in four square). Here again the findings of Jordan, et al are pertinent, in that the children are rejecting the authority of the rules based on their position in the context of the game and the nature of the command. This also points to limitations in the findings of Sanchez (2006) that children are learning about the concepts of fair play and respect while practicing reasoning and rhetorical skills through their play in situated game encounters. This may be the case in some contexts, but they are also learning how to skillfully use power, social position and domination in order to control the social order in those same encounters. [good]

In adults' use of coercion and reward, the context combined the use of their position of authority on the playground with a child's resistance to legitimate rules. It was in these contexts that all four observers experienced difficulty in distinguishing whether a particular power use was truly legitimate, expert or informational rather than coercion and reward. Subsequently, very few instances were identified as use of coercion and reward power. Again, the design of this study did not allow us to fully understand the relationships between individuals on the playground enough to distinguish the true nature or impetus of the use of power. The presence of the researcher may also have caused reactivity in the adults, leading them to alter their

behavior into something less obviously coercive in order to avoid judgment or gain approval. [good] However, the observations that we were able to categorize as coercion and reward showed that the use of this power manifested as threats of punishment (e.g. having to sit out of a game) or threats of withholding a reward or resource (e.g. taking away a ball or the right to play a certain game).

As mentioned in the findings, expert power was the most frequently used type of power by adults on the playground. The context in which these uses of power occurred were characterized by the adult assuming a role of referee or judge during a game or called in to mediate a particular conflict. This position differed from times in which the teacher acted from a position of authority in that they were seen as the possessor of the knowledge and judgment necessary to make play possible or to continue play in this context. The authoritative position was now situated within the social structure of the game, rather than the school. The power structures here were characterized by the children's complete deference to the adult's knowledge of the rules and enforcement of them. Returning to Foucault, the adult exerts power through their definition of truth within the encounter (cited in Jordan, et al, 1995). Here the use of expert power manifested through explicit verbal commands or pronouncements of the rules, which resulted in the acceptance of rules.

The explicitness and acceptance of the rules also typified the manifestation of expert power in children, but was also implicit at times when one child was acting as the de facto expert or judge while also playing the game. In these instances, exertion of expert power could also be seen through other children's mimicry of the expert or acquiescence to follow a set of rules that child puts forth explicitly at the beginning of a game and is only referred to implicitly thereafter. Perhaps one of the most striking aspects of our observation of children's use of expert power was

its limited use in the context of adult presence. When an adult was not present, there were 56 instances of expert power (18% of 309 instances), but this diminished to only seven times in 87 instances (8%) when an adult was around. When an adult is not around, a child may be more likely to have the social status necessary to establish the legitimacy and authority needed to hold the position of leadership (Laupa & Turiel, 1986), here as an expert or judge, while simultaneously positioning others in subordinate positions (Goffman, 1961). When an adult is present, however, the ability to establish oneself as an expert may be diminished. It may also be possible that the position is not as crucial to the social interaction with an adult present, or that the children simply prefer to have the adult act in that capacity if needed and the resultant decrease in frequency in children provided more opportunity for adults to use that power.

The few instances in which information power was used by children occurred in similar contexts to expert power in that an adult was usually not present. However, unlike the situations in which a designated expert was present to decide disputes according to their understanding, or possession of, the rules, disputes were open to multiple interpretations and in need of group consensus. Here rationalization, justification and argumentation of one's viewpoint come into play, as well as a deliberative process in coming to agreement. The complexity of these situations may contribute to the relative infrequency of our observing them on elementary school playgrounds. The use of this type of power may require further growth in the reasoning and rhetorical skills that Sanchez (2006) says are developed through practice in situated activities such as the games we observed. As these nascent skills and recognition and internalization of rules continue to develop throughout their maturational process (Jordan, Cowan, & Roberts, 1995), the frequency of the use of information power may increase. [good]

Although the age of the children involved in the observations we were able to record was

not as precise as would have been desired, the information we do have points to the fact that this power was used by older children, which would support the idea that this type of power requires higher levels of maturation. In an interview, a private school teacher alluded to this when discussing the process for conflict resolution used at the school where she works. In this process, children are asked to enter into a discussion of the conflict and to present their view on what happened and what should be done to resolve it. She said that:

“they don’t get it until the 5th grade, but they are trained in it the whole way through. So they sort of go through the motions, but when they are 5th graders, they say, ‘Oh, I get what you were thinking!’ They begin to really view that.”

