Culture

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A Message from the Chair Michael Schudson UC San Diego

Monica Lewinsky's story may well come to dominate historical accounts of the Clinton administration. But today, prospects for the President's removal are fading fast. Before the whole business becomes yesterday's news, there are a number of questions to examine sociologically. One that intrigues me is this: Why is there so large a gulf between Washington insiders and the general public? For months, Washington insiders and the news media have insisted on the gravity of it all. The public, titillated, was unmoved. Clinton's approval ratings in the polls remained high. Why?

Part of the answer is simply that Washington political insiders live in a different world from the rest of us. They understand themselves — and rightly so — as a distinctive culture. In 1991 and 1992, when I interviewed Washington insiders about Watergate's impact on the country, no phrase popped up more often than "In this town...." You have to understand, my interviewees would say, that "in this town" such-and-such is taken very seriously or "in this town, when someone says x it means y."

"In this town" is a phrase with multiple overtones. It positioned me instantly as an outsider, that is, someone who could not really understand. It was a way of saying, "Look, I'll try my best to explain, but you can't really understand because it's so different here."

"In this town" also positioned the speaker as a self-reflective person, someone with a critical distance on his or her world, unawed by the splendor of Washington. It was never "In Washington." It was not even very often, "inside the

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Troubling Emotions: The Panic Over Moral Panics James M. Jasper

Are moral panics, like pornography, all in the eye of the beholder? Are sociologists who use the concept simply denigrating political mobilization they dislike? Nicola Beisel and Brian Donovan (1998a) seem to think so, for they charge that sociologists use the term mostly to refer to rightwing crusades and not to political action they favor. It is an old tradition in social-movements research to analyze movements we like differently from those we don't, so Beisel and Donovan appear to be on to something. Their main charge is that the term panic implies a "disproportionate" response to a social problem, something that can only be judged if the researcher is willing to make a claim about what the "objective" or "rational" response would be. Instead, in the eyes of researchers, panics are emotional, a focus that "diminishes the rationality and power" of those behind them. Beisel and Donovan have decided to attack the concept of moral panics (in the pages of Culby criticizing the version presented in Goode and Ben-Yehuda's Moral Panics. I believe the heart of this debate

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The Art Faculty of the Mind Albert Bergesen University of Arizona

A new approach to the scientific study of art is proposed based on solving the central problem that faces anyone trying to explain artistic behavior: how is it that each painting is unique, reflecting the creativity of the artist, yet at the same time structured in a particular way, following the rules of an identifiable art historical style. Each Jackson Pollock painting is unique and all Pollock's are different from all deKooning's. Yet both artists paint within the same rule governed style, Abstract Expressionism. How can such artistic behavior be both creative and governed by the rules of an art historical style at the same time? The answer lies in turning art history on its head. Instead of the traditional focus upon art styles as descriptive taxono-

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Beltway," which would suggest either a geographic location or a collective state of mind. "In this town" identified a society, a whole way of life, a culture, folkways and mores.

So what is it about this town? That's a great topic for the sociology of culture. It is too often assumed that politics is about institutions and interests, as if institutions and interests are not themselves cultural. (If a culture of politics is recognized at all, people take it to be material for fiction or, perhaps, for an ironic anthropology that plays up the primitive, mythic, and ritualistic in Washington. The latter is exemplified in J. McIver Weatherford's 1985 study of Congress, *Tribes on the Hill*. This work is insightful and interesting without ever finding the heart of the matter.)

The culture of insider Washington is distinctive in a variety of ways, of which I note just two. First, in Washington, party identification is very, very strong, while in the rest of the country party identification is weak and growing weaker. The parenthetical phrase the newspapers affix to every Congressional representative — "(Dem-MD)" or "(Rep-N.D.)" — is practically a physical appendage of Washington persons. Party matters. That is the rule in the governing circles. It is the rare exception for Americans generally.

Second, from the sixties on, and especially from the women's movement on, Americans have grown accustomed to recognizing that "the personal is political." But in Washington, however, and to a lesser degree in state capitals, the inverse is true: "the political is personal." If you or I tune in the evening news or pick up the morning paper, we are stretching ourselves to be informed about a world of Important Things beyond the matters of our own everyday lives and everyday gossip. When people of the Washington governing classes do the same thing, it is an easy extension of their everyday lives and especially their everyday gossip. The Washington Post is for Beltway insiders a combination of Lingua Franca, the Chronicle of Higher Education, and the Culture newsletter. The people they read about may very well be Important People but, even more, they are People I Know or People Connected To People I Know.

Nothing can be understood about the Republicans' enmity toward Bill Clinton without knowing how salient party identification is in "this town" of Washington. Nothing can be understood about the deep sense of disappointment, anger, and betrayal Democrats feel toward Clinton without knowing that in this town the political is personal. Nothing can be understood about the impeachment proceedings without seeing that the depth of party feeling and the enmity between the Republican and Democratic moieties trumps the anger the Democrats feel toward this President. And nothing can be understood about the split between Washington insiders and the rest of us without knowing that the general public does not share in the central subcultural elements that make Washington "this town."

Some ten years ago I was trying to figure out what made Ronald Reagan such a wildly popular president. Why had he taken the country by storm? What wave of popular approval was allowing him to dismantle the federal government? As I thought about that, I asked a graduate student to check out the Gallup polls so I could have a dramatic figure about Reagan's unprecedented popularity. The student returned with the news that Reagan was not popular, at least, that he had not been popular in his first three years in office. No, that's wrong, I said, You must have the wrong figures.

The student had the right figures. He and I (Elliot King and Michael Schudson, "The Illusion of Ronald Reagan's Popularity" in M. Schudson (ed.) The Power of News, 1995, published in shorter form in Columbia Journalism Review in 1987) showed that (a) Ronald Reagan's approval ratings in his first years in office to have been the lowest approval ratings for any President since Gallup began regularly asking the question in the Truman era; and (b) the news media consistently reported and Washington insiders obviously believed that Ronald Reagan was triumphantly popular, the poli data notwithstanding.

My favorite example was the New York Times for March 18, 1981, when on the bottom of page 22 a news item reported the latest Gallup report that showed Reagan's approval to be the lowest in polling history for a newly elected president, while James Reston in his op-ed column noted without irony that Congress was about to pass Reagan's first draconian budget because the representatives were reluctant to vote against so popular a president.

