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Children's Folklore Review regularly publishes articles on all aspects on children's traditions: oral, customary, and material culture. In addition CFR will consider articles dealing with the use of folklore in children's literature, children's folklore and education, children's folklore and popular culture, and similar topics. Articles are referreed and are indexed by the MLA and other major bibliographers. CFR retains copyright for all articles but gives permission for reprinting with no charge.

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Send manuscripts to Elizabeth Tucker, ltucker@binghamton.edu (Department of English, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY 13902-6000). Books for review should go to book review editor Li Cornfeld, licornfeld@gmail.com.

Cover photo: Like father, like daughter: hair's family tapestry. Neal A. Lester with daughter Jasmine Z. Lester.

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From the Editor

Elizabeth Tucker

As this thirty-third volume of *Children's Folklore Review* goes to press, I feel excited about the high level of achievement that has resulted in its contents. This year we have two winners of the William Wells Newell Prize: Spencer Green, author of "Disastrous Alternatives: Boy Scout Disaster Stories and Legends and Imagining the Natural World," and Steve Stanzak, author of "Manipulating Play Frames: The Yo Momma Joke Cycle on YouTube." Both of these outstanding essays would have delighted William Wells Newell, who held children's creativity and tradition conservation in such high esteem. Because of space limitations, this issue just contains Green's essay; Stanzak's will appear in volume 34.

Besides one of the two Newell Prize-winning essays, this volume of *Children's Folklore Review* contains other extremely interesting essays. Katharine R. M. Schramm's "Nascent Folklore" explores the emerging interdisciplinary field of communication and aesthetics in infant behavior; Neal Lester's "Fathers and Their African American Daughters: Hair Pieces Creating Ties That Bind" explicates the significance of African American girls' hair; Mona Lisa Saloy's "Sidewalk Songs, Jump-Rope Rhymes, and Clap-Hand Games of African American Children" examines the wealth of children's folklore among children in New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina; and Robert MacGregor's "The Appropriation of a Commercial Trademark: the Golliwog as a Cultural Marker" traces contested representation of a cultural symbol in the United Kingdom. I am proud to add that the two short essays on dangerous games, Karin Phillips's "Genetic Bubble Wrap" and Pamela Weintraub's "Failing to Fly but Free Falling: Jumping as a Form of Childhood Release," were written by two outstanding undergraduate students in my Children's Folklore class at Binghamton University last spring.

This fall we can celebrate the acceptance of all back issues of *Children's Folklore Review* by Indiana University's Scholar Works Web site. I want to thank Jennifer Laherty at Scholar Works for all of her help in making this possible. Now scholars of children's folklore have access to all of our published material.

I want to thank the Dean's Office at Harpur College of Binghamton University, which generously supports *Children's Folklore Review*. I am also very grateful to Kathy Buchta for her fine work on layout/design and to Sheridan Press for its excellent work.

Li Cornfeld, our new book review editor, is starting to work on reviews for our next issue. If you would like to review a book on children's folklore or a related subject, please contact her: licornfeld@gmail.com.

Submissions and comments are always most welcome. Please feel free to contact me any time: ltucker@binghamton.edu. Thanks very much for your support of our journal.

Nascent Folklore: Communication and Aesthetics in Infancy

Katharine R. M. Schramm

> Whereas just as cultural relativity implies that each human group fashions its own forms of human adaptation and expression and that each has its wonder and beauty (as well as disasters), so with childhood there is an aesthetic for each age, which may be celebrated (or cursed) by adults, rather than simply glossed as an inevitably inferior step on the way to the 'wonders' of adults' civilization, reason, and morality (Sutton-Smith and McMahon 1999, 299),
>
> Newborn infants, though weak and inexperienced, are sentient and intending agents (Trevarthen, et al. 1999, 143).

The question of when folklore begins is one which is simultaneously philosophical, biological, and psychological. It hinges by implication on what, indeed, constitutes folklore. If we assume that folklore is artistic, communicative, culturally grounded, and socially actuated, something must come before the more recognizable forms of tradition, performance, and identity — a nascent folklore. Not only is there interesting material in the prelinguistic, pre-genre, pre-self arena of infant behavior that recommends itself to our attention as folklorists of children, but we as folklorists can recognize it and comment upon it, using the tools at our disposal. We can engage with proto-cultural agents through an interdisciplinary approach that does not relinquish our qualitative methods for quantitative ones.

In what follows, I will discuss the subfield of children's folklore as a gateway into discussing the broad issues inherent to folkloristics. Once having established a few basic criteria and their quantitative-field counterparts, I will press forward into an interdisciplinary exploration that takes on infant interaction in an ethnographic context, merging the developmental and folk psychological approaches.

