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4 DOUBLE DUTCH AND DOUBLE CAMERAS

STUDYING THE TRANSMISSION OF CULTURE

IN AN URBAN SCHOOL YARD

Ann Richman Beresin

It can be said that within the children's game lies an entire cosmos. For Jean Piaget, the study of marbles uncovered the wrestlings of the moral judgments of the child. For Brian Sutton-Smith, the flexibility of children's games revealed play itself as a process of invention and reversal. For John McDowell, the riddle texts unfolded an array of themes reflecting that of the children's lives as a whole. (Piaget 1965; Sutton-Smith 1976b; McDowell 1979). This paper will examine the complex world of double dutch jump rope as practiced and performed by third- through fifth-grade girls in an urban, public, working-class, racially integrated elementary school yard in Pennsylvania. It will be argued here that the study of the game reveals complex, overlapping cultural worlds, and that if we can attune our eyes to the game beyond the basic game text, that the potential meaning of such study goes beyond the collection of interesting rhymes.

Unlike the classic studies of jump-rope rhymes which have privileged the texts of the rhymes over their actions (Abrahams 1969; Butler 1989; Delamar 1983; Gomme 1894; Newell 1883), in this paper I seek to explore the interaction around the game in addition to its texts, and to examine its relationship to the specific context of the urban school yard. I suggest not only that the school yard shapes the game—and it is indeed inseparable from it—but that the privileging of game texts by collectors of children's folklore has been directly related to the available methodologies for folk-game study. Rhymes and songs were written down by observers of children, and these rhymes were then compared with older rhymes and rhymes from different regions in order to examine cultural uniqueness and distribution. It was not until recently that the invention of the audio tape recorder enabled the student of games to capture verbal nuances, cadence, and rhythm, thus allowing for the preservation of detail beyond the mere text.

Although it is hard to imagine folk song collectors today not using a

tape recorder to capture the details of song, the use of visual media in game study is virtually untapped. Like dance ethnography, the study of folk games could greatly benefit from the preservation of actual game performances on film or videotape, in order to examine the game in its rapid-fire detail, and then, perhaps most significantly, to replay the game for the participants to get their expert views.

Prior to the use of audio and video equipment, students of children's folklore made use of historical documentation and oral history to extract meaning from rhymes and games. The Opies' extensive use of written documentation and Sutton-Smith's vast collection of oral history around folk games have emphasized the shifting temporal context of the games (Opie and Opie 1959, 1969; Sutton-Smith 1981a). Although collections from Gomme to the Opies have included musical notation in singing games, the jump-rope literature has, to this day, typically emphasized the poetic meter, and done so sparingly, leaving the impression that jumping rope was something one does perhaps sitting down with one's mouth (Butler 1989). The first in-depth interactionist study of the game of jump rope is Goodwin's 1985 article "The Serious Side of Jump Rope: Conversation Practices and Social Organization in the Frame of Play," which, by using audiotaped transcripts of talk around the games, allowed for the capturing of variation in actual rope games as they were performed in the streets of Philadelphia. Although still emphasizing the verbal interaction around the game and implying that the game of rhythmic foot work, known as jump rope, was primarily a verbal art, this provided a step into the study of the game as more than fixed text. Goodwin's study demonstrated that the game was a framework, as Bateson and also Goffman have suggested, for other kinds of dramas (Bateson 1972; Goffman 1959, 1974). For more on the significance of the inclusion of the larger social context and folk interaction, see Bauman 1982; Briggs 1988; and Kendon 1990.

