Home Page

Clement Chau, PhD

Learning | Design | Technology

Hello,

a bit about me:

I am a learning technology designer and researcher with over 10 years of experience in product design, child development, and educational technology. Entrepreneurial by nature with a keen sense of innovation, I have created over 100 games and toy products for young children, including numerous award winners and 4+ star reviews in the US and abroad. As an academic by training in the field of applied child development, I have a particular interest in the role of new media technologies in engaging children and families to promote social connection and positive youth development.

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Resume

**About Me**

Dedicated and creative learning researcher with multifaceted expertise in product design, child development, and educational technology. Entrepreneurial with a keen focus on innovation. Proven record as a director and manager of interdisciplinary teams that leverage analytics and user research to turn vision into award-winning for youth and children.

**Experience**

LeapFrog Enterprises, Inc.   
DIRECTOR OF LEARNING  
2016 - present

Manage a team of learning design specialists to create and produce award-winning learning toys, educational games, and early childhood book products. Establish dual-brand curriculum strategy for LeapFrog and parent company VTech Toys. Conduct primary and secondary research, lead product ideation and user research, and establish product roadmap.

Children’s Media Association

PRESIDENT

2017-2019

Founded the Bay Area chapter of Children’s Media Association and served as the inaugural chapter president. Wrote the chapter charter and application that established the local chapter. Registered over 80 members in the chapter’s inaugural year.

Kidaptive, Inc.

DIRECTOR OF EARLY LEARNING  
2015-2016

Owned and managed the early learning business including recruiting and interfacing with partners. Established and managed the early learning analytics framework. Collaborated with psychometric and assessment specialists on learning analysis and statistical calibrations.

LeapFrog Enterprises, Inc.

SENIOR LEARNING DESIGNER

2010-2015

Oversaw the curriculum and design for 70+ preschool toys and learning games. Authored content based on proprietary scope & sequence. Managed work streams between design, development, and marketing. Interfaced with designers, developers, QA, and engineers.

PONTE AND CHAU CONSULTING INC.

CO-FOUNDER

2006 - PRESENT

Managed a team of domain experts including health specialists, educators and designers. Successfully designed and executed independent user testing and efficacy evaluation. Clients included national agencies, universities, schools, non-profits, and start-ups.

**Education**

PhD, Applied Child Development   
2014

*Tufts University, Medford, MA*

Dissertation: Positive Technological development for Young Children in the Context of Children’s Mobile Apps

MA, Applied Child Development

2006

*Tufts University, Medford, MA*

Thesis: Associations between online civic engagement and personal technological

characteristics among college students

BA, Music and Psychology (Minor: Computer Science)

2004

*Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO*

**Awards**

RESEARCH-PRACTICE INTEGRATION AWARD  
Tufts University, 2014

TOY AND GAME INVENTOR OF THE YEAR

Chicago Toy & Game Group, 2013

Latest Projects

(Please see separate folder for all images)

**Project 1**

Title: LeapFrog Magic Adventures Globe

Description: Designed for children ages 5 to 10 years, this interactive globe includes a smart stylus that can tap anywhere on the 10” globe to play live-action videos or animations on the integrated video screen. As the lead education and learning designer for this project, I provided guidance on game design and oversaw the writing of all dialogue scripts. I also collaborated closely with the BBC to curate, review, and edit over 5 hours of live-action video footage showcasing the culture, landmarks, animals, and geography of all 195 countries around the world.

**Project 2**

Title: RockIt Twist

Description: Designed for children ages 4 to 8 years, this rotatable handheld gaming system is inspired by the fidget spinner craze and departs from touch-screen gaming to offer a range of highly tactile, colorful, light-up controls such as buttons, dials, spinners, slider, switches and a D-Pad. I served as the lead learning and usability designer of the base UI and contributed to the design and content development of the 12 preloaded games covering a range of curriculum including literacy, math, problem-solving and creativity.

*Toy of the Year Finalist, 2020.*

**Project 3**

Title: LeapSearch

Description: A kid-safe web browser for LeapFrog’s proprietary kid tablets with white-list features and robust parent controls. I directed the curation team that ingested, curated, and tagged over 2,000 web videos, links and photographs for the LeapSearch database.