I've been suspicious of Washington opinion ever since (and grateful for the much maligned opinion polls).

Why the disparity between what the public thought and what the political insiders thought the public thought? The peculiarity of Washington culture offers a partial answer. Remember, for instance, that the Washington establishment generally detested Jimmy Carter. Carter was too standoffish and unsocial, even billing congressional leaders for breakfasts at the White House. Reagan and his aides, immediately after the election, not only began meeting Washington leaders but, in sharp contrast to the Carter White House. attending Georgetown parties. Meanwhile, not only had Reagan beaten Carter (with a little help from the Iran hostage crisis and a struggling economy), Republicans won a Senate majority for the first time in a generation. Inside Washington, capturing the Senate mattered enormously in both symbolic and real terms. Momentum was with the Republicans, the Democrats were in disarray, and Reagan's effective aides promoted their legislative agenda. The result were some early victories (including the budget that squeaked through the House in May, 1981, 218-214) adding enormously to the local perception of Reagan's magic.

Two centuries ago, James Madison knew the capital would have its own climate of opinion. He wanted it to. He wanted representatives to be at a distance from their constituents. He believed the deliberation in Congress would purify decision-making and help express the public good.

Today, the distance Madison hoped for has come to pass, though not quite in the way he intended. Sometimes, the view from Washington may be loftier and more far-seeing

than what we have at home. But more often the peculiar culture of the District of Columbia has its own blinders. These blinders are not fully accounted for by a listing of campaign contributions. The distorted vision inside the Beltway comes not from what powers pour into Washington but from the parochialism that flows outward from this town.

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revolves around the challenging issue of emotions and how to analyze them. Here, as elsewhere, emotions get contrasted with things like power and rationality and strategy, rather than being seen as part of these. Like culture more generally, emotions are not distinct causal billiard balls, but a omnipresent component of all action. In addition to being treated as distinct "things," emotions are often attributed to entities such as newspapers and formal organizations and segments of the public that, strictly speaking, cannot actually have emotions. Then they can be dismissed because they smack of the "group mind" thinking of earlier generations of scholars. Emotions will remain a treacherous minefield as long as we continue to ignore them. We must pay more attention to them, not less; we must learn to identify and analyze them more carefully. Then they might derail fewer debates. And not only in the field of social movements, but in cultural sociology and sociology in gen-

Moral panics are simply one example of the problem. Beisel and Donovan attack Erich Goode's and Nachman Ben-Yehuda's Moral Panics by associating Goode and Ben-Yehuda with - ouch - the collective behavior tradition most popular in the 1950s. In Beisel and Donovan's eyes, and that of most students of social movements, the collective-behavior approach (based on mass society theory and the like) has been soundly and properly superseded by resource-mobilization and political-process models with their gritty empiricism and hard structural and organizational metaphors. Goode is actually one of the few sociologists today willing to write a book with collective behavior in the title, so he does not think that approach, and the empirical boundaries it represents (studying social movements alongside fads and panics rather than alongside organizations and electoral politics) is dead.

Raising the banner of resource mobilization is risky, especially for those who care about culture. Important sensibilities and intellectual interests were lost when resource mobilization theories displaced collective behavior in the 1960s and 1970s, including cultural constructionism and serious attention to emotions. The older tradition had drawn on the literature on social problems and deviance, allowing attention to how grievances and even collective actors get defined. With resource mobilization, objective group "interests" are assumed to be there already, ready to drive protest when the opportunity arises. A willingness to protest is simply assumed, and cultural processes can be safely ignored. A lot of collective behavior research had indeed done a

poor job of looking at meanings and emotions, which often seemed to be held by groups rather than by individuals. They were replaced by a tool kit of metaphors such as networks, formal organizations, competition among protest organizations, states and structural opportunities, and a number of other concepts that leave little room for anything that went on inside people's heads (except the occasional calculation of costs and benefits). There is some irony in the former chair of the culture section embracing resource-mobilization theory, especially since there have been numerous efforts in recent years to graft some culture onto mobilization and process models, as well as efforts to go beyond these dominant paradigms altogether.

Unfortunately, the culture added to models of social movements has been rather thin, a highly cognitive world of grids and classifications and worldviews, with an occasional moral rule sprinkled in (Jasper, 1997:chap. 4). There are few emotions anywhere in this work, since the recent cultural wave (and not just in the study of politics) seems to accept the mobilization theorists' view that emotions would make humans appear irrational (as many collective behavior theorists painted them). Nonsense. Emotions are part of all action, from the most rational to the least. A sense of fear is compatible with cold strategic calculation. When political actors make mistakes it is more often because of incorrect cognitions (wrong information) than strong passions. Further, most of the important concepts in models of social movements derive much of their causal force from the emotional dynamics they contain, unrecognized by analysts (Jasper, 1998). Cultural sociologists are guilty of a similar bias against emotions.

The charge of irrationality is often part of the concept of moral panics, based on the claim that the panic is a disproportionate (and, implicitly, emotional rather than a rational) response to a social problem. On one side, Goode and Ben-Yehuda build disproportionality into their definition of a moral panic; on the other Beisel and Donovan seem to want to rule it of court ab initio. Silly terms of debates inevitably force both sides into faulty stances.

By misunderstanding emotions, these two pairs of authors have fallen into an old trap in political analysis, in which a disproportionate amount of blood has been spilled: debates over the rationality of protestors. Goode and Ben-Yehuda insist that moral panics differ from other collective action because they are irrational (because disproportionate); Beisel and Donovan follow the last thirty years of social-movement research in insisting strongly on protestors'

rationality (and by waving the banner of resource mobilization they seem to define rationality as the pursuit of material interests). Although this is a dense issue, I find the entire debate misguided. We must first distinguish irrationality of means from irrationality of ends. It is almost impossible to establish the latter. A group willing to martyr itself for its cause is irrational under cost-benefit thinking. but this shows the limits of that form of thinking; martyrdom is apparently supremely satisfying, a kind of moral and symbolic victory. As for irrationality of means, political actors sometimes make mistakes. And they are frequently misinformed. But only if they cannot learn from their mistakes can we begin to think they may be irrational. Commentators often label protestors irrational because they misspecify the protestors' goals. Antinuclear activists, for instance, may not expect to shut down a power plant, but feel that their protest will strengthen efforts elsewhere or reinforce the solidarity of their own group (Jasper, 1997:chap. 8). When protestors have strong emotions, this does not necessarily render them irrational. All social action, political and otherwise, entails a range of emotions that help propel it, including voting, business deals, and eating a meal.