The majority of the folk-game literature can be said to be either a micro or a macro survey, leaving us with often uncomparable details, as Schwartzman has noted, or acontextual lists of separate events, as is popular in the general books on American children's folklore (Bronner 1988; Knapp and Knapp 1976; Schwartzman 1978). For years the historical comparative methodology when used in combination with fieldwork provided the only way to merge the two perspectives. But, given our relative access to the technology of wide-angle and close-up footage, this is no longer the case. Rivka Eifermann's massive study of Israeli Arab and Jewish children's games serves as perhaps the closest prevideographic model of combined micro and macro study; she utilized hundreds of simultaneous observers

within the same play area. (Eifermann 1971, 1979). In this manner Eifermann was able to amass a wealth of detail in survey form and to compare children of different social classes, locales, and ethnicities. Although the published versions of her study do not illuminate the important details of the folk games within its survey, it stands as a marker in the careful examination of the meaning of children's games in the larger culture.

THE USE OF FILM AND VIDEO

Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead pioneered the use of film in *Learning to Dance in Bali*, as they captured the nonverbal stylistics of a cross-cultural dance lesson. Reels of unedited film recorded the instruction of cultural forms. Film documentary, which by definition is an edited process of graphic storytelling, has its own fascinating history, but what is relevant here is not the use of film and video as storyteller, but rather as presenter of art forms.

Helen Schwartzman's encyclopedic text *Transformations: The Anthropology of Children's Play* includes in its final pages a listing of ethnographic films, ranging from Bateson's own 1954 film of river otters at play to Bess Lomax Hawes and Robert Eberlein's *Pizza Pizza Daddy* in 1969, a film about a special performance of favorite African American singing games. It is in these films that the details and nuances of the games emerge, and the texts can be placed in perspective, as verbal expressions of bodily forms.

What is being proposed in this paper is the use of film or video as witnessing or documentation, so that when a game is described in transcription or in actual videographic presentation we can see the phenomenon being discussed. Unfortunately, this chapter is itself limited to the paper medium, but with careful description of a few minutes of actual footage, it is hoped that the reader will begin to see and hear details of the game. As microethnographers Adam Kendon and Frederick Erickson advocate, through the use of such documentation we can begin to be more consistent about our study of social phenomenon, in this case the cultural transmission of folkgames, and build upon a collection of real cases involving real human beings (Kendon 1979; Erickson and Wilson 1982). We have the possibility of checking them, and rechecking them, long after the fieldwork is over, in slow motion and in fast forward, with sound on and sound off, to see things not possible in the quick blur of the moment. And we have the possibility of the local experts sharing their specific insights on their own folk process, well after the moment of concentration is past. The very field of children's folklore expands before us, and it has the potential to become the study of children's cultures and folklife, in all its richness and complexity.

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DOUBLE CAMERAS

When this author set out to study the games and rituals of one multiethnic working-class school yard in 1991, it became clear that one pair of eyes would not be sufficient to capture the details or the larger boundaries of school-yard interaction. In the summer months, the principal of the Mill School was approached for general permission to spend time at the daily fifteen-minute recess periods, and eventually to use audio and video recorders. Permission was granted, as no individuals were being targeted in the study, and student anonymity was assured. General information letters were sent in the fall to one class in each of the third, fourth, and fifth grades on which the fieldwork was based. In mid-fall, a stationary videocamera was placed in a second-floor window facing the school yard, and set on a wide angle. This was done to capture the basic traffic zones and play spaces, and as an aid in the locating of field observations within the larger picture. The principal was supportive and accepted such a plan, as the individual faces were obscured, and he, too, was curious to learn what kinds of interaction were occurring. Recess had been canceled by his predecessor out of fear of school-yard violence, and the status of recess time was uncertain. Such documentation, to be shared with him and his staff at the end of the year in report form, was of interest and had policy implications.

On the first day of school, daily nonparticipant observation fieldnotes were written, and it was not until rapport was firmly established with the children and staff that audiotaping commenced. From January to May, daily audiotapes were made, overtly, with many texts collected, rules explained, interactions noted, and nonverbal information described. It was not until May that the researcher felt ready to ask the children if a mobile video camera could be set up on the school yard to record their games directly. A deep rapport had developed by that time, and their response was universally positive. They were quite excited, as it had been our agreement that they could see themselves on video later in the month. At that time, they were to tell me what they thought about the games they played. Small group interviews with the three classes under study had been conducted since the beginning of the year, so this would be another round of interviewing, also considered a pleasant task.