Even though it was rarely used, the emergence of information power in children was evident, and manifested on the playgrounds as a deliberative, argumentative process around the acceptance and enforcement of rules.

Information power was also the least used type of power (that was still observed) by adults. The contexts in which these instances occurred could possibly be categorized as coercive power in that their impetus seemed to be based in using their authority to enforce a rule rather than deliberation about what a rule was and whether it should be enforced. However, these interactions have been categorized as use of information power because the interactions are formed around a discussion or question (e.g. ‘what is the rule here?’), rather than a simple enforcement. Although we are not capable of knowing the intentions of the adult, we noted in our observations that these interactions had a coercive undertone to them and that they typically were manifested as an enforcement of a legitimate rule through the invocation of authority and explicit reference to “the rules.”

The use of referent was difficult to identify given the design of the study, because the observers did not have access to the relationships of the children with each other or with the

adults. These relationships, either on the playground or in their classrooms, would assumedly impact the interactions we observed. Although it was the least frequent use of power we identified, we suggest that it was at play in many of the interactions we observed. [yes, I agree] The contexts in which it occurs is most likely varied and spans the gamut of those discussed in other types of power, and its manifestation is also likely to be as diverse.

CONCLUSIONS

Although we experienced limitations to our study due to the design, length of time, and shortcomings of the typology of power, we were able to quantify and qualify the use of power on the playgrounds that we observed, as well as identify the various ways in which these types of power manifest on the playground. This study adds to the current body of research on children's everyday interactions, use of power and engagement with rules. Particularly, this study provides insight into the otherwise under-explored area of unsupervised activities of children on playgrounds. Much of our findings support those of other researchers, but also indicate areas that may need further investigation or reconsideration. [yes!! excellent]

The findings on the frequency of the types of power used on the playground may well be of interest to those teachers who are charged with the task of observing their school's playgrounds and administrators that make decisions about how playgrounds should be supervised based on the environment they want to provide for their students. This study may also serve parents looking to understand the development of their children and their evolving conceptions of rules during the formative, elementary school years. Education and child development researchers who are interested in children's activities on playgrounds or their development and use of power can gain insight from the patterns between and within schools

that we have noted here.

The limitations and lingering questions raised by this study demonstrate the need for more research in this area. Further inquiries into the use of power should go beyond and modify the typology of the five types of power. Although this was a useful means of identifying and categorizing the use of power in everyday interactions on the playground, it did not provide a sufficient explanation of what we saw or account for more than two actors in an interaction. Implementation of a similar typology would also require a study design that affords access to and an understanding of the teacher-student and student-student dynamics in order to accurately and extensively identify the use and type of power at play. Part of this would entail having more time on site, which would also allow for an account of student maturation and development. Further exploration and expansion upon the contexts, including different game types in which power is used would also be beneficial to this area of inquiry.

Kristen, Jarrod, Brooke, and Adam: Although you seem to have struggled with your conceptual framework and it is not as well-constructed as I would like to see, you have done an excellent job with the findings and discussion section of this report. Your use of both frequency and reconstructed data is impressive and compelling. Your discussion of the limitations of your data collection and the power typology is well argued and informative for future use/researchers.

Congratulations on a very nice piece of work. Margaret

Grade for Final Report = A

1 All researchers are middle class, Caucasian graduate students. One researcher is a native English speaker with fluency in Spanish, and the other three are English speakers with some proficiency in Spanish.

2 Two focused and three structured observations were conducted for swings and ball games. One focused and three structured observations were conducted for tetherball and four-square.

3 Both teachers work at suburban elementary schools, one public and one private. The mother's children include a fourth grade girl, sixth grade boy, and eighth grade boy who attend suburban public schools. The fourth grade boy also attends a suburban public school. All interviewees were middle class and Caucasian.

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