



Pat Bordman

## Two generations linking hands

"Step on a crack, break your Mother's back."  
"Hold your breath when you pass a cemetery."  
"If she stands on a spider, the rain falls beside 'er."  
"Lady bug, lady bug, fly away home."

These and other jokes, riddles, and sayings are part of the culture of childhood. Usually it is transmitted from child to child and the superstitions and games remain quite stable.

Occasionally adults try to get in on the act. Sharing the past and recreating it with your child can be a source of great pleasure for you both. But, passing on childhood lore is difficult when years of other thoughts have intruded. Only bits and pieces of a favorite game may be remembered.

One of the most enduring games played by children is a string game called Cat's Cradle. By tying a string into a loop, many designs can be created by twisting the string around the fingers. Usually played with a partner, it is the perfect game to pass along to the younger set. The trouble is figuring out how to do the looping.

NOW THERE IS a kit complete with a book of explanation and a fancy string to use. The book contains dozens of designs from the most basic to the very complex. It is illustrated with photographs using children's hands.

The accompanying string is one of the best for creating these sometimes confusing, sometimes funny designs. It is multicolored, smooth and soft. Best of all, it is the exact length needed and there are no knots in it!

This boxed set is called Cat's Cradles and Other String Figures, by Joost Elffer and Michael Schuyt. Published by Penguin Books, its cost is a little high at \$9.95, but it would be a lovely gift for an adult to share with a child.

Patricia Bordman, a freelance writer and photographer, has taught elementary school and conducted workshops and lectures on education. She is a Master's Degree candidate at Oakland University, specializing in Early Childhood.

Mrs. Bordman welcomes suggestions and comments. Please write her c/o The Observer-Eclectic Newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia 48150. • PATRICIA BORDMAN



Cat's Cradle is one way to bridge the gap between generations. (Photo by Pat Bordman)

## Holiday Fling

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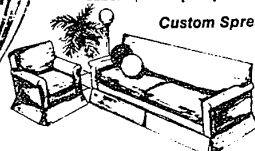
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## Library has language aids

Language materials to assist Indo-Chinese families newly arrived in the United States are now available through the audio visual section of the Avon Township Public Library Children's Department.

Vietnamese phrase books with accompanying cassette tapes, English-Lao and English-Khmer

phrasebooks, and English pronunciation lessons for Hmong are among materials recently acquired from the Washington-based Center for Applied Linguistics.

The library, at 210 W. University in Rochester, also will interloan books in foreign languages for any residents who desire them.

# TOYS "R" US

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