In approaching the concept of nascent folklore, it may be useful to consider it as a subset of children's folklore. Children's folklore is our window through which we study expressive forms shared by children, among children, a protean world which often functions counter-intuitively to adult sensibilities (Sutton-Smith 1999, 6). Its study has come a long way from the thorough collection of text and variant and a preoccupation with "survivals" to incorporate theory that takes into account what William Wells Newell noted well over a century ago — that children's folklore is both innovative and dynamic, as well as traditional and conservative. Children's folkloristics is concerned not only with the contexts where childlore occurs, but also the negotiation of social roles and activity surrounding expressive forms (Goodwin 1985), and how children learn, adapt, and create within child-constructed frameworks of performative competence (Brady 1980, 163). Scholars are also cognizant of the fact that lore is not transmitted so much as it is activated, opening up the possibility of alteration and permutation (McDowell 1999, 61). Unlike folklorists who work with adults, folklorists of children are much more

likely to be aware of developmental considerations influencing what they observe, as those often are telling characteristics in setting childlore apart in both form and function (Fine 1980, 172).

An example of these developmental considerations is McGonnagill's 1993 study of preschoolers at play. The children she observed did not have a high degree of communicative or social sophistication, but she found that the game-playing behavior she observed still functioned as a way for them to process and cope with their social environment, despite relying entirely upon a fluid approach to their play, up to and including the actual goal of the game. McGonnagill called this behavior "protolore," because there were substantial differences when compared with approaches to folklore that stressed lore performed within the more clearly defined boundaries of aesthetic communication marked by particular conventions and style. She compared folklore and protolore to riddles and preriddles, enacted by young children whose grasp of the genre was not quite sophisticated or solidified enough to be considered mastered (McGonnagill 1993, 41).

However, children's folklore or protolore has rarely gone into areas that pre-linguistic children occupy, namely toddlers before 18 months of age. Talkers are more interesting: their experimentation with developing language skills gives researchers a ready verbal transcript, and the ease with which cognition and cultural competence can be evaluated via the increasing complexity and situational use of linguistic forms is undeniable. Infant behavior, on the other hand, has been dubiously regarded, save the responses and actions directed from adult caregivers to infants.[1] What occurs in infancy is complex and lays the groundwork for later development. I would not expect folklorists anywhere to deny this, just as they would not deny that childlore in its various age-appropriate incarnations contains its own complexity and significance whose mastery dovetails into the adult-recognized world of expressive competence. Yet the study of children's folklore ought not be concerned primarily with where child culture is going, through the ramifications of performative competence in the child contributing to adult social competencies, but with that which is in the moment, and how it has its own value which is insubordinate to adult norms. It short, it recognizes the inherent value and function of child expressive forms at each age.

Folklorists tend to gravitate to the expert performers, willing performers who have mastered their craft, and who are recognized by their community. These may include the most authoritative jump-rope ringleader on the playground, the snarkiest teenage dirty-joke teller, or the gaggle of kids who are unafraid to harass a fieldworker while the tape is running (Goodwin 1985, Bartlett 1971, and McDowell 1979, respectively). However, infants do not regularly exist in a community of peers, because they are incapable of being left to their own devices for long. The context one might imagine as hosting an "infant peer community" might be a day-care setting, or some arranged opportunity when infants are given the opportunity to interact with one another. Yet even here, our adult or even older-child conceptions of "peer group" seem inadequate. At times, infants do not even seem to be responding directly to one another when they're observed. Or are they?

Without our easily usable default (admittedly problematized) terms like culture, group, and language, infant behavior seems to be a very amorphous

phase. In part, this impression is correct because the forms we enjoy studying do not yet exist — what is performative competence for something that is not yet performance? However, from another perspective, there is a basic insecurity in the way that we approach our informants — namely, that lacking the ability to refer to language use as a means to validate our conclusions, we doubt our assessments as too adult-centric, or as wishfully inserting the reading of intention instead of confirming it. These are perfectly agreeable and acceptable cautions, and well worth acknowledging: a teleological angle makes for circular arguments, and "just so" stories instead of theory. Another part of this insecurity comes from our hesitance to acknowledge infants as actors in their own right, as agents, even if they seem to possess an alien form of individuality against our developed sense of self. Yet we are creatures that can and do live as a part of a physical world wherein body language is read alongside *or without* spoken language (Cicourel 1973, 40-41).[2] Ascribing intentionality and agency to non-speaking individuals is part of all human interpretive communication, yet recognizing infant activity itself as part of the range of interpretable human experience clearly requires some sort of approach.

However, what do terms like competence, group, artistic, or communication mean in the context of infant interaction? To get at the undergirding elements of folklore requires some conception of what folklore itself is. As Oring notes, a definition of folklore *per se* is problematic, as it may be "partial, idiosyncratic, or inconsistent" (Oring 1986, 17). However, examining how various scholars have approached the problematic definition of folklore yields certain basic commonalities.

The first is that folklore occurs between and among people. It is discursive, interactive, and is a form of communication. This group may be large or small, down to a basic binary pair (Dundes 1965). The concept of "group" is fraught with ambiguity, and exists on multiple levels and imaginaries. However, it can be conceptualized due to shared experience and "bodily patterning" — existing in a physical, felt sense of community (Noyes 2003). This sense of community (alternatively, *communitas* as articulated by Victor Turner) hinges on the ability to empathize with fellow community members (Kapchan 2003). Empathy works to direct communication between members of the group, aiding mutual comprehension and sense of identity (Noyes 2003). In seeking out the nascent forms of these requirements for folkloric interaction, we will be identifying where and if the infant shares the ability to sense others' motives, if the infant can recognize other humans through shared experience, and if the infant can communicate interactively with other humans.