In sum, the methodology included ongoing small group interviews, daily fieldwork, gradual inclusion of audio recording, seasonal wide-angled videotaping from the second-floor window, eventual close-up or micro-video footage, and then the presentation of samples of the footage to the participants. A total of thirty-three videotapes were recorded, covering twenty-seven days of recess. Nineteen tapes of wide-angled footage were made, and fourteen tapes of close-up micro footage were made. Fifty-one days of live au-

diotape were also recorded.

One hundred and four third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade boys and girls were observed, audiotaped, and videotaped during recess. Forty-seven children served as native experts and provided their own commentary as they watched themselves at play on videotape. Occasionally younger and older children were included in the taping process, if they were part of a game being studied and played by the core participants.

Although not the first study to utilize videotaped games of children in this manner, this study is among few to share the footage with its participants in this age group (see also Sutton-Smith and Magee's "Reversible Childhood" [1989a], on the use of reflexive video ethnography with young children). Although this is not the first study to examine school-yard games and the transmission of culture in one place (See Parrott 1972; Sluckin 1981; Hart 1993), it is unique in its deliberate emphasis on a public, multiethnic school. Studies of urban play, such as Dargan's and Zeitlin's extensive photo essay *City Play* (1990), capture bits of the cultural crossover visible in urban street games, but in the following transcriptions we can see it emerge in the school-yard games themselves. Such cultural crossover is significant in the light of the emphasis on school desegregation so important to the American public-school system, and in the light of the potential elimination of recess as school policy (Sutton-Smith 1990b).

Several games were studied in this larger exploration of the folklore of the 1991-92 Mill School yard, including the games of the third- through fifth-grade boys. This paper, however, will serve as a window to the specific game worlds of the double dutch players. (For a complete view of the larger study, which includes handball, folk basketball, hopscotch, step dancing, and play fighting, see Beresin 1993.) Double dutch was perhaps the chief peer-led activity for African American girls at the Mill School, and provided a performance focus for a mobile audience of both girls and boys in the school yard.

DOUBLE DUTCH

A fast-paced, polyrhythmic jump-rope style, double dutch utilizes two ropes, typically turned inwards, egg beater fashion, by two girls who have "the ends," while a single jumper executes specific steps to a specific song or chant. It is almost exclusively an African American girls' tradition in urban Pennsylvania, and has been virtually ignored in the jump-rope literature. There has been so little written on double dutch in the folklore literature, and in the collections of African American folklore, that it could even have been said to be skipped over.

Singing game and street game collections like those of the Opies have

described larger game traditions but excluded rope singing. American children's folklore, as in the works of Bronner and Knapp and Knapp, have homogenized the ethnicity of their young experts and have given us only single rope traditions; the African American collections of general folklore have rarely even mentioned the lore of young girls (Kochman 1972; Jackson 1967; Whitten and Szwed 1982). With the exception of Jones's and Hawes's *Step It Down* (1972) and *Black Girls at Play* (1975) by Bauman, Eckhardt, and Brady, the games of African American girls have been rendered practically invisible, and these collections have examined only the stepping and clapping forms. Abrahams's *Jump-Rope Rhymes: A Dictionary* (1969), a text called "the most thorough recent compilation of these (jump rope) rhymes for English-speaking children" (Schwartzman 1978, 36), lists a handful of articles relevant to double dutch, but, with the exception of his own useful 1963 article, all deal with it only in passing.

