

the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries maintained as communication and performance in small groups? Once again, she looks at structure and content, this time the manipulation of modern media (television, compact disks, and video) to fit with the range of expression by children. We learn, through her fieldwork, that the children have latched on to media heroes including Michael Jackson and kung fu champion Jackie Chan, whose movements, texts, costume, and props are incorporated into the performance of the present using the structures of the past, including poetry and break dancing. We also learn how boys use computers to engage in informal interaction framed by access to games and the Internet. Although these chapters are vital in rounding out the range of child lore, they could be better connected to the previous chapters. They are not free floating, but it is plain Soileau has some trouble making cultural sense of these media movements.

In three appendices, Soileau presents teenagers' memories of their play and a further sampling of her collection. In the former, she has gathered a group of girls who are active in the Japanese club system, the *anime* where members of local clubs further themselves in the media presentation of rewriting literary works according to their perceptions of them. In this setting, the author asks the girls to reflect and remember their child lore. It is the only place where children are given voice to think about their lore, its manifestations, and its functions. Had Soileau given similar voice to the children she documented in her more than forty years of work, it would have enriched her study.

In the latter appendices we receive a treat: selections of Soileau's collection and a cluster of black-and-white photographs of children at play. Readers may not be entirely sure why the author has given us these gifts, but there is every reason to be grateful for them.

All told, *Yo'Mama, Mary Mack, and Boudreaux and Thibodeaux* has the potential to become a classic in the study of Louisiana's African American children's folklore. It is thoughtful, respectful, and honoring without being patronizing. And it is an encouraging work that brings to the literature an overlooked heritage in many of its manifestations.

—Jan Rosenberg, Heritage Education Resources, Inc., Bloomington, IN

Doll Studies: The Many Meanings of Girls' Toys and Play

Miriam Forman-Brunell and Jennifer Dawn Whitney, eds.

New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2015. Acknowledgments, introduction, contents, contributors, images, and index. 287 pp. \$40.95 paper. ISBN: 9781433120695.

In a collection of essays called *Doll Studies: The Many Meanings of Girls' Toys and Play*, Miriam Forman-Brunell and Jennifer Dawn Whitney offer a critical review of how play with dolls and the construction of dolls have affected imaginations, ideologies, and identities. The editors divided the book into five sections: "Objects, Narratives, Historical Memories"; "Performance and Identity"; "Mediating Contexts of Play";

“Modernism and Modernization”; and “Commodifying Multiculturalism, Nationalism, Racism, and Girlhood.” From discussions of material culture and memories of girlhood in Germany to doll discourses in Ireland, from Bratz dolls and diasporic Iranian girls in Australia to Nicki Minaj and Harajuku Barbie, *Doll Studies* illustrates the growing importance of an international and interdisciplinary approach to the study of these universal toys.

The essays tend to contain post-structuralist theoretical perspectives with feminist epistemologies. The approach of these contributors, many of them among the newest wave of scholars, resembles the discourse in Miriam Forman-Brunell’s *Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood* (1995), in which she traces the history of dolls in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and calls attention to the significant contributions women and girls made to establishing female identities through play with dolls.

Robin Bernstein’s essay provides readers with a thought-provoking study of nineteenth-century children’s literature and material culture. Many acknowledge John Newbery as the father of children’s literature. In 1744, Newbery published *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book: Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly*. The book contained several games and amusements, and Newbery paired its sale with a ball for boys and a pincushion for girls, making Newbery the first to link the commodities of books and toys for a single market. Bernstein cautions that many scholars of play fail to examine such an interdependence of children’s literature and material culture.

She devotes considerable attention to Harriet Beecher Stowe’s 1852 antislavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, noting that children—after reading the text—used dolls to act out its scenes of racial violence. She also refers to several horrific performances of ritualistic violence described in *Babyhood* (1897) by noted psychologists G. Stanley Hall and A. Caswell Ellis. As reported by a Minneapolis newspaper, children gashed the throats of black dolls, burned black dolls, and staged slave auctions. Bernstein argues that literature and material culture “co-scripted 19th century practices of play” and that “doll play was not private ... thus they further transmitted practices child-to-child” (p. 10).