Another basic aspect of folklore lies in its attention to the creative and the artistic. Folklore is at some level expressive, and aesthetic expression in turn draws in the notion of the repeated, re-creation, tradition, and again, the community (Ben-Amos 1971, Glassie 2003, Oring 1986). *Creative, artistic, expressive* — all of these terms are immensely problematic, and must be judged in terms of the culture from which they originate. Yet as Pocius points out, regardless of what art might be, its expressive potential hinges on the emotional and affective. "Art" comes to be considered as a kind of skillful behavior, accomplished between people to varying levels of emotionally-affective efficacy (Pocius 2003, 51). In short, the

connection between human communication, human skill, and human emotional response is inseparable: we will be looking for where infants show the capacity to respond and express with emotionally responsive and affective behavior.

The final basic block in artistic communicative actions is that its performance is intentional. The "interpretive frame" within which communication is produced and read must be at its heart a reading and evaluation of intention to make sense of others' actions (Hufford 2003). The will to create makes the creation possible (Glassie 2003). To see if this aspect of folklore is present in a nascent form, we will be looking to see whether infants are capable of reading intention and demonstrating intentional behavior.

However, to seek out what makes the communal, the aesthetic, and the intentional feasible during this stage of human development benefits from an interdisciplinary stance, through developmental psychology, language socialization, and evolutionary biology. Developmental psychology takes as a starting point the idea of normative stages through which all humans pass on their way to adulthood. It is concerned not only with the development of infant cognition, but also what may be considered healthy development in terms of interaction and socialization through measurable tests of competence (Sameroff and Cavanaugh 1979, 386).[3]

Mediating between developmental psychology and more qualitative research is the study of language socialization, which asserts that all human behavior is learned interactionally, and that by gradual mastery of interactive forms, children become increasingly competent members of their social and cultural contexts (Ochs 1986, 2). Children socialize adults, just as adults socialize children, and once children are capable enough to work tacitly (if not reflexively) with interactional routines, they also socialize one another (Corsaro 1992).[4]

However, if infants are born with these socializing abilities, it may also imply a biological, evolutionary imperative inherent in infant interaction with adults. The evolutionary approach has become very trendy within the past decade. In its most fascinating moments, it makes a case for artistic activity as not merely part of what "matters" for our mental wellbeing, but that at a basic level it is a trait selected for over millennia for human survival (Dissanayake 2000, 2001).[5]

The three fields work well in tandem for the same reasons that ethnographers learn about a culture in order to interpret it. Developmental psychology points out what we can reasonably expect from our infant interlocutors, as well as gives us signs to look for during our ethnographic exploration. Language socialization provides us with a successful model to follow in terms of merging lab analysis with cultural manifestation. The evolutionary approach allows us the possibility that specific observations at the nascent level may indeed be generalizable across cultures.

Why "Nascent Folklore"?

If developmental psychologists, language sociologists, and evolutionary biologists are doing so much good work on infant behavior already, why should folklorists take it as their interest? As cited in the introductory quote to this article, Felicia McMahon and Brian Sutton-Smith make clear that for folklorists of children, *each* age has potential. I read this as a challenge — shortly after the child exits

the womb, she is literally severed from the mother to become her own separate physical entity that must rely on communication to survive in a cultural context that will shape her and be shaped by her. I noted above that infant behavior does not always conform to our assumptions about how interaction is supposed to work. For cultural relativism to function for infant behavior, we have to simultaneously acknowledge infants as cultural agents, and as agents that may not yet have internalized cultural practice. This idea is particularly problematic when we consider the most loaded assumption of agency — that the agent be intentionally setting out to act upon her environment.

This is the heart of nascent folklore — the abilities, skills, and biologically adaptive mental machinery that infants possess as the smallest, most proto-cultural, and most underrepresented of human agents. The mastery of foundational communicative abilities is imperative for the development of later expressive forms, yet as an early form of communicative action embedded in shared human experience, these abilities can be shown to be themselves a form of folklore.

To explore what these foundational abilities mean in the context of ethnographic infant observation, I was fortunate to enjoy the cooperation of mothers and staff in visually recording infant interaction at several parent-baby playtimes during the spring of 2007. The playtime took place in a comfortable, living-room-like environment in the building of the hosting organization, which provides valuable natural-birth and breastfeeding resources, as well as pre- and post-natal counseling and other health-related activities particularly geared towards new and expecting mothers. During the same time period, I also took video footage of my then-baby daughter in our home. In the first situation, infants were able to interact with one another as well as with their mothers, though I stayed off to the side. While the mothers occasionally conversed with me, I spent no time deliberately interacting with the infants. In the second, staying out of direct interaction with my daughter was impossible, even with her father trying to engage her, due to her curiosity with the video camera.