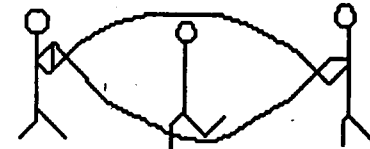
Even when only a single rope was available—it was typically one brought by a child from home—it was utilized in the style and steps of double dutch. Two girls hold the ends and turn for the girl who is jumping, and often it is expected that one must turn for someone before getting the chance to jump. Occasionally the "double Irish" or "double orange" style of rope turning was observed; that is the term for the turning of the ropes outward, egg beater style. This method was considered more difficult and sometimes occurred by accident when the turners changed direction. More typically, there would be two turners rapidly turning the rope inward, left, right, left, right, swaying rhythmically to the slapping beat as the rope brushed the ground. The jumper would dance the steps associated with the song or rhyme, and a group of singers, ranging from the turners to nonparticipants to would-be participants, would dance a minimal version of the game in place. This was considered both a fun thing to do while you await your turn, as well as a chance to practice the sequence.

The game was competitive, with jumpers vying to be the one who could not only stay in the ropes the longest but could progress the furthest in the particular rhyme. Someone would shout "She got foot" or "She got turn." And one would often hear the cry of "Saved!" or "Saved by one!" meaning that the person shouting had progressed farther than the jumper who had just tripped on the turning rope. Steps were parodied, styles imitated, and occasionally corrected in order to ensure that the jumper did the job right. Turners could be accused of turning too rapidly, or of intentionally "flicking" the rope to make it more difficult, and high-status jumpers, usually the more skilled fifth and sixth graders, claimed first jumps, while the younger, less experienced players would be the turners. The chance

to jump first, and if one was skilled, stay in the spotlight, was often called long before the game started, in the hallway, in the classroom, or at the end of one round for the round the next recess.

Double Dutch Style

Count 2 turns
left hand
clockwise



Count 2 turns
right hand
clockwise

Count 1 turn
right hand
clockwise

Count 1 turn
left hand
clockwise

Immigrant Chinese and Haitian girls, representing a small minority of this officially racially desegregated school, also occasionally did individual, single jump rope. Two Chinese girls sometimes jumped in two parallel ropes and, in their own ropes, looped circles around each other, sort of a couple dance while jumping. The Haitian girls sometimes jumped with a second girl in the same small rope, either face to face or back to front. Regardless of form or ethnicity, jump rope was almost always competitive, either by endurance, elaborateness of steps, or frequency of turns.

The European American girls would often be observers of the double dutch games, and on only rare occasions do individual ropes themselves. When they did so they would compete to see which of them could jump the most times. They would not sing or chant, just count the number of continuous jumping steps. One girl was up to 230 and still jumping. Unlike the African American girls, who stayed in one place or rotated their positions slightly to be out of the bright sun, or the immigrant girls, who stayed in one place with their individual ropes, the European American girls did a running jump rope step and would, one at a time, run around the entire yard counting. Like their hand-clap games, which were also done to numbers or counting, the European American girls had clearly distilled their games and no longer had an active jump-rope singing tradition at this school. The singing jump rope game, and for that matter the singing hand-clapping game, had become predominantly an African American tradition.

Many double dutch songs included the same sequence of steps or commands: foot, bounce, hop, turn, criss (crossing), clap, with "foot" or "footin" being the basic right, left, right, left running step over the quickly turning ropes. "Bounce" involved a lighter touch of the foot while doing the running step; "hop" a one-footed airborne step. "Turning" and "crissing" involved the most skill and only the most advanced jumpers were able to do those steps. Taisha, a particularly graceful fifth grader, was known to add turns to all of her steps, in every sequence, just for the challenge of it.

THEMES OF THE JUMP-ROPE TEXTS

Much like the world of themes found in the children's riddling studied by John McDowell (1979), the recorded texts of the rope games were spheres of the African American girls' culture. There were "1,2,3 Halleluya" and "Hey, D. J., let's sing that song," and "Boom Boom Tangle"—a rhyme about rap artists. Plus there were "All in Together," "Hey Consolation, Where Have You Been," "Girlscout, Girlscout, Do Your Duty," "Juice Juice, Let's Knock Some Boots," "D-I-S-H Choice, Do Your Footsies," "Challenge, Challenge 1,2,3," and "Kitty Cat Come, Gonna Be on Time, Cause the School Bell Rings at A Quarter to Nine." But these themes, the ones of religion, region, pop music, of group entry and exit, schooling, and even of plain step display in menu form, were out-shouted by "Big Mac," a commercial for the McDonald's Corporation.