Writers on moral panics are always tempted to show that the threat is "really" small, since disproportionality highlights the cultural construction that goes into the panic. To me, this is a fair move (as long as it stops short of charges of irrationality), especially in cases where there is good evidence, as in the absence of Satanist rituals behind child abuse. Often, however, arguments like this are a little like arguments that "culture" is more important than "structure": they miss the point of how the two are inseparable and related. On the one hand, a panic is still a panic whether or not there is a significant threat. On the other, the panic is shaped by the interaction between mobilization/construction and the available "evidence" (or what is accepted as evidence by some of the parties involved). For instance, Cynthia Gordon and I (1996) tried to show the parallels between protest against environmental threats (in our case, an incinerator) and social threats (a jail barge). The psychological response to threat was similar in the two cases, but the anti-incinerator movement was able to find much more evidence, respectably scientific, to bolster their case as well as (partly because of the evidence) a greater number of organizational allies. The quality of protestors' evidence matters less for their actions and feelings than for the response they get from others.

To show the ability of an organization or profession to ignite a moral panic even when there is little "objective" threat, it seems to me, is precisely to demonstrate its power and possibly its rationality (since it is doing so for other, probably political, purposes, which evidence of disproportionality may uncover). Some of those being manipulated (if that can be demonstrated) may be making mistaken choices, but those pulling the strings usually still know what they are doing.

Beisel and Donovan's argument that there is a contra-

diction between "understanding panics as social constructions and defining them as disproportionate responses to social problems is too relativist for my taste. We live in a culturally constructed world, to be sure, but that does not mean that no evidence can ever be brought to bear on social issues. Panics differ in their evidentiary base. There is virtually no evidence for Satanist conspiracies or the carcinogenic effects of computer screens; there is better evidence for the health risks of high-temperature incinerators and hazardous waste dumps; and we understand pretty well what happens as the result of a nuclear accident (as well as the probabilities of many kinds of accidents). In other kinds of cases, such as abortion, there is less disagreement over its prevalence than over its moral implications. No matter what the "objective" evidence — and I do not mean to exaggerate its objectivity -- panics over these problems can have similar dynamics.

On the other hand, the fact that we can sometimes assess the evidentiary base of a panic does not imply that we should define panics as only those mobilizations based on weak or nonexistent evidence. The mobilization processes. protest tactics, and beliefs and feelings of participants — in other words the basic dynamics of a moral panic — may be similar regardless of the strength of the evidence. The panickers believe the evidence just as strongly whether the sociologist does or not. None of the emotional dynamics of a panic need refer at all to the "objective reality" of the problem being addressed, although it can. Certain kinds of issues may have different emotional dynamics than others: we can find villains in the nuclear industry more easily than we can for diffuse air pollution, perhaps; outrage on behalf of others (such as children) differs from indignation and hurt when we feel we have been offended. I would prefer to understand such emotions than to try to relate them to some body of evidence.

One thing I like about the concept of moral panics is its ability to draw on disparate sociological literatures, including social problems, deviance, social movements, culture, organizations, and occupations. Rather than aiming only to refine academic theories, it begins and ends with a real-world phenomenon that non-academics might care about. It is also a catchy phrase that non-sociologists can understand and appreciate. Undergraduates will remember the idea after their intro course, even their college career, has ended; they may exercise some skepticism as a result. It is partly this ability to intervene in public discourse that worries Beisel and Donovan, who seem to think that this power encourages subtle ideological bias on the part of researchers. Instead, I think it often makes their biases explicit, and their work more

There are risks in the concept of moral panics, to be sure, especially that of mis-specifying who is having what emotions. Whether we call them panics or crusades, much of the action takes place in highly bureaucratized settings: courtrooms, editorial pages, police headquarters, public hearings, Sunday services, legislatures, and so on. Are these opinion makers panicking? Not in the sense of a crowd flee-

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ing a fire. They are taking advantage of salient beliefs and fears among their audiences in order to advance their agendas. It is the audiences' feelings that make up the panic — yet very few researchers study these. If we understood feelings of threat, dread, anguish, and outrage, we might better sort out the debate over moral panics. It would also help us understand an enormous amount of political mobilization, and not just in moral panics and crusades. But this requires extensive ethnographic research, often among people we don't especially like (on these difficulties, see Blee, forthcoming). It also would entail a psychological sensitivity that most sociologists resist. Without this important step, though, we are stuck hurling definitions and distinctions at one another.

It is not clear to me what Goode and Ben-Yehuda gain, other than Beisel and Donovan's ire, by insisting that a moral panic must involve a disproportionate response. Goode and Ben-Yehuda say that disproportionality is built into the term "panic," but this seems wrong. A crowd in a flaming theater may panic — quite justifiably (if more die because of the panic, then the individuals were fatally mistaken, but not necessarily irrational). If the concept focused on the felt emotions and actions, it would not need to ask questions about proportionality. Insisting on this kind of definition transforms moral panics from a flexible conceptual mechanism into something more like a theory to be tested, then either rejected or confirmed.

Beisel and Donovan aim too high in one way and too low in another. Too high because they are really only criticizing Goode and Ben-Yehuda's definition of moral panics. not its more general usage. Too low, because the rich psychological dynamics of moral panics can help us generate concepts that are applicable, not just to "moral reform movements," but to social movements more generally, and even to political action at its broadest. Goode and Ben-Yehuda, in their concern to isolate a type of politics called moral panics, also do less than they could to generate concepts that could be applied to a wide range of political phenomena. A whole range of negative emotions, including feelings of threat, anger, hatred, and anxiety, permeate politics. Contrary to resource-mobilization and political-process assumptions, most protestors are spurred to action by something they dislike rather than by some opportunity or goal they like (Jasper, 1997).