**Project 4**

Title: LeapFrog Academy

Description: LeapFrog Academy is a subscription-based online comprehensive interactive learning program for children ages 3 to 6 years. The platform includes over 2000 games, ebooks, videos and activities covering a whole-child curriculum including reading, early math, science, social studies, social-emotional skills, health, and creativity. I headed the education team that wrote the curriculum for all of the games and activities and designed the adaptive assessment feature that tailors the learning experience for each individual user.

**Project 5**

Title: LeapBand

Description: An interactive fitness tracker for children ages 4 to 7 years that encourages kids to stay active with fun daily creative movement challenges and health habit lessons. An included iOS app synced activity data for additional game play and activity tracking reports. I was responsible for usability and focus group testing for the content experience.

*Dr Toys’ 10 Best Active Toys, 2014*

**Project 6**

Title: Creativity Camera

Description: In collaboration with IDEO, this protective phone case transforms an iPhone into a pretend point-and-shoot camera. Once inserted into the case, the phone is locked into the creativity camera app that offers both open-ended photo activities and learning games that encourage kids to explore letters, shapes and facial expressions as they complete photo-taking missions. The specially designed protective case also includes a large shuttle button that interacted with gameplay. I was responsible for the design of the game activities and the usability testing of the case.

*Toy and Game Innovation Award, Electronic Adaptation, Chicago Toys and Games Group, 2013*

((I included 6 projects now. Please make sure the code is dynamic enough that I will be able to add more later))

Publications

**Doctoral Thesis**

Chau, C. (2014). Positive Technological development for Young Children in the Context of Children’s Mobile Apps. *Dissertation Abstract International, 75*, 10(E). ISBN: 9781303986192.

This dissertation examines the extent to which children’s tablet software applications, commonly called apps, are designed appropriately to promote the optimal development of preschool children aged three to five. This study extends previous research, particularly the theoretical frameworks of developmentally appropriate practice and Bers’ positive technological development. The researcher argues that, for children’s mobile apps to be developmentally meaningful, they need to satisfy three conditions: (1) apps must be designed appropriately to accommodate the developmental stages and needs of young children; (2) content must be designed to promote young children’s development in the areas of cognition, academic skills, social-emotional skills, and physical development; and (3) digital interactions engage children in activities and behaviors that foster optimal developmental assets. This study examined 100 children’s apps from the Apple’s App Store in regard to design, content, and features. The findings underscore the need for developmentally meaningful children’s mobile apps for preschool children.

**Master’s Thesis**

Chau, C. (2006). Associations between online civic engagement and personal technological characteristics among college students. *Masters Thesis Abstract International,* AAT 1436328.

This thesis describes a cross-sectional study that looked at the level of online civic engagement among college students and its association with their technological experience and characteristics. In particular, this study applied the positive youth development framework to examine a) how college students differ in their uses of the Internet for pro-social purposes, and b) how these differences might be associated with variations in their technological experiences and their attitudes about technology. Results showed that online civic engagement among the eight-five college students in the study could be described in terms of three underlying constructs interpreted as perceived technological efficacy, social uses of technology, and technological contribution. Variations in these characteristics were associated with the extent to which participants demonstrated uses of online technologies for civic and pro-social purposes.

**Papers**

Ponte, I., Rothbaum, F., & Chau, C. (Under Review). Preschool teachers’ beliefs about behavior management in Beijing, Tokyo, and Boston. *Developmental Psychology.*

Kuh, L., Ponte, I., Chau, C., & Valentine, D. (2014). Taking it outside: Rethinking and reclaiming outdoor play. In *Thinking Critically About Environments for Young Children: Bridging Theory and Practice,* (Ed. L. Kuh). Pp. 69-88. New York: Teacher College Press.

Bers, M., Lynch, A.D., & Chau, C. (2014). Positive Technological Development: The Multifaceted Nature of Youth Technology Use towards Improving Self and Society. In *Constructing the Self in a Digital World,* (Eds. Ching, C. C. & Foley, B. J.). Pp. 110-136. Cambridge University Press.

Kuh, L., Ponte, I., & Chau, C. (2013). The impact of a natural playscape installation on young children’s play behaviors. *Children, Youth and Environments, 23*(2), pp. 49-77.

Chau, C. (2011). *YouTube* as a participatory culture. In *Youth as Media Creators*, a special edition of *New Directions for Youth Development*. (Ed. Marina Bers). Jossey-Bass.