In what follows, I will engage with the three major, interwoven areas common to approaches to folklore — the communal, the aesthetic, and the intentional — and argue that the infant abilities of interactive imitation, innovation, and intention are where these later orientations find their first expression.

Interactive Imitation

The first area of nascent folklore is that of interactive imitation. Imitation in infancy takes place within an explicitly social framework in which develop forms of social cognition, group identity, and aesthetic capacity.

For present purposes, imitation is, most simply, the reproduction (or attempted reproduction) of some act. At its most easily detectable, imitation can resemble identical stimulus and response, but its complexity can encompass simultaneous movement, affect, sound, timing, and even intention (Trevarthen et al. 1999, 140-142) Neonate imitation between adult and infant has received substantial experimental attention. Minutes after birth, a newborn can imitate simple movement, such as tongue protrusion, and by six weeks of age, infants can

repeat imitated actions over a day's delay, indicating some memory of the action (Meltzoff and Moore 2001, 176). Furthermore, they can actively influence the flow, type, and manner of communication with caregivers by their own positive and negative reactions (Dissanayake 2001, 85-86). By eight weeks of age, infants' sense of timing is good enough to know whether or not a play partner is responding contingently (Dissanayake 2001, 86). By three months of age, an infant can repeat behavior in order to elicit more of the same behavior from her partner, and by seven months, the infant repeats behavior to bring about a desirable result from an adult (Bretherton, et al. 1981, 334–5).

The ability to imitate and the awareness of being imitated give infants an identity by analogy which serves as a psychological basis for social cognition, not its eventual outcome:

> Because human acts are seen in others and performed by the self, the infant can represent the other as 'like me': I can act like the other and reciprocally the other acts like me. Persons are special entities, the only entities in the world with whom I can share behavioral states. *The cross-modal knowledge of what it feels like to perform observed acts provides a privileged access to people not afforded by things.* This sets the child down the pathway of ascribing psychological properties to people. (Meltzoff and Brooks 2001, 174, emphasis in original)

In other words, imitation may not only be the sincerest form of flattery, but the most direct avenue into forming conceptual as well as lived community. Imitation goes hand in hand with what appears to be innate human empathy (Field 2007, 94; Eisenberg 1992, 8-10). Imitation provides a process by which motives are interactively engaged, being simultaneously read and responded to, and innate abilities develop into intentional ones (Trevarthen et al 1999,142). Beyond the establishing of community and social cognition, infants' intersubjective reading of motivation and early development of the intricacies of timing and signal may be responsible for the development of pretense, as they discover that the framework can be manipulated between the contingent response and the non-contingent response. With the skill in intersubjective comparison and contrast grows an increasing awareness of and competence in directing the metacommunicative signaling of play.[6]

Where to Find Interactive Imitation

To draw out the shared, the aesthetic, and the communicative as one might hope to find in a folkloristic analysis, I am looking for consistencies, repetition and attempted repetition, what is collectively done, and how knowledge (if any) is transmitted, as well as looking out for metacommunicative markers of both play and social engagement (Meckley 1994, 5). This includes but is not limited to established signs of social interest from developmental literature, such as sustained gaze, smiling, outcry, eye contact, directed movement, as well as lack of interest denoted by averted gaze.

The description that follows is excerpted from my video footage of the local parent-baby playtime described above, and lasts approximately fifty seconds. The excerpt features two infants of eight months and four months placed face-down, roughly two feet apart and facing one another on separate blankets. Both were at varying levels apparent strength and balance in maintaining a position in which they could push up with their arms on the floor to look around. Their mothers sat to their infants' sides within arm's reach, frequently speaking on the infants' behalf, interrupting their own casual conversation.

However, in looking solely at the movements of the infants and their non-verbal interaction, the two baby girls showed immediate interest in one another through sustained gaze and eye contact, breaking it only from time to time to look at a toy or a caregiver. These breaks in attention given to other things such as toys, blankets, or mothers lasted from one to three seconds. However, their shared attentive gazes lasted between fifteen and twenty-seven seconds, making the asides comparatively miniscule. Neither infant could creep or crawl effectively yet, so they stayed where they had been placed.

In the first ten seconds of the clip, the younger infant, who demonstrated generally a much less physically stable ability to push up and balance herself, arched her back and kicked her legs in the air. The older infant watching her immediately arched her own back and vigorously wiggled her arms and legs in the air. After the older infant repeated this movement several times, the younger observer noticed and followed suit. The timing of the wiggling was entirely dependent on whether or not they were visually engaged with their partner. When the older infant, more capable of turning her head and pushing herself up, looked away, she missed her play partner's break into wiggling, and did not wiggle in response until she turned and actually saw what the younger was doing. Of particular note was that the infants did not wiggle simultaneously while they were closely watching one another, only in alternation. When the younger infant averted her gaze, she stopped participating in the activity. It was only a matter of seconds after the clip ended before she began to cry and her mother removed her from the situation.