Goode and Ben-Yehuda distinguish (unclearly, in my opinion) moral crusades from moral panics (1994:20). By their definition, panics are disproportionate responses, which crusades may or may not be. Crusades are organized by moral entrepreneurs, whereas panics may or may not be. Panics seem to be closer to spontaneous, grassroots impulses than crusades, but their very first example of a panic was primarily organized by the Brazilian state, their second by a crusading district attorney. Whatever the difference between panics and crusades, there is little to be gained by arbitrary definitions. If the criticisms of panics are pushed off onto

crusades, they must still be addressed. If there is a difference between panics and crusades, I suspect it lies in who is having what emotions.

To me the issue of children is a red herring, somewhat beside the point. Children are powerful emotional symbols in a range of protest movements and mainstream politics, a kind of moral vocabulary that can be put to many different uses. Concern for their children propelled parents into the antinuclear and peace movements as surely as it aroused many anti-pornography protesters. When scientific researchers were under attack by animal protectionists, their most effective response was to televise sick children who had been saved by recent scientific breakthroughs. Beisel and Donovan seem to argue that, when anyone waves the banner of threatened children, there must be real interests at stake, or at least (a very different point, more compatible with Goode and Ben-Yehuda) ones that much of the public perceives as real. Children may or may not be threatened in a given case, and that is no doubt an important question to ask, but it does not seem relevant to an analysis of the panic. Better comprehension of emotional references such as children would help us appreciate why they appear in political debates so often — and whether this is healthy or insidious.

Beisel and Donovan are correct, alas, that most scholars of politics have applied different frameworks to those movements they like and those they dislike. I think this is less true than it once was, partly due to a more thorough-going cultural constructionism. It is possible to be respectful of movements you dislike; a striking example is Jonathan Rieder's treatment of a right-wing panic in Canarsie. If labeling something a panic is a way to dismiss it, as Beisel and Donovan claim, this can only be because someone does not take emotions seriously (although it is not clear why Goode and Ben-Yehuda would write a book on a phenomenon they were dismissing).

Many sociologists share Beisel and Donovan's suspicion of the concept of moral panics; even more are suspicious of emotions. Not only students of politics, but sociologists of culture (along with most sociologists) have resolutely ignored the role of emotion throughout social life. Why such avoidance and anxiety? Is it fear of emotions as a basic element of social action? Sociologists do not like to deal with their own emotions, much less other people's. Emotions are frequently hard to measure, and their apparent messiness may appear to threaten the recent gains of (cognitively oriented) cultural sociology. Do scholars of social movements fear "regression" to the crowd theories of prior generations? A loss of rigor in our scientific efforts? Emotions are an aspect of culture just as surely as cognitive meanings are: they are shared, learned, and often culturally variable; individuals and organizations do considerable work to shape and control them; they are an aspect of all social action and power strategies. If we wish to understand the world around us, we had better learn to deal with them.

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mies they must be re-conceptualized as internal mental rules of the mind, constituting something like an art grammar.

"We might ask whether the concept of grammar is in some extended sense of this term appropriate in the case of other mental organs as well", Chomsky (1984) inquired. I am convinced the answer is an unqualified yes. The other mental organ I want to focus upon is what I am calling the Art Faculty of The Mind, which, like language, can be represented by structure dependent rules that constitute a tacit knowledge allowing artistic behavior to be both creative and rule governed at the same time. If such rule governed creativity is a defining characteristic and if artistic behavior shows similar properties, then I will assume as a working hypothesis that the better known language faculty and this newly identified art faculty may very well operate in the same manner.

The study of style in art has been very similar to the study of language prior to the advent of generative grammar. Primarily, such studies constitute a structural description and taxonomic ordering of artistic output (paintings, drawings, sculpture, etc.). This has resulted in the structural description of the principal forms of artistic behavior, which are the major style categories of art history: Gothic, Renaissance, Realism, Cubism, Abstract Expressionism, etc. and their sequential ordering over time: High Renaissance to Mannerism to Baroque to Rococo to Neo-Classicism to Romanticism, and so forth. Like pre-generative grammar linguistics, art history is nothing but the descriptive pattern of structured artistic output temporally ordered end to end from the earliest cave art to today's postmodern multiculturalism. The notion of style in art is the equivalent of language in linguistics, and as structural linguistics described the world's languages so has art history described the world's styles. Chomsky challenged the study of language as such a descriptive taxonomic enterprise, pointing out the limitations of a mere structural description of output. Instead, Chomsky encouraged the study of the mental competence necessary to produce such structural patterns in the first place.

My assumption here is that this revolution in the study of language can also be performed for the study of art. In short, the science of art needs to move away from the descriptive taxonomic ordering of structural patterns of artis-

tic output and toward identifying the mental rules that constitute artistic competence that generates these structural patterns. This analogy between art and language has long been asserted, but only in the most general and metaphoric way art communicates, art carries meaning, there is a vocabulary of artistic elements, etc. When the language analogy is taken more literally it stops at the Saussurian insight of the arbitrary relationship between sign and meaning. This had led to a focus upon what are essentially performance constraints in the form of the institutional order of the "art world" which is argued to socially construct and assign meaning to art objects. The problem here, I suspect, will be a poverty of the stimulus issue, namely it will be hard to show how the richness of style governed artistic output derives from the minimal and fragmentary nature of the art training. It will be even more difficult to associate the wants, needs, demands, incentives, and so forth of patrons, galleries, agents, the state, or institutional orders of gender, race, class, or ethnicity with specific rules of an art historical style.

Instead of turning toward the performance constraints of the art world, it may be more fruitful to follow the lead of generative grammar and look for the mental rules that constitute artistic competence. There are a number of similarities that make the analogy between not only language and art, but between the rules of syntax and rules of style worth pursuing in the effort to arrive at something like a generative grammar of art. In language sounds are used to build words, which are used to build phrases, which are used to build sentences, and in art, brush strokes are used to build lines, which are used to build forms, which are used to build paintings. In the study of language, one inquires as to the rules that build such nested structures from phoneme to sentence, and in the study of art, the inquiry must be to discover the combinatorial rules that build artistic structures from the brush stroke to the completed painting. In this way art, like language, can be said to involve a system of principles or rules, something like a "visual grammar," for not every combination of forms, lines, and space is possible in every style. Just as a native speaker of English is not free to combine nouns and verbs in any particular order, so a native painter of Cubism is not free to combine picture planes and bounded spaces in any particular order. We know English has a grammar, and the study of art needs to realize that so does Cubism. German, Swahili, French, and Navaho all have syntactic rules, as Cubism, Impressionism, Dadaism and Mannerism all have stylistic rules. And just as no one speaks "language," no one paints "art". People speak English, Navaho, or Japanese, and people paint as Cubists, Impressionists, or Abstract Expressionists. Further, native speakers are free to create sentences of limitless length and artists are free, in principle, to create paintings of limitless size. Using a generative grammar, native speakers can create a limitless number of new, unique, and never-spoken-before sentences in a particular language, and using something like a generative artistic grammar, artists seem able to paint a limitless number of new, unique, never-seenbefore paintings in a particular style. Now, if we can ask what a native speaker must know to speak English, it seems reasonable that we should be able to ask what an artist must know to paint Cubism. And if knowing how to speak English is knowing the rules of English grammar, then it seems reasonable that knowing how to paint Cubism should involve knowing something like the "grammar of Cubism."