Bers, M., Beals, L., Chau, C., Satoh, K., & Khan, N. (2010). Virtual worlds for young people in a program context: Lessons from four case studies. In Khine, M. S. and Saleh, I. M. (Eds.), *New Science of Learning: Cognition, Computers, and Collaboration in Education.*

Bers, M., Beals, L., Chau, C., Satoh, K., Blume, B., DeMaso, D., & Gonzalez-Heydrich, J. (2010). Use of a virtual community as a psychosocial support system in pediatric transplantation. *Pediatric Transplantation*, *14*(2), 261-267.

Bers, M. & Chau, C. (2010). The virtual campus of the future: Stimulating and simulating civic action in a virtual world. *Journal for Computing in Higher Education, 22*(1), 1-23.

Chau, C. (2009). A review of *A New Literacies Sampler* by Knobel and Lankshear. *E-Learning and Digital Media,* *6*(4), 422-423.

Bers, M., Chau, C., Satoh, K., & Beals, L. (2007). Virtual Communities of Care: Online peer networks with post-organ transplant youth. In *Proceedings of the Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning Conference*.

Bers, M. & Chau, C. (2007). Technology and Early Childhood Education. In Rebecca S. New and Moncrieff Cochran (Eds.), *Early Childhood Education: An International Encyclopedia*. Vol. 3, pp. 798-801.  Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.

Chau, C., & Bers, M. (2006). Positive Technological Development: A systems approach to understanding youth development when using educational technologies. In *Proceedings of the International Conference of the Learning Sciences.* (Eds. S. Barab, K. Hay, & D. Hickey). LEA Publishing, 902-903.

Chau, C., Mathur, A., & Bers, M. (2006). Active Citizenship through Technology: Collaboration, connection, and civic participation. In *Proceedings of the International Conference of the Learning Sciences*. (Eds. S. Barab, K. Hay, & D. Hickey). LEA Publishing, 904-905.

Bers, M. & Chau, C. (2006). Fostering civic engagement by building a virtual city. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 11*(3), 748-770.

Talks

**Professional**

City of STEM Science Festival. Panelist. The Toy Association.

Oct 2020

Panel discussion on the topic of learning STEAM through play and toys as part of a virtual science festival in metro-LA.

The Genius of Play. Panelist. The Toy Association.

Jun 2019

Panel discussion presented to congressional staffers on Capitol Hill on the role of toys and play in early childhood development, education, and STEM.

Podcast Interview. We Are Teachers.

Oct 2010.

Discussed the role of games and screen-based technology in today’s learning ecosystem and some criteria that teachers can use to evaluate what games can support their teaching.

Live Webcast Panel. Panelist.

Jun 2010

Panel discussion with Henry Jenkins (MIT) and Mark Warshaw (The Alchemists) on topics related to navigating new media and learning.

Fred Forward Roundtable. Panelist. Fred Rogers Center.

Jan 2011, Oct 2011  
Contributed to the development of a theoretical framework for quality in digital children’s media.

The Dust or Magic Institute. Presenter. Children’s Technology Review.

Nov 2010  
Demo and discussion of a new interactive stylus learn-to-read platform.

**Academic**

American Educational Research Association Conference

April 12, 2016

Adaptive learning & parent communication. In the panel *Learning from Educational Media at Home: Principles and Practices for Working with Families.*

American Educational Research Association Conference

April 15, 2012

The Outdoor Play Inventory: A time-sampling observation protocol for assessing children's play in outdoor playgrounds.

Digital Media and Learning Conference

February 19, 2010

When worlds collide: Real politics in the *World of Warcraft* universe. In the Pecha Kucha series *From Fan Activism to Political Activism: Participatory Democracy around Popular Media Affinity Groups*

Learning in a Participatory Culture Conference

May 2, 2009

(Keynote Presentation)From participatory culture to learning ecologies*.*

Society of Research in Child Development Conference

March 21, 2007.

(Symposium, Chair) Developmental Technologies: Positive uses of technology for youth learning and development. Chair and Organizer.

American Educational Research Association Conference

April 9, 2007

Using a 3D virtual environment to foster college-community connections.

Head Start National Research Conference

June 26, 2006

The interface of Chinese and American culture in an urban Head Start center.

American Educational Research Association Conference

April 10, 2006

Exploring the relationship between educational technology and youth development: A case study of LEGO summer camp.

American Psychological Association Convention

August 21, 2005

Positive technological development: A research methodology for exploring relationships between youth development and educational technologies.