In “The ‘Dollification’ of Riot Grrrls: Self-Fashioning Alternative Identities,” Meghan Chandler and Diana Anselmo-Sequeira examine the ways dolls can subvert gender expectations within the context in the Riot Grrrls movement from the early 1990s. A group of women initiated the movement after they held a meeting to discuss sexism in the punk music scene. The women decided that they needed to riot against a culture that failed to validate women’s experiences. In her research, Emily White noted that the term “grrrl” likely derived from the desire to focus on childhood, a time when girls enjoy the most self-esteem. Participants in the Riot Grrrl movement believed girls should actively engage in cultural production rather than be mere supporters of existing art. Chandler and Anselmo-Sequeira consider the ways Riot Grrrls used dolls in artistic performances and how such appropriations intersected with previous cultural meanings ascribed to the dolls. Establishing the importance

of Hall and Ellis's 1897 *A Study on Dolls*, in which the psychologists asserted that dolls fostered a girl's feminine identity, the contributors also look at the impact on such an identity of Riot Grrrls musicians—Courtney Love from the band Hole; Kat Bjelland from the band Babes in Toyland; and Katie Jane Garside from the band Daisy Chainsaw. Chandler and Anselmo-Sequeira argue that, although Hall and Ellis “seminally proposed that ideal ladylikeness was best embodied by the figure of the doll: a silent, and inactive object,” Riot Grrrls “reclaimed and reused dolls to dismantle longstanding notions about proper femininity” (p. 80). There is nearly a century of doll production that the contributors might use to enhance their thesis. They might also have focused more on the Grrrls themselves. Take for example, Courtney Love's relationship with dolls. While she “defied dominant expectations and investments in hygiene, self-containment, and beautification,” Love also collected hundreds of dolls with husband and musician, Kurt Cobain. When Cobain passed away, Love commissioned doll maker Dame Darcy to create a doll for their daughter. Dame Darcy used a lock of Cobain's hair to make the doll's hair. With this decision, the doll became an artifact of memory and mourning and embodied a long tradition of doll play.

The study of dolls provides a unique perspective for understanding how play constructs and disrupts girlhood. Many of these essays would be strengthened by illustrations since the analysis of dolls in cultural history often depends on the study of images. Still, *Doll Studies* is a thoughtful collection that demonstrates the impor-

tance of play and its material culture to social and cultural history.

—Michelle Parnett-Dwyer, *The Strong*, Rochester, NY

Jane Jensen: Gabriel Knight, Adventure Games, and Hidden Objects

Anastasia Salter

New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Acknowledgments, preface, foreword, notes, and index. 183 pp. \$21.99 paper. ISBN: 9781501327469.

Until recently, perusing just about any published history of video games might have given rise to the false impression that the industry is entirely driven by men. But such is not the case—it is only a matter of how games have largely been historicized. After all, historically speaking, video games are quite young. Most video game histories mark the beginning with William Higinbotham's analog computer game *Tennis for Two* in 1958—although some dispute even this, since video games did not become popular until the 1970s. Anastasia Salter, in her illuminating biography of an understudied industry figure, *Jane Jensen: Gabriel Knight, Adventure Games, and Hidden Objects*, offers the history of video games a much-needed intervention.

Jensen, Salter's subject, is an interactive storyteller for whom computer games—particularly adventure games—offered great potential. Best known for the Gabriel Knight series, Jensen brought thoughtful “hidden object” puzzle design and a novelist's attention to narrative and

When playing with a doll, the child identifies himself with it and thus enters the world of human beings [3]. He reflects his experience, especially what is bothering him, and enacts people he knows or fairy-tale characters in play. They fairly often communicate with their favourite toys and ask them questions, which they themselves answer. The child gets an idea of human relationships through play activity which is conventional for this process. The more detailed is an action in practice, the more compressed and subconscious is the role relations plan. The attractiveness of a toy and its correspondence to the child's interests and meanings is a very important requirement that, in fact, makes the toy a matter of the child's independent and initiative activities.

