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The Yo-Yo

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The Yo-Yo

Obwohl schon über 2500 Jahre alt, wurde erst 1899 ein Patent auf das Jo-Jo erteilt. Populär wurde es jedoch erst viel später. Obwohl heute fast vergessen, war es eines der ersten Spielzeuge, die direkt an Kinder und nicht ihre Eltern vermarktet wurde.



Who *deserves* to be called a product's *inventor*: The first person to dream up a product? To produce a product? To patent a product? Or to *commercialize* it?

Let's take the example of the yo-yo. We know from Greek vases that children played with yo-yo like toys 2500 years ago. The word itself comes from the Philippines, where the toy was introduced in the early nineteenth century, *yóyo* being the Tagalog word *supposedly* meaning come and go. There is even speculation that versions of it with *razor*-sharp edges were used as weapons, almost like a boomerang.

The first U.S. patent for a yo-yo-like toy was *issued* in 1866, but it was not until 1928 that a Filipino immigrant named Pedro Flores *popularized* the toy. While working as a *porter* in a Santa Monica, California hotel, he demonstrated various yo-yo tricks to the guests. Flores made a key innovation in the yo-yo. Instead of *tying* a knot around the *axle*, he used a *loop*, which allowed the yo-yo to sleep or *spin* and to perform other tricks. Flores's demonstrations proved so popular that he opened the Yo-yo Manufacturing Company in Santa Barbara. Flores is also *credited with promoting* the yo-yo *contests* that helped *fuel* the *craze*.

Then Donald Duncan – the *entrepreneur* who marketed the first successful *parking meter* – bought out Flores's company. Duncan *succeeded* in turning yo-yos into the first modern children's toy craze using new mass *advertising* techniques. He sent out teams to demonstrate yo-yo tricks. In fact, Duncan *hired* Flores to serve as one of the first 42 original yo-yo demonstrators.

Flores' and Duncan's yo-yos were among the very first toys marketed directly to children rather than to their parents. Unlike earlier toys, such as *Lincoln Logs* or dolls, yo-yos weren't *intended* to *socialize* boys and girls into *distinctive gender roles*. Nor were they sold as educational, even though yo-yos can illustrate such principles of physics as motion, *friction*, *inertia*, *acceleration*, momentum, and velocity.

Not surprisingly, the yo-yo has had its ups-and-downs, only to *bounce* back. Today, it's possible to buy a yo-yo formed from magnesium alloy with a *ball bearing* axel for more than \$400.

has a right to ... creator

make money with

*see list

*see list

awarded

made popular ... doorman

*see list ... spindle

ring ... rotate

Production

attributed with marketing

competitions ... power ... trend

businessman

*see list

managed

promotion

employed

*see list

meant ... *see list

typical ... *see list

rubbing

*see list, speeding up

spring

mixture ... *see list

In a children's world dominated by video games, fewer kids know how to "walk the dog" or "rock the baby" or make the yo-yo go "round the world." Still, we might remember that today's highly commercialized world of mass manufactured children's toys began with the lowly yo-yo. ■

María Elena Soliño/Steven Mintz

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<i>acceleration</i>	Beschleunigung
<i>advertise, to</i>	werben, anzeigen
<i>alloy</i>	Legierung
<i>axle</i>	Achse
<i>ball bearing</i>	Kugellager
<i>bounce, to</i>	springen, hüpfen
<i>commercialize, to</i>	kommerzialisieren
<i>contest</i>	Wettbewerb
<i>craze</i>	Fimmel, Wahn
<i>credit so. with sth., to</i>	jdm. etw. zuschreiben
<i>deserve, to</i>	verdienen
<i>distinctive</i>	ausgeprägt, unterscheidend
<i>entrepreneur</i>	Unternehmer
<i>friction</i>	Reibung
<i>fuel, to</i>	anheizen, schüren
<i>gender role</i>	Geschlechterrolle
<i>hire, to</i>	einstellen, anheuern
<i>inertia</i>	(Massen-) Trägheit
<i>intend, to</i>	beabsichtigen, vorsehen
<i>inventor</i>	Erfinder
<i>issue, to</i>	erteilen, ausstellen
<i>Lincoln Logs</i>	Holzbaukasten
<i>loop</i>	Schleife, Schlaufe
<i>manufacture, to</i>	herstellen, fertigen
<i>parking meter</i>	Parkuhr
<i>popularize, to</i>	bekannt machen
<i>porter</i>	Portier, Träger
<i>promote, to</i>	fördern, bewerben
<i>razor</i>	Rasierer
<i>socialize, to</i>	sozialisieren
<i>spin, to</i>	drehen, kreiseln
<i>succeed, to</i>	erfolgreich sein, gelingen
<i>supposedly</i>	angeblich, vermeintlich
<i>tie, to</i>	binden, knüpfen