The interactive cues that marked the two infants' social interest in one another included sustained and averted gaze, outcry, isolated arm and leg movement, and the fully-engaged body wiggle. The communal co-wiggling activity was, like the preschool protolore observed by McGonnagill, spontaneous and structured in part by the context in which the mothers had placed the babies, but was not directed by the adults. Despite their occasional interference (such as stroking their infants' heads, smiling encouragingly, speaking to the infants or the other mother as if to explain their baby's action), the mothers were never as interesting to the infants as the infants were to one another. However, unlike protolore, the imitative wiggling cannot be read as including some intent, not even a flexible one. It exists on a genre-less level of action and reaction.

The mutually enjoyable patterning of wiggle play between the infants proved possible because of the highly developed sense of timing and signal that the infants already possessed. With extended observation, tracking cultural cues for timing could be achieved for even this young age. It is possible to suggest

that instead of disjointed flailing of arms and legs, the younger infant began to move in ways that lifted all four limbs up off the ground in closer imitative form to the other infant, closely attending to how it was done and then repeating the action. Beyond the idea of skill acquisition, the exploration of "turn-taking procedures" may be, as Shieffelin and Ochs suggest, a way into understanding larger communal social relationships (1986, 171). If we take nascent folklore in tandem with language socialization, we can argue that infants at this age not only communicate in terms of social cohesion and interaction, but that they actively teach one another by imitative skill acquisition within a peer group.

Innovation

Innovation is the second major area of nascent folklore. It is closely linked with imitation, but beyond the establishment of community and social cognition, the intersubjective reading of motivation and infants' early awareness of the intricacies of timing and signal rapidly transform into experimentation. From the early ability to compare and contrast grows an increasing awareness of the metacommunicative signaling of play. These markers can be found in "exaggeration and stereotypy, (e.g., prolongation, patterning, and repetition)," and the dynamic variation of their use serves to establish that intentions can vary dramatically from expectation and not be taken seriously, which is the point at which pretense can function (Dissanayake 2001, 94-95).

By nine months of age, an infant's sense of timing is not only good enough to imitate when she wishes, but also to try different tactics in imitative interaction to see if the imitator is watching or not, which often becomes a game to see if the other is following (Meltzoff and Brooks 2001, 179). The infant also begins to attempt different means of accomplishing the same goal (Meltzoff and Brooks 2001, 182).

However, deciding when and where infant inventiveness occurs may hinge on uncovering the point at which habitual action and delayed imitation can be distinguished from "innovation," as well as coming to terms with what innovation may mean for infancy. The field observation in the previous section dealt with infant interaction in a face-to-face context, but it must also be noted that much of infant and toddler play is done in apparent solitude, with little or no direct interaction at all. However, this co-presence still functions as a basis for imitation and learning. Tullia Musatti explains that among infants and toddlers, it has been experimentally verified that even during apparently non-related play, children's activities are related consistently to what other children have done previously during the same time, with varying degrees of relationship between them. In studies where the range of age went from twelve to eighteen months and eight to twenty-seven months, imitation occurred that did not necessitate direct communication; infants and toddlers aligned themselves to what occurred around them. "Having a child's own activity and that of the partner simultaneously displayed makes it easier for the child to assess the activities' similarities and differences" (Musatti 1993, 245). In other words, they are able to distinguish

between their own activities and those of others, and to incorporate and imitate that which is new.

The question then is whether any innovation is truly new, or if infants simply learn by watching others and trying out new activities the first time for themselves. While I do not want to dismiss the infant at solo play, the autotelic, self-sustaining enjoyment of his experimentation feeds upon itself. Much like studying dialogue with oneself, solo play bears the hallmarks of communicative activity while not explicitly being so. Innovation rises out of interaction with others, even when it is in parallel and indirect.

In summary, dynamic variation existing between the infant and the other, whether another infant or an adult, gives rise to the co-interpretative, intersubjective existence of imaginative play, all by the age of nine months. The ability to engage and recognize engagement by the other is fundamental to recognize what is play and what is not, in order to establish the subtle framing of experience and interaction.

Where to Find Innovation

For the purposes of identifying nascent folklore, we turn our focus to what is communicatively effected during the flow of an interactive scene, setting aside for the time being the more difficult-to-identify innovation at work within individual experimentation.

Signs to look for in identifying innovation are similar to imitation. Sustained gaze can denote interest, and shared actions and patterns mark the interactive element. However, to discover innovation, we seek those actions which break the pattern, and in a play context, are used for the purpose of contributing to a sustained and mutual enjoyment of an activity. To know whether an action is truly innovative, a fresh invention of game play that the child has never witnessed before, is simply not in the scope of these field observations. However, introduction of a fresh movement, a different cry, or a different use of a toy that is done for the purpose of prolonging the enjoyment of play demonstrates the innovative ability of the infant to string together prior witnessed behaviors into a fluid whole, not unlike verbal formulas and innovative variations within a riddle sequence that require skill, intelligence, and creativity to fashion together.[7]

By way of illustration, let me sketch a play scene based on my own observation of infants at play. Two infants are playing with toys which rattle. One lifts his toy into the air and shakes it vigorously, eliciting the sound. The enjoyment of doing the action appears to be reason enough to continue shaking the rattle periodically. Meanwhile, the second infant begins to pay attention and lifts her rattling toy, imitating her play partner's movement. Now there are two infants rattling toys in similar ways. At this point, the second infant, whose toy is not of the rattle-specific variety, but has a number of other bells and whistles attached, begins to bang it on the carpet, and it makes a most pleasing cacophony of noise. Infant one continues shaking his rattle midair for a moment more, then begins enthusiastically pounding it on the floor, smiling, eyes wide.