It also seems that such art knowledge can be represented by a set of generative rules, so that to know or to be competent in a style is to know the generative rules of that style, such that as with the language the rules are the style, and knowledge of the style is knowledge of the rules. We can also assume that these rules are not always consciously known (the tacit knowledge assumption) and most importantly that they constitute a separate domain of mental knowledge. These rules of the Art Faculty generate styles by allowing modular components (forms, shapes, pictorial space, line, etc.) to be snapped together in permissible ways to create a structure in terms of which art materials and subject matter are inserted to create the final painting. Style, then, is a set of structure dependent rules, like syntax, and vision/perception is like phonology. Seeing, like making sounds, is absolutely necessary. But just making sounds will not produce English as opposed to German, neurocognitive principles of vision/perception will not produce Mannerism as opposed to Abstract Expressionism. Sound and sight are inputs, but there is another level that transforms them into at least two more layers of computational rules. There are principles of morphology which put sounds together to make words, and there are principles of form that put perceptions together to comprise forms. Words are then combined through syntactical rules to constitute sentences, and forms are combined through stylistic rules to create art objects such as paintings.

This proposed similarity between language and art seems plausible, but at present there is no systematic theory of artistic competence the way there is of linguistic competence, and more importantly, no theory of the Art Faculty analogous to the much-studied Language Faculty. There have been, though, efforts to link artistic behavior with principles of vision and perception. But these efforts have

primarily focused upon understanding how the mind/brain encodes visual data from art objects to construct spacial representations (Marr, 1982) rather than how the mind/brain produces such artistic representations in the first place (Gregory, et al., 1995; Solso, 1994; Pinker, 1994; 1997; Harth, 1998). While this research is important, it doesn't address the issue of information output from the visual system that could result in stylized artistic behavior analogous to the way the Language Faculty produces an output of syntactically structured speech behavior. This focus upon the principles of vision is in some ways a secondary question, for it implicitly assumes the mind has already constructed the art object.

For the vision system to constitute an adequate theoretical explanation of artistic output, we must establish a link between the vision system and the production of art in the same way that we have specified the link between the Language Faculty and the production of speech. A comparison with what we know about the Language Faculty and speech is helpful in understanding what we don't know about the vision system (faculty) and art. The Language Faculty's parsing device decodes input sound to create linguistic representations, as the vision system decodes retinal data to create spacial representations. The Language Faculty is also capable of converting auditory information into linguistic information which can then be converted into motor instructions to the vocal chords to produce speech, but as yet we have no analogous understanding of how something like the "vision faculty" is capable of converting visual information into motor instructions to the hand to produce

In trying to understand this path from mind/brain to hand and artistic output, we can begin with the simplest hypothesis: there is a one-to-one mapping from the mind's internal spacial representations (ISRs) to what could be called external spacial representations (ESRs), or art. Such an ISR = ESR Model seemingly works similar to the linguistic model, as the visual system would send information as motor signals to the hand to create structured external visual representations (like, paintings) the same way the language faculty sends motor signals to the vocal chords to create structured sounds (like sentences). Generating ESRs has been referred to as "placing images into the outside world ... where ... images and symbols interact in the human brain" and are "extended beyond the confines of the individual by externalizing images and symbols" (Harth, 1998: 2, 10). But it isn't clear or specified how the mind downloads spacial representations to "externalize images." It is just assumed that somehow artists create their "effects," and their "pictorial and sculptural forms" through "mimicking and elaborating ... the transformation of the retinal image by the visual system" (Latto, 1995: 69). Principles of the visual system are supposedly selected and recreated by the hand's markings such that the eye now thinks it is seeing real objects when it is seeing only a painting. "[Realist] painters ... use visual images from memory ... [and] ...[a]rrange some matter so that it projects the same retinal image as an object the brain is biased to recognize... A picture is nothing but a convenient way of arranging matter so that it projects a pattern identical to real objects. The mimicking of matter sits on a flat surface ... and it is formed by smearing pigments..." (Pinker, 1997: 215, 216).

There are a number of questions about this hypothesis that artists select from among their spacial representations held in memory (or directly computed from ongoing retinal data) and recreate them externally as art. The problem is similar to that of mapping the structure of thought (mentalese) directly onto the structure of language (Pinker, 1994). Thought has various structures and contents, but this - contra Whorf - cannot be mapped directly onto linguistic structure, for language is a separate domain of mental activity that follows its own rules. There is, rather, an interface between the domain of mentalese and the domain of language which allows the linguistic representation of thought. But such linguistic structure is not identical with the structure of the thought it represents, as the same thoughts can be expressed a number of different ways and a number of words can represent the same idea. Language may not be the perfect mechanism, or even the best possible device that could conceivably be created and some thoughts may never be accurately represented, but natural language is the mental mechanism we have, and for humans to represent ideas in a natural language is to activate the phonological, morphological and syntactic rules of the Language Faculty. The same relationship holds for the relationship of mental images and their artistic expression. Art is the natural "language" of visual expression and it has its own natural grammar through which internal visual images gain external representation. But, there is no direct link between the spacial representations the mind/brain computes from retinal data and the artistic representations the hand produces. The visual system may generate spacial representations as output that constitute input information to the Art Faculty, which in turn, generates output as stylistically coded information to the hand to paint and draw. But just as mentalese doesn't map directly to speech, visual images don't map directly onto ESRs, or art. Both are mediated by other mental faculties, those of language and art. Artistic production emanates from the Art Faculty, not the visual system, just as speech production emanates from the Language Faculty, not mentalese. The Art Faculty's production of artistic behavior takes the form of stylistically coded information to the hands, and just as there is no speech that isn't syntactically coded in a particular language, so there is no art that isn't stylistically coded in a particular style.