As Cheyna, a fourth-grade African American girl had said, "Want to hear my favorite?" (Snap fingers on down beat. Accented syllables are capitalized)

Big MAC, Fillet FISH, Quarter POUNDer, French FRIES, Ice COKE,
Milk SHAKE, Foot

Fillet FISH, Quarter POUNDer, French FRIES, Ice COKE, Milk
SHAKE,

BOUNCE

Fillet FISH, Quarter POUNDer, French FRIES, Ice COKE, Milk
Shake,

HOP

Fillet FISH, Quarter POUNDer, French FRIES, Ice COKE, Milk
Shake,

TURN

Fillet FISH, Quarter POUNDer, French FRIES, Ice COKE, Milk
Shake,

CRISS

Big Mac appeared in twenty-three out of fifty-six live unrequested recordings of double dutch chants, closely followed by a follow-the-leader game, "Challenge Challenge, One, Two, Three." This contrasted with the rest of the active repertoire, of which two or three versions were recorded of each. First observed in mid-October, "Big Mac," and its occasional partner "Challenge Challenge," were the only chants jumped at recess until February. Most of the other rhymes did not appear at all until April. "Big Mac" represented forty percent of all the songs sung for double dutch, with "Challenge Challenge" representing thirty percent. The remainder totaled three to six percent, tallying another thirty percent. "Big Mac" was therefore not only the first jump-rope rhyme to appear in the school yard and not only the most frequently jumped, but, as we will see, also the one used for learning how to play the game of double dutch itself.

Collectors of jump-rope games have typically emphasized the antiquity of the games and rhymes, in part because of the archive methodology available, as discussed, and in part because of the inherent romance in finding things old. Paradoxically, the most significant rhyme for the players of this game was the newest one, invented by the McDonald's Corporation as a menu chant. Again and again the local jump-rope experts—the third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade girls—claimed that the "Big Mac" rhyme was commercial and approximately ten years old, but that the game was learned from their mothers and sisters. The dating of this particular chant was confirmed by the national public-relations office of the McDonald's Corporation, which indicated that the menu chants are periodically placed in local papers as part of a contest. It is significant that McDonald's has been a national sponsor of double dutch competitions since the late 1970s and that the only other long commercial text that emerged was in an interview setting: This was "R-E-E-B-O-K do your footsies the Reebok way." Reebok is also a national sponsor of double dutch competitions.

All of the new attempts at double dutch recorded in the school yard were done to the "Big Mac" rhyme. When Isha, a fifth-grade expert jumper, was asked what was the easiest rhyme, she answered, "Challenge Challenge," because "you just had to imitate what was done before you." When asked why the younger girls and the ones new to double dutch started with "Big Mac," she answered, "Because they don't have nothing else." Commercial culture is, for the kids of the school yard, the most basic of common culture.

The commercial is easily learned: It's short, it's quick, and it's "fun in the mouth." Children who are bused in from all sections of the city know it, and children from all economic levels have access to it. It may have been introduced by the corporate-sponsored leagues and ad campaigns and may

be a future classic example of the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), but it would not have continued if it did not serve some function. Adam Kendon, in his book *Conducting Interaction* (1990), talks about "movement coordination in social interaction" and the use of ritual to facilitate synchrony. The sound bytes of "Big Mac" may well serve to speed up the ritualization of entry into the game in a recess period that allows only fifteen minutes for play in this city.

In an environment where raw materials are inaccessible and consistently removed from the play time, it appears that the African American children from poorer neighborhoods, rich with an oral tradition, are teaching non-African Americans what can be done, as Isha says, "when you don't have nothing else." This is especially true of the play of girls, which is particularly repressed in the school yard by the institution of school itself. Here it is commercial culture that is the common denominator, both within an ethnic tradition and across ethnic traditions.