We do not know whether the second infant had experienced floor-pounding with the toy prior to this situation. However, the break in the rattle pattern was directed by the infants' choices, and, most importantly, contributed to the continuation of the play activity. Perhaps after a time, rattling midair would have ceased to be enjoyable. Perhaps changing the activity to pounding allowed the infants' enjoyment of the activity to endure ten or even twenty seconds longer than the rattle game might have lasted on its own—a significant space of time for their attention spans. The possibility for this early creative process hinged on the intersubjective space between the two infants where variation could be incorporated and improved upon.

This example suggests an approach much like trial and error in the ways that human beings mutually construct culture. Behavior is imitated, and when improvements are attempted, the response of the community (or party) for whom the communicative behavior is initiated determines whether those changes in turn are repeated. This early pattern in infant rattle play becomes writ large, with all of the same messy and subjective misfires of communication building upon and responding to one another, smoothing into established patterns over time.

The attempting of new or previously demonstrated behavior for one's own ends (often in the same process of trial and error) is also foundational in regard to creativity. Creativity and innovation as terminology possess culturally-laden value; and the idea of innovation as "newness" and therefore "good" certainly creates problems. However, if we recognize the interactive quality of innovation — namely, that it is dependent upon others to validate it, repeat it, or encourage further repetition — we can see that together, imitation and innovation in interactive symbiosis provide rudimentary guidelines for judging activities that evoke pleasure, such as play (Miller 1973, 91). In other words, they form the foundational properties of aesthetics.

As noted earlier, distinguishing the difference between previously imitated behavior, a failed imitation, and a completely original innovation is beyond the scope of my observation. However, I would question to what extent such distinction truly matters. The communicative function of the innovation is located in the context where it occurs, and its effect is of greater interest than its originality. However, as noted above, imitated behavior and innovative behavior do differ somewhat in the matter of intention, for it is in the exploration of intention that we can create a picture of the infant as agent.

Intention

The final area in which to see the nascent stage of folklore is intention. Imitation and innovation in the context of interaction are intimately tied to the simultaneous and mutual reading of intention and motivation by infants. Intention, motivation, belief, and desire are all terms considered to fall into the realm of "folk psychology," namely, the interpretive system(s) that humans utilize to make sense of others' actions through the attribution of mental states (Malle and Knobe 2001, 45-46).[8] Despite its relative lack of empirical provability, intention has been the focus of much attention in recent years, and considerable effort has been made to

analyze the various aspects of intention as well as to do empirical study of how the concept is put to use (see Malle and Knobe 2001, Ames et al. 2001). What is particularly relevant for this analysis is that intention and the reading thereof is a social, survival-oriented trait, culturally nuanced and intimately connected with communication.

Infants appear to learn intentionality within the same interactive and imitative framework that Dissanayake credits with laying the foundation for later aesthetic imagination. Meltzoff notes that infants are taught the idea of actions being linked with intention by virtue of their own experience in trying to fulfill their own goals and watching others do the same:

> Infants have goals and act intentionally. They have experienced their own failed plans and unfulfilled intentions … When an infant sees another act in this same way, the infant's self-experience could suggest that there is a goal, plan, or intention beyond the surface behavior. Thus infants would come to read the adult's failed attempts [at doing a task], and the behavioral envelope in which they occur, as a pattern of 'strivings' rather than ends in themselves. (Meltzoff 2007, 131)

However, this broad analysis gives us little assurance. By three months of age, it has been shown, infants repeat behavior in order to bring about a repeated response in a caregiver, and infants from seven months repeat behavior in order to make an adult laugh (Bretherton et al. 1985, 334-5). Elsewhere, it has been argued that infants begin to infer absent goals from between nine to thirteen months of age (Meltzoff and Brooks 2001, 181).

However, to what extent can such activities be considered intentional? Knowing that infants are intentional agents and recognizing infant intention may be separate matters. Ascribing intentionality may itself be a component in whether an action achieves its goal, since reading a situation as goal-oriented implies the existence of intention. Relevant as well is the idea of self, and to what extent the infant agent conceives of the self, as we approach intention's sister concept, agency. The awareness of how one acts upon the world, in tandem with how much one may exert one's own action upon it, vary substantially within the first year of life.