Consider, for instance, the structuring of artistic elements in the style of the High Renaissance (Wolfflin, 1932) where figures are bounded by a clear line and posed along a single flat plane, as if the picture frame is a piece of glass and the figures are pressed up against it. If we consider these as rules which constitute a painter's tacit knowledge of the High Renaissance style, we can inquire as to which mental faculty might be their origin. Bounding figures with a clear,

as opposed to a fuzzy or impressionistic line and aligning them along a flat plane doesn't not seem like a rule constraint imposed by principles of perception or vision. These are style constraints, not vision/perception constraints, and they emanate from a separate domain, module, or faculty of mental activity. Second, there doesn't seem to be any particular rule from the vision system that specifies why such style principles should co-occur in any particular way. Why, for instance, shouldn't an artist bound half a figure with a clear line and other half with an unclear line? There seems no reason from visual science, but this doesn't occur in natural artistic behavior. Third, if there were only visual system constraints on art, then if one or another of these style rules should change, there should be, in principle, no necessity for other rules to change. But this isn't the case in naturally occurring art historical behavior.

For example, switch the plane rule. Instead of posing figures across a flat plane, have them follow another rule that makes them recede into the picture so that something like a recessional rule is in effect. The painting now recedes into the picture plane and its figures could just as easily be painted with a clear clean line if the artist so desired. But in naturally occurring art historical behavior, they aren't. When there is a switch from aligning figures on a plane to having them recede into the picture space there is also a switch from clear line to a more impressionistic line bounding these figures. But such principles are not derived from the rules of the visual system. Each is a separate mental module, or domain specific competence. That is the key point, and the present limit to cognitive science speculation about how the mind/brain is capable of producing artistic output. Jackendoff's (1984; 1993) idea of different "languages of the mind" as another way of talking about domain-specific cognitive abilities should also include art, which along with language and vision, are separate modules. Art and vision are as separate as reasoning and language. Reasoned thoughts are an input to the language faculty which tries to represent them given its constraints, rules, and procedures, and visual images are similarly inputs to the art faculty, which tries to represent them given its unique and domain-specific artistic rules and principles.

It is my working hypothesis, then, that our mind/brain provides us with something like a Universal Style Grammar (USG) with allowable parameterizations that, when made, yield the observable styles of art history. From this perspective the study of art need no longer be only the study of historical description — art history — nor the present cognitive science study of vision, optics, perception, etc. If generative syntax can be said to produce the structure of language, then something like a generative stylistics produces the structures of art, which, over time, are art history. At least four binary sub-systems of the hypothesized Universal Style Grammar can be identified. Parameterization of these principles allows for the creation of four base or core art styles that constitute something like the deep structure of art history. These rules include Composition Rules which deal with the planetric or recessional ordering of forms

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(Bergesen, continued)

in pictorial space, Focal Point Rules which deal with how the eye is drawn to the art object in terms of a single or multiple focal points, and Bracket Rules which deal with whether the composition is framed or unframed by symmetrical forms. When these Base Styles are combined with historically contingent subject matter and a variety of residuals and extraneous elements they yield the clearly recognized surface styles that make up art history (Post-Impressionism, Romanticism, Rococo, etc.).

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Books of Note

Richard A. Peterson, Vanderbilt University

Cerulo, Karen A., Deciphering Violence: The Cognitive Structure of Right and Wrong. NY: Routledge. Drawing on television, newspaper, fiction, film, painting, and photographic depictions of violence, as well as information from interviews and focus groups, Cerulo shows how violence is depicted and evaluated in the U.S. today. Moving beyond focusing on violent content, Cerulo shows how the role of story structure and the sequencing of events systematically influences the moral judgment of violent acts, and she points to ways of increasing the social control of media violence.

Bourdieu, Pierre. Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action. Translated by Randall Johnson and Others. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Pierre Bourdieu provides a meditation on many of the epistemological issues which have concerned him over the decades: Can social sciences exist? How do the worlds of family, the church, and the intellect differ? How can morality be based in hypocrisy? He also presents a foretaste of his most recent work.

Markham, Annette. Life Online: Researching Real Experience in Virtual Space. Markham describes the activities and attitudes of people who make a life on the net and provides a pattern for doing research on such people.

Witkin, Robert W. Adorno on Music. NY: Routledge. Witkin thoroughly explores the link made between music and morality that established, to Adorno's satisfaction, the right of the arts to be acknowledged as a moral force in the development of modernist society.

Bailey, Frankie C, and Donna Hale, editors. Popular Culture, Crime, and Justice. Wadsworth: Belmont, CT. A number of chapters are devoted to "reading" the media representations of one or another aspects of deviance or the criminal justice system. In addition, several chapters are devoted to the ways that criminality is constructed in the process of making media representations and how such representations themselves may be criminalized.

Fishman, Mark and Gray Cavender, editors. *Entertaining Crime: Television Reality Programs*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter. The authors of these eleven chapters draw on studies made in England, France, Holland, as well as the U.S. to show the content of "real-

ity crime" shows; the characteristics of audiences; and the audiences' interpretations of violence on these shows.

Jarvis, Robert M. and Paul R. Joseph, editors. *Prime Time Law: Fictional Television as Legal Narrative*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press. This is a show-by-show analysis of the ways in which lawyers and their work are depicted on TV.

Lee, Robert A. Designs of Blackness: Mappings in the Literature and Culture of Afro-America. Herndon, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC. Lee provides a comprehensive account of African-American story telling from slave narratives to the present.

Walker, John A. Cultural Offensive: America's Impact on British Art since 1945. Herndon, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC. Starting from the assumption that there was a "British Art," as opposed to women and men living in the United Kingdom who painted, Walker shows how New York-based innovations in art influenced the UK art world. Serves the Brits right for their pop-rock invasion of the U.S. in the 1960s.

Helmreich, Robert L. and Ashleigh C. Merritt. Culture at Work in Aviation

(Books of Note, con't.)

and Medicine: National, Organizational and Professional Influences. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing. The authors compare the culture of production designed to avoid mistakes in the operation of airplanes and on people. They provide an excellent view of the routinization of errors in these two vital fields.