One of the most relevant texts on this topic is Newell's 1883 book *Games and Songs of American Children*. His essays "The Inventiveness of Children" and "The Conservatism of Children" address the dynamics inherent in play study, the idea of play as being both traditional and transitional, and the idea that children reconstruct and reinvent performances relevant to their complex lives. The key word is relevant. Valuable things are reused and recycled and retold. And as we will see, the repetition of the commercial rhyme may be fixed, but the variation and creativity in the game can be found in the foot work. In a sense, the folklorist begins with the text, but cannot stop there.

VIDEO TRANSCRIPTIONS OF DOUBLE DUTCH

The following are transcriptions of actual footage of the "Big Mac" game, filmed on two days in the spring of 1992. The clips are unique in that they capture two incidences of non-African American girls participating in the African American tradition of rope jumping. The first example is the first time R., a European American third grader, actually got a chance to jump, although she had been a turner of single rope African American games previously. The second example is an overt lesson in the art of double dutch itself, as given by African American girls to an immigrant girl from Hong Kong, and also to a Polish American girl.

The transcriptions show a basic diagram of the rope, and list a running time imprinted on the videotape in hours, minutes, and seconds. In this manner the transcript reflects specific frames of videotape and can be cross-referenced by time. The cross referencing of tapes by time turned out to be

rather significant and is a topic to which the concluding pages will be devoted.

The action is described in the middle column, and the audible conversation and game text is listed in the right-hand column. Following the principle, but not the style, of Ray Birdwhistell's kinesics, and Adam Kendon's studies of nonverbal communication, it was considered important to at least describe the basic body motion as a line of communication separate from the speech (Birdwhistell 1970; Kendon 1981). Actual kinesic transcriptions, from Birdwhistell to Laban, have proved too complex for most readers and, in a sense, give us more detail than is necessary for this level of analysis. (For an example of Laban's system of movement notation, see Hutchinson 1977). The advantage of video ethnography is that the footage is there to be reanalyzed over time, as more and more detailed levels of analysis become of interest. (For more on the recent attention given to the body in folklore studies, see Young 1993.)

Example A: The Single Rope Version of "Big Mac"

In the following transcription there is a demonstration of non-double dutch and double double dutch styles utilizing a single rope. Third- and second-grade girls Q., V., and S., all African American, and European American girl, R., took turns jumping. One to two singers sang as they jumped without doing any particular steps. A more experienced jumper joined in and the two jumped at once, facing each other, laughing. The last jumper performed the "Big Mac" steps and sang all the way from foot to criss, with a stop in the middle. She was angry when another girl tried to do joint jumping with her. They jumped past the honking bell, and this episode ended angrily when she was interrupted by another attempt at joint jumping.

Diagram	Time	(Action)	Voices
	10:40:15	(Q. jumps single rope, both feet, not double dutch style)	(no singing)
	10:40:27	(R. gets a turn, jumps, same way)	
	10:40:29	(A second African American girl, V., jumps in; they stop)	
	10:40:30	(R. again jumps)	"No, no, no"
	10:40:36	(Joint jumping of R. and V.)	Laughter of R. and V.

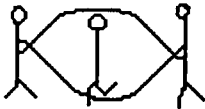
10:40:38	(R. tries again)	"Hey come on!"
10:40:43	(S. begins turn)	
10:40:51	(S. sings to herself)	"Quarter pounder, french fries, ice coke, milk shake, foot"
	(jumps non-d-d style)	
10:41:02	[school bell rings]	(Sound of bell, screams)
10:41:04	(V. jumps in to joint jump)	
	(A., a turner, yells)	"No, don't jump in."
	(S. gets angry, starts again.)	"Quarter pounder, french fries ice coke, milk shake, turn quarter pounder, french fries ice coke, milk shake, criss"
	(S. does required motions)	
10:41:17	(V. jumps in; they miss. S. gets angry. R. tries to collect the rope)	

There were several variations from the typical game here, reminding us that no game really is typical. The text itself was varied and began with "Quarter pounder, french fries," creating an even syncopation of the usual rhyme, making it slightly easier for this younger player. The format itself was different as a single rope, not a double rope, was being used. The style was different, as both before and after the double dutch style was being jumped a second player attempted to do joint jumping. And the intensity of the game itself was shaped by the honking of the bell.

Example B: The Double Rope Version of "Big Mac"

Here we have a distinct double dutch lesson, utilizing two ropes. Second-through sixth-grade girls, all African American, were instructing a Polish

American and immigrant girl from Hong Kong in the art of double dutch. Neither got very far, and the sixth grader instructing them had the others learn by standing in the middle of the ropes while trying to turn in a way that made it easy for them. The rope itself was flimsy and the wind was strong. As each got stuck, a young girl in the front jumped up and down shouting "Saved! Saved!" indicating that she had gone farther than these older girls in the overall competition. When the bell rang, there was much shrieking and shaking, and the young immigrant from Hong Kong was knocked over and began to cry.

Diagram	Time	(Action)	Voices
	10:46:50	(K., a second-grade Chinese immigrant is trying to learn double dutch)	"Big Mac fillet fish"
	10:47:01	(she misses) (Second-grade African American girl, who has ends, dances, turns to her audience, and points out)	
	10:47:05	(Three second graders dance in place) (Polish American sixth grader, enters) (She is told, nonverbally, to stand in the middle and lift her feet in place. She does. The other turner, her instructor, also a sixth grader, is checking to see which rope should be raised first)	"Saved! Saved!"
	10:47:12	[Off camera]	"One, two, three."
	10:47:15	(Girl steps in place, in the middle of the rope; fourth grader	Sixth grader says, "Do it again."

	on side nods that the right side should be turned first)	
10:47:20	(She jumps high, both feet together, and misses)	"Big Mac"
		Instructor says "I told you not to come down!" (honk)
10:47:27	[School bell rings] (Girls jump up and down. A nearby boy jumps in front of the camera and shakes his whole body. The Chinese girl gets knocked over.)	

Of interest in this clip is the capturing of cultural transmission from ethnicity to ethnicity, something undiscussed in the literature of the school yard, and also of the banging of one culture—school yard culture—into that of school instructional time (Pellegrini 1987; Hart 1993). The video camera captured not only the teaching of the game, and the competitive reaction of many of the players as they gauged their relative status, but the context of the school yard and how it affected the players themselves. The visible time stress at the ringing of the bell, which caused one observer to shake while another player was knocked over, thus emphasizes the utility of using a popular culture rhyme, such as Big Mac, for the sake of quick negotiation. At the same time, this also indicates the need to examine the reasons for the bell as a significant part of the game itself.

Both video clips captured variation in game text, language specific to the game, and examples of direct and indirect instruction. Both indicate that there is something about the timing of the ringing of the bell that shapes the game and the interaction around it and that can be said to be unique to the culture of the school yard.

BEYOND THE GAME: THE SECOND CAMERA

In order to make sense of patterns across these games, we can compare similar transcripts, as we did above, and then also comb through the footage of the wide-angle camera. With this survey of the macro footage, an interesting larger pattern emerged.

Consistently, at the end of the recess period, violent interactions were visible on the wide-angle screen. In glimpses from the micro footage, one can clearly see a definite rippling of anger, kicking, punching, and fighting during the transition back to the classroom. Typically within two minutes of the ringing of the bell, an almost palpable tension is trackable. In the macro footage alone, eight out of nine sample tapes showed distinctly violent conflict in the lining up transition, with six out of the eight violent interactions occurring less than one minute before the bell, and the other two occurring within two minutes of the bell. In more than half of the micro footage, taken of a variety of games, there are incidences, indirectly captured, of real fighting or direct violence. And, in all of these images, with only one exception, the tension occurs within a minute and a half of the ringing of the bell.

Victor Turner, symbolic anthropologist, has spent much of his career analyzing the liminal, in-between moments in rites of passage in tribal cultures (Turner 1974a). Although some attention has been paid to transitions in the sociology of face-to-face communication as studied by Goffman, the attention of folklorists to transitional times has been minimal. Some attention has been paid in the folk game literature to opening rituals like counting out rhymes (Goldstein 1971; Opie and Opie 1969; Sluckin 1981; Sutton-Smith 1981a), but these are usually viewed as pregame ceremonies, rituals designed for the facilitation of games' beginnings. The phenomenon under discussion presently is the lack of ritual in the school yard and its associated lack of transition at game's end.

The second camera allows us to see how the context shapes the game, beyond the interaction around the text. The study of the one genre, then, leads to the understanding of the ecology of the larger context. The advantage of extended ethnographic fieldwork in one place is that it allows us to see the significance of the place on the game, and the patterning over time. Superficial folk-game surveys that are panoramic mask larger contextual issues and indeed the crossing of ethnic boundaries, which are perhaps only visible over time. It was apparent that the children needed the entire school year to reach a point of intimacy with each other, as well as the researcher's needing that much time to observe the big picture in that place.

BEYOND THE CAMERA

The camera is seductive, as it seems to provide a form of documentation with less debate and more data. Yet, even when the editing is kept to a minimum and the shots are taken at the widest angle possible, no camera is objective. It too is the manifestation of decisions made by the photographer, ranging

from angle to height to light to the very decision as to when the tape begins and ends. The goal is not to present a new objectivity in folk game presentation, but rather to present the performances on the film or video back to as many participants as possible in order to collect yet more stories about the folk games as cultural markers.

When the adults at the Mill School viewed the above clips, several of the staff responded that the tapes were "too happy" and performance oriented, and many shared that they had never observed anything but "misbehavior" during recess. Many of the staff did become nostalgic about the games they had played during their childhoods; they noticed that although some were the same, many were different with new and different rules. The comment about misbehavior is significant, given that the staff generally had the opportunity to come to the school yard only in the last few minutes of recess, which I have documented as the time of most conflict. They indeed missed all the constructive cultural expressiveness and sharing that occurs in the earlier parts of the play period.

When the third- through fifth-grade girls, both African American and European American, viewed the clips, their reaction was delight, pride, and outright laughter. For several it was an opportunity to reflect upon their own process of learning how to "do double dutch." For Tanya, a fifth grader, it was a chance to comment on the misdirection of the above double dutch lesson. She had been taught to enter the ropes and begin by jumping in near the ends. In the above clip, the immigrant child from Hong Kong and, later, the Polish American girl, were being instructed in the middle of the rope, with the rope being turned from a stationary position around the jumper. This was considered to be much more difficult, indicating that there is an acknowledged art to instruction as well as performance.

Tanya, like many of her expert double dutch friends, started learning "how to jump" when she was six or seven years old. Her training, like theirs, was intensely visual and often meant observation without direct participation. "I started in like, first, or second grade, got to be first or second, because my, I never knew how to jump, but my cousin was in, my cousin was in the eighth grade and my cousin used to always play rope, and I used to always jump in they (*sic*) rope, and they used to get mad at me, and kick me back to my line." For Rica, an African American fourth grader, the process also involved the observation of older girls, and had to do with her "catching on" to the new songs. "This is how I learn because when people, like older people start jumping, yeah, like I caught on to the song, like Tamisha's sister, she'd be singing all these bunch of songs I don't know. And the next (day) they'd have two of them."

If we are going to be able to understand the process of the transmission of culture within the boundaries of one place, such as the school yard, as well as across the boundaries of that place, and across time, such reflections can be most insightful. The study of children as tradition bearers within an ethnic tradition and in a multiethnic setting sheds light on children's folklore as an area of cultural study, and not just cultural collection. Their process is more than aural, it is kinesthetic and intensely visual, and our process as fieldworkers can parallel it.