In order to interpret underlying intentions, there must be a shared "framework of meaning," as well as some medium through which communication can be achieved (Bretherton et al. 1981, 340). As discussed in the previous sections, this framework of meaning is constructed through the minutiae of action and reaction, imitation and innovation, and infants can direct and influence its flow. I read this as arguing that infants do not need to possess a "theory of mind," that is, the ability to recognize intentionality in others, in order to express desire in a goal-directed way.

Desire is another folk psychological concept. As Malle and Knobe point out among adults discerning between desire and intention, desire is often defined as an internal state, while intention is the action that springs from desire. In determining intention, social perceivers suppose strength of a person's desire to

do something. If that desire is acted upon, then it is read as intention, but only if there is an equally perceived presence of commitment (Malle and Knobe 2001, 60).

This raises a teleological spectre. Do varying assumptions of present desire and committed action risk adults reading too much intention into infant behavior than actually is present? I think that we as ethnographers must be willing to spend the time necessary to interpret infant behavior in long-term ethnographic context, to recognize individuated cries and gestures, as well as culturally-relevant recognizing of infant intention — what is recognized will be responded to.

In studies of vocal imitative behavior between infants and parents, developmental psychologists Kokkinaki and Kugiumutzakis found that with infants between two and six months of age, imitation with parents gave rise to "two specific kinds of emotion: interest and pleasure." They go on to write that, "Given that emotions are regarded as motives in human intentional communication, this later finding provides evidence that infants and parents also share the ability to read each others' motives and intentions" (Kokkinaki and Kugiumutzakis 2000, 185).

While this developmental work does not prove anything about perfect strangers being able to read the intentions of infants whom they do not know, it does suggest that drawing in expert observers, namely parents, could provide an angle for making more accurate conclusions about infants' intentions during a given interaction. Like any human interaction, reading motivation is an interpretive process.

When looking to establish and interpret infant intention, many of the same criteria that are useful in recognizing imitation and innovation also apply. However, this time the approach must also incorporate more obvious emotional signs of response — pleasure, excitement, and interest — that work to direct action.

Beyond merely signaling and recognizing intent with sustained gaze, or looking for consistencies and repetitions and breaks in that repetition for new permutations on an old theme, the indication that the collective play activity has a clearly defined emotional component is key in attributing intention, as well as are metacommunicative markers of play, such as exaggeration and stereotypy.

Where to Find Intention

I hope to illustrate this concept of intention by comparing the following two scenes, where I have entered as an "expert observer" of my own child. Both scenes demonstrate attempts at a game variant of peek-a-boo played with my daughter of thirteen months at our home. The first scene is directed by me, stationed to one side of a video recorder. The second is the same game played with her father while I filled the role of observer and camera person. Both video clips do not last more than thirty seconds each in recorded form.

In the first recording, our daughter turns from standing at a door and walks roughly fifteen feet away from the camera, through a living area scattered with toys, and down a hallway. I ask her where she is going (in high-pitched play tones) even as she disappears out of sight around a doorway. Then come the

cue words of our game, which we have played numerous times before: "Where's [Name]?" The sing-song chant is repeated at a higher pitch. As the repetition of the cue comes to a close, the child runs out from the doorway with a huge smile on her face, looking for my face. I exclaim with exaggerated excitement, round eyes, and large smile, "Ohh, there she is!" My daughter responds by squealing in delight and prancing on her tiptoes. She drops eye contact with me, and continues to create the squealing noise for her own apparent pleasure. She averts her gaze to inspect the basket momentarily before she looks up and turns back for the doorway.

In the second clip, the toddler is standing behind her father, seated in the middle of the living room floor. He begins the game cue. "Where's [name]? Where did [name] go?" He turns around quickly with a wide, open-mouthed smile and exaggeratedly wide eyes. "There she is!"

However, our daughter has instead turned to a nearby toy behind her father, and does not respond to his cue. As her father turns to make eye contact with her, she looks up from the toy, and then to where I am seated with the video camera (about ten feet away) and then back to her father (about a foot away), before she returns her gaze to the camera, with a slight smile. The father tries again, turning away from her and repeating the game cue again. However, the direction of my daughter's gaze does not stay more than a moment on her father, and with an increasingly large smile, the indirect steps that had taken her to the toy become more direct, and she makes an unsteady beeline in the direction of the camera. As she passes her father by, he laughs, "Ohh, [Name]'s not paying any attention to Daddy; [Name] wants the video camera!" The clip ends as the child, grinning into the lens, gets her wish, grabbing for the camera and wrenching it to one side.

The desire of our daughter to play the game with us was just as important as our willingness to play it with her. Through metacommunicative exaggeration, we parents in both clips demonstrated our intent to play, and our daughter picked up on it. In variation one, she used the doorframe to hide behind. In the second variation, her father expected her to hide behind his back and appear to one side (based on their previous game play). However, whether due to the distraction of the camera, or the lack of ability to see his face as he signaled the game to her through exaggerated expression and repeated, patterned behavior, her direct engagement with him and with the game were fleeting, despite his numerous attempts at re-establishing the flow of interaction between them.

In the first clip, pleasure could be interpreted and shared by both participants, and recognized in the form of squealing, exaggerated expressions, and body language, such as excitable prancing. The appearance of the toddler was marked by the child's pleasure. Perhaps this came from filling the hanging, uncertain expectation of the situation and gratifying it, but it engendered a return of clear, affective signals that reinforced and heightened the her own emotional response. Pleasure was also demonstrated for pleasure's sake, such as the continued squealing that was disengaged from seeking a response. When we re-engaged through eye contact, she immediately turned back and walked directly for the doorway, a clear gestural sign that she wanted to repeat the action and have the game continue.

In the second clip, the child's own gauging of the likelihood of chasing the camera seemed to grow steadily, first in the uncertainty of her glances between camera, father, and toy, and then in the widening smile she manifested in advancing in the direction she wished to go. It might also be noted, however, that she was never dissuaded from heading toward the video camera. Both parents reinforced their own amusement to the child through smiles and laughter as the incongruencies between the situation they were trying to effect and the child's actions became more and more pronounced, first through her utterly ignoring her father in favor of the nearby toy, and then as she toddled purposefully for the camera.

Both of these clips make apparent the ability of the parents and the toddler to establish a pattern and a play frame for the game. The parents achieved this through a repeated call with a specific vocal tone and exaggerated facial expressions. The child accomplished this through the repetition of actions that will trigger the calling cue, and enabled her to share in the expression of delight and surprise. The delight and surprise that generated the fun of the game hinged on the toddler's ability to distinguish between that which was expected, and that which was not expected. By failing to appear immediately in the first game, the toddler experimented with the concept of expectation, of the absent being present, and her own control in eliciting a reaction. She was in control of the flow of the response (though if she had disappeared into the bathroom for too long, I would have assumed that she was no longer participating, and would have broken the play frame to deny her agency in exploring that particular location). In the second situation, parental attempts at creating a recognizable play frame can be seen to exist somewhat shakily, and then fall apart. In the uncertain glances between father and mother and camera, it was apparent that not only did the parents recognize what their daughter wanted, but that the toddler was not entirely at ease with pursuing her goal until the signals were clear — the parents had been attempting to make eye contact and repeat a cue call, but once their laughter and smiling at her replaced their (feeble) attempts to maintain the play situation, her steps became faster and more direct, and her smile widened and grew to a cry of pleasure upon reaching her destination.

The Promise of Nascent Folklore

The areas of interactive imitation, innovation, and intention have much to offer folklorists who wish to understand this stage of human aesthetic potential.

The seeds of identity and community sprout in shared communicative and intentional behavior, the mutual recognition and empathy inherent in imitation, and the developing theory of mind that comes out of the developing child recognizing others as "like me," perhaps the most early experience of Turnerian *communitas*. The most basic experience of imitation and innovation is relived in tradition, paralleling the conception of folklore's ability to be both conservative and dynamic (Toelken 1979, 39-40). This "communal creation and recreation" (Ben-Amos 1971, 7) is negotiated through a social community and its inherent system of response and evaluation, and the building fluency of triggering response in others and in

turn reading their intention provides for the existence of framing and the reading of contextual clues (Hufford 1995, 532). The ability to read the differences in performance and intention can be argued as the foundation of genre.

There are some unsettling implications that we can draw out of the areas of infant ability that I have discussed above. One harks back to outdated assumptions about "primitive" man and cultural group-think. Another could be perceived as a flattening of cultural variation and change under biological reductionism. However, despite the implied conclusion that all infants everywhere share these foundational abilities as part of their biologically evolved equipment for survival, there is no cause to diminish the role of human agency.

By recognizing foundational abilities which incorporate the desires and the intentions of the individual actor, there exists room for the growth of the master performer as well as creative expression. Between cultural and social frameworks, I would expect to find imitation, innovation, and intention appearing in varying forms, with peer and adult responses to proxemics, timing, and variations of intentional action being read and responded to very differently. The forms that these infant desires and intentions grow into will be diverse — what creativity looks like, and indeed what constitutes mastery or performance, will vary by culture and folk group.

The folklorists of infancy are few and far between, which suggests challenges in negotiating developmental literature, dealing with the lack of a clearly defined group identity, and transcribing multimodal, nonverbal communication. However, perhaps we set aside ethnographic methodology and interdisciplinary experimentation too soon. As adult humans we possess years of practice past that early developmental milestone of nine months to begin grasping that others have goals and that other humans are "like me," while simultaneously acknowledging that expectations can and do differ from what actually occurs. Already highly experienced readers of intention and action, as ethnographers we hone this skill to make our interpretations as accurate and culturally sensitive as possible; as folklorists, we engage the expressive, emotionally moving, communicative aspects of human behavior — regardless of the phase of human development at which it occurs.

Infants experience emotionally meaningful shared communication—between one another and others. They possess their own means for evaluating contingency and demonstrating their engagement and preference; they interact creatively and imitatively. With expressive communication which is wordless yet vocal, active and intentional, infants can be recognized as significant bearers of protoculture — their own nascent folklore.

NOTES

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NOTES

1. A notable anthropological exception to this that I have