Goldstein, Jeffrey, editor. Why We Watch: the Attractions of Violent Entertainment. New York: Oxford University Press. At a time when serious questioning of human behavior is inhibited by the politics of political correctness, it is important to try to understand why people are drawn to watching violent entertainment. Its title notwithstanding, this anthology focuses less on why people watch violent programming and more on relishing examples of violent programming.

Epitropoulos, Mike-Frank G. and Victor Roudometof, editors. *American Culture in Europe: Interdisciplinary Perspectives.* Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Four from the University of Tennessee Press

Niman, Michael I. People of the Rainbow: A Nomadic Utopia. Niman provides a view of the Rainbow Family, an anarchist nomatic community that, since 1972, has held forest gatherings to pray for world peace and to create a model of a functioning utopian society.

Lawrence, Elizabeth Atwood. Hunting the Wren: Transformation of Bird to Symbol. Wrens are protected in England and on the Continent except for a short while around the time of the annual solstice when they are systematically hunted. Lawrence traces the practice back to ancient Celtic rituals.

Weston, William J. Presbyterian Pluralism: Competition in a Protestant House. Weston shows how a diverse set of views can coexist in an institution noted for ideological controversy and fractioning.

Dorgan, Howard. In the Hands of a

Happy God: The "No-Hellers" of Central Appalachia. In his study of Appalachian Primitive Baptist Universalists, Dorgan focuses on how they can simultaneously be Calvinists and "No-Hellers."

Sage's Four

Seale, Clive, editor. Researching Society and Culture. This is a cultural sociology-friendly sociological methods text composed of chapters by eighteen experts.

Rothenbuhler, Eric W. Ritual Communication: From Everyday Conversation to Mediated Ceremony. Rothenbuhler looks at ritual communication less as communication of information than as the reaffirmation of what is already believed, and he finds such practices in media communication, in political rhetoric, in civil rituals, and in the routines of everyday life.

Harris, Marvin. Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times. This is Marvin Harris being Marvin Harris, critiquing current theoretical tendencies ranging from sociobiology to postmodernism.

Frisby, David and Mike Featherstone, editors. Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings. Frisby and Featherstone provide a useful set of readings on culture drawn from the work of Georg Simmel.

Princeton University Press has Four

Borneman, John. Settling Accounts: Violence, Justice, and Accountability in Postsocialist Europe. The fall of the Soviet system has brought with it calls for accountability and justice. Borneman finds that the greatest amount of "retributive" violence has occurred in those states which have tried to ignore the complex issues involved.

Rochon, Thomas R. Culture Moves: Ideas, Activism, and Changing Values. Focusing on the issues of race and gender, Rochon traces the role of small communities of critical thinkers in the creation and dissemination of new values.

Mc Daniel. Tim. *The Agony of the Russian Idea*. The argument is that Russia has not been able to create the

foundations of a viable modern society over the past two centuries, McDaniel argues, because of a fatalistic attachment to the idea that Russia can set itself apart from the modern West through adherence to shared utopian belies in community and equality.

Doremus, Paul N., William W. Keller, Louis W. Pauley, and Simon Reich. *The Myth of the Global Corporation*. The authors show that the world's leading multi-national corporations have not become globalist in their views. Rather, their corporate outlook and practices are guided primarily by the customs of their home countries.

University of Chicago Press' Three

Lott, John R., Jr. More Guns, Less Crime: Understanding Crime and Gun Control Laws. Whoops, this is not the way Lott expected it to come out. Lott details the wide range of evidence he has assembled, and along the way he chronicles the efforts of gun-control advocates, academic critics, and the news media to discredit his conclusions.

Gamson, Joshua. Freaks Talk Back: Tabloid Talk Shows and Sexual Nonconformity. Gamson looks at the production of tabloid talk shows, the emerging norms and culture of the genre, and the views of non-conforming practices that are presented.

Erenberg, Lewis A. Swingin' the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture. The audience has commonly been treated with contempt in the jazz world, so it is interesting to read how the audience helped to reconstitute jazz in the "swing era" and contributed to the valorization of black culture.

Three from the University of Texas Press

Ross, Luana. Inventing the Savage: The Social Construction of Native American Criminality. Ross draws on the life histories of imprisoned Native American women to demonstrate how race/ethnicity, gender, and social class distinctions contribute to criminalizing of various practices and to subsequent incarceration rates.

Prince, Stephen. Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of the Ultraviolent Movies. Peckinpah's work opened the way for the depiction of graphic violence in general release films. Prince provides a view of the work as art rather than as reprehensible fare.

McAnany, Emile G. and Kenton T. Wilkinson, editors. Mass Media and Free Trade: NAFTA and the Cultural Industries. The authors review the implications of the North American Free Trade Agreement on the cultural exchange among Canada, the US, and Mexico. They predict that there will be a steadily increasing flow of cultural goods from the US to its neighbors.

University of Minnesota Press has

Woodbury, Marda Liggett. Stopping the Presses: The Murder of Walter W. Liggett. In the decades between the World Wars Minneapolis was a wide open crime city largely in the hands of organized crime. Woodbury uses the murder of her father, crusading journalist, Walter W. Liggett, to expose the mob's control over the Minneapolis news media.

Kintz, Linda and Julia Lesage, editors. Media, Culture, and the Religious Right. Authors of these chapters show the diverse ways that the Christian right has used the media. These include training films and videos used by the Christian Coalition; the 700 Club; key figures including Rush Limbaugh and the psychologist, Dr. Dobson; the use of alternative media including fax machines and the internet; and the media's effect on the organization practices and political mobilization of the religious right.

Niller, Toby. Technologies of Truth: Cultural Citizenship and the Popular Media. Niller provides an examination of the ways that television, magazines, films, and museum displays influence the ways such issues as democracy, citizenship, nationhood, globalization, truth, and fiction are conceptualized.

Hollinger, Karen. In the Company of Women: Contemporary Female

Friendship Films. Hollinger places a close analysis of six recent female friendship films in the context of similar films of fifty years earlier. She argues that contemporary female friendship films both critique and defend traditional female roles.