When offered the choice of playing with either a doll or a toy truck, girls will typically pick the doll and boys will opt for the truck. This isn't just because society encourages girls to be nurturing and boys to be active, as people once thought. A common explanation holds that these toys facilitate more vigorous activity, which boys are evolutionarily programmed to seek out. But the 2009 study indicated that their affinity for balls and trucks predates the stage when children actually start playing with toys. "Multiple studies in humans and primates shows there is a substantial male advantage in mental rotation, which is taking an object and rotating it in the mind," Wallen said. "It could be that manipulating objects like balls and wheels in space is one way this mental rotation gets more fully developed." If you want to read online the *Dolls Studies: The Many Meanings of Girls' Toys and Play (Mediated Youth)*, we also provide a facility that can be read through your notebook, netbook, ipad, kindle, tablet and mobile phone. Excellent book is always being the best friend for spending little time in your office, night time, bus, and everywhere. It will be a good way to just look, open, and read the book while in that time. As known, experience and skill don't always come with the much money to acquire them. Reading this book with the title *Dolls Studies: The Many Meanings of Girls' Toys and Play (Mediated Youth)* shows that girls played with the toys in the girl boxes and boys gravitated to the toys in the boy boxes. Both genders focused on the toys in the boxes meant for their gender and did not pay much attention to toys marked for the opposite gender. Continuing to limit access to birth control would wreak economic havoc. Read more. For both boys and girls, the occupations of their dolls have become unrealistic, says Sweet, which is unfortunate as dolls give children a chance to try on professions. Unless you are Kate Middleton, the odds are you didn't grow up to be a princess. As tastes evolve, all three researchers hope that one day, toys will stop being broken up by gender and will instead be categorized by type, like puzzle toys, dolls or children's bikes.

Doll Studies: The Many Meanings of Girls' Toys and Play. Edited by Miriam Forman-Brunell and Rebecca Hains, New York: Peter Lang Press, 2015., 2015. In *A Study on Dolls*, a pioneering text in the field of childhood psychology published in 1897, G. Stanley Hall and A. Caswell Ellis had argued that dolls fostered girls' feminine identity. After polling over 640 boys and girls attending American and British schools, the two American psychologists concluded that playing with dolls shaped children's understanding of society (p. 22). By making sense of the outside world through small-scale doll-universes, children supposedly formed life-long notions of "goodness" and "badness," which informed their self-perception as well-adjusted individuals. When playing with a doll, the child identifies himself with it and thus enters the world of human beings [3]. He reflects his experience, especially what is bothering him, and enacts people he knows or fairy-tale characters in play. The child gets an idea of human relationships through play activity which is conventional for this process. The more detailed is an action in practice, the more compressed and subconscious is the role relations plan. As a result, most of toys bought by parents reduce children's play to primitive manipulating activity. The attractiveness of a toy and its correspondence to the child's interests and meanings is a very important requirement that, in fact, makes the toy a matter of the child's independent and initiative activities. «Those with academic and research interests centred on doll studies and childhood studies will find this collection of essays extremely useful.» (Emily Aguilo-Perez, *Children & Society* 31/2016). Read more.

About the Author. Miriam Forman-Brunell is Professor of History at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and author of *Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood* (1993/8). Her recent publications include *Babysitters: An American History* (2009) and *The Girls' History and Culture Readers* (2011). Jennifer Dawn Whitney teaches in the School of English, Communicative Dolls are the focus of this pioneering anthology establishing Dolls Studies as an interdisciplinary field of scholarly inquiry. This work revises conventional understandings of what constitutes a doll; broadens the age range to include female adolescents, women and others; locates dolls in untraditional contexts; and utilizes new methodological practices and theoretical frameworks. Dolls are the focus of this pioneering anthology establishing Dolls Studies as an interdisciplinary field of scholarly inquiry. Placing dolls at the center of analysis reveals how critical girls' toys are in the making - and undoing - of racial, ethnic, national, religious, sexual, class, and gender ideologies and identities. The findings suggest girls play more with dolls than boys not because of sex-stereotyped socialization but because of "biological predilections." Richard Wrangham of Harvard University said: "This is the first evidence of an animal species in the wild in which object play differs between males and females." Earlier studies of captive monkeys had also suggested a biological influence on toy choice. When juvenile monkeys are offered sex-stereotyped human toys, females gravitate toward dolls, whereas males are more apt to play with "boys' toys" such as trucks. The findings were the result of 14 y