

Fellows



Deborah Broderson
Duke/IFK_Junior Fellow

Duration of fellowship
01. October 2001 bis 30. June 2002

Deborah Broderson

PROJECT TITLE

Building a Ludic City. The Development of the Urban Playground in the Twentieth Century Metropolis

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The urban playground is one of the unheralded products of the industrial revolution.

From its Germanic origins in the mid-nineteenth century, the playground has evolved to address the changing needs, both real and imagined, of urban populations around the world. The introduction of the children's playground into the fabric of the modern city is a reflection of numerous concerns about the nature of childhood and the organization of free time that have their origin in the nineteenth century and continue today. Despite the common perception of the playground as a space for the free play of children, designers and architects working in the past century have often deliberately planned the urban playground as a space of control and observation.

The children's playground reveals a great deal about the attitude to both child and adult alike of the society that sponsors it. Deborah Brodersons current research explores the relationship between the design of urban playgrounds and their equipment and the cultural, economic and political factors that influenced the development of twentieth century urban space.

How have spaces for organized play been designated within the urban landscape? What social and cultural mechanisms determined the acceptance or rejection of playgrounds during the period of their initial introduction and subsequent expansion? And how has the ideological program of the urban playground changed since its introduction over a century ago? Design decisions made on the urban playground continue to have profound implications for the lived environment of both adults and children.

CV

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