Westview Press' Six

Alvarez, Sonia E., Dagnino, Evelina and Arturo Escobar, editors. Cultures of Politics/Politics of Cultures: Revisioning Latin American Social Movements. This anthology focuses on the cultural politics enacted by contemporary Latin American social movements and searches for ways of fostering alternative political cultures.

Pillsbury, Richard. No Foreign Food: The American Diet in Time and Place. From pizza to apple pie, Pillsbury explores the diverse and wondrous worlds of food in the United States.

Valaskakis, Gail. Being Native in North America. Contemporary Native American identity is found in collective memory, oral tradition, militancy, and spirituality. It is also found in the constructions of non Native Americans that become reintegrated into Native American identity.

Strong, Pauline Turner. Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Practice and Representation of Captivity across Colonial Borders in North America. Strong examines the themes found in the numerous "Indian captivity narratives." These are stories of whites captured and integrated into Native American communities who later return to white society. It would be interesting to compare the pathos of this genre with that of the "slave narratives" written about the same time.

Mirande, Alfredo. Hombres Y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture. Mirande's ethnographic observations on this genre of the male can serve as a good base from which to understand the whole species.

Evans, Joyce A. Celluloid Mushroom Clouds: Hollywood and the Atomic Bomb. Evans traces the changing image of atomic bomb and its consequences as seen in Hollywood movies released between 1947 and 1964.

Four from the University of Illinois Press

Mahar, William J. Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture. Mahar provides an interesting historically situated analysis of minstrelsy, the first uniquely American commercial popular culture form. Like later forms from jazz and blues to rock and rap, it entered the mainstream as whites perfected ways of imitating elements of African American culture.

Coward, John M. The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the Press, 1820-90. Coward traces the role of nineteenth century newspapers and news-making practices in fabricating the image of the Native American. Whether noble or savage, the image of Indian was used to highlight the progress being made by white society.

Romalis, Shelly. Pistol Packin' Mama: Aunt Molly Jackson and the Politics of Folksong. The daughter of a coal miner, Molly Jackson married a miner, became a mid-wife, labor activist, and protest song writer. Discovered and brought north in 1931, she was befriended by an extensive circle of left-wing intellectuals, including Theodore Dreiser, Charles Seeger, and Woodie Guthrie. Over the next two decades, she became a cultural broker, linking the rural working poor with cosmopolitan left-wing activism.

Hicks, Michael. Sixties Rock: Garage, Psychedelic, and Other Satisfactions. This is a fascinating study of how the sound of 1960s rock was created and how it evolved into an art form. Focusing on the evolution of "Hey Joe" and "Light my Fire," Hicks shows the development of a number of conventions including guitar distortion, the distinctive vocabulary of riffs, and the emulation of the drug experience in the music.

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Calls For Papers

Review of Religious Research

The Review of Religious Research, an interdisciplinary journal now co-edited by Christopher G. Ellison and Darren E. Sherkat, is seeking manuscripts on any topic dealing with religious beliefs, activities, and organizations. We strongly encourage submissions investigating the connection between religion and culture. To submit, send four (4) copies of manuscripts and an e-mail or disk version of the paper to Darren E. Sherkat, 1811-8 Dept. of Sociology, Vanderbilt University, Nashville TN 37235. The e-mail address is SHERKADE@CTRVAX.VANDERBILT.EDU There is a 15\$ processing fee for scholars who are not members of the Religious Research Association. Membership is only \$24, and information can be found out http://rra.hartsem.edu

Edited Volume on "Symbolic Childhood"

In social practice and in social policy, children and child-hood stand for things other than themselves. Descriptions of childhood—whether found in religious doctrine, educational theory, political rhetoric or everyday talk—inevitably involve prescriptions for children. How or whether parents should discipline children, what the appropriate length of social dependency is or should be, whether children are to be seen as already complete persons or as developing persons—these vary over time and across cultural context. Prescriptions invoke moral positions and imply a cosmology. They offer stated and unstated views about the nature, origins and direction of humanity as a means to evaluate conduct.

Children enter childhood and thus social life through and in discourse. Meanings of childhood are multiple. They arise in a field of signs, symbols and metaphors that are necessarily subject to interpretation and challenge. Children and childhood are particularly malleable social objects and cultural categories because children lack the ability to resist semantic association in any significant way. Their participation in the field of discourse is effectively blocked or made inconsequential. Childhood is a social status unlike any other in this regard because children must pass through it into adjudicated "adulthood" in order to represent it with any authority to a public.

Publicly, however, the social meaning of childhood tends to be treated as given and relatively stable. Childhood as a time of innocence and children as sacred, perhaps endangered, beings are widely shared symbolic currencies which are often used as alibis for the most embracing social and political projects and interests—at least in the late modern world. Children often serve as symbols of domesticity and subordination, as icons of progress and "the future" as well as emblems of poverty and social decline. They can be presented as the personification of a national identity to be nurtured and protected, as ideal consumers or unchecked hedonists, as signs of parental virtue or irresponsibility. In public formats, re-presenting children often registers race, class, gender and sexual concerns implicitly even as the image of "the child" pretends universality. Symbolic childhood is ideology most often cloaked in a veneer of sentiment.

Papers are now being solicited for an edited volume on "Symbolic Childhood" by Dan Cook at the University of Illinois. Cook's historical work examines how depictions of "the child" served a growing market for children's goods, especially clothing, in the 20th century. Papers can be theoretical discussions as well as empirical demonstrations. For purposes of this volume, the age which constitutes childhood can range from representations of "the fetus" to those of persons around 12 or 13 years old (i.e., not "teenagers"). Historical, anthropological, sociological, feminist and literary approaches are welcome, as are studies dealing with popular culture, the material culture of childhood and media. Papers should deal in some way with how "the child" and/or "childhood" are deployed publicly as instruments of some identified interest or group. These may include child advocates, academicians, social classes, marketeers, politicians and governments. Papers should also deal with the modern (or late- or post-modern) historical period.

A letter of interest and a one- or two-page description (or drafts or completed papers) of your project should be forwarded immediately. Currently several presses have expressed interest, including Duke and Rutgers. Send inquires and project descriptions to: Dan Cook, Symbolic Childhood Project, Departments of Sociology and Leisure Studies, University of Illinois, 104 Huff Hall, 1206 South Fourth Street, Champaign, IL 61820 USA; 217-244-3887; fax: 217-244-1935. dtcook@uiuc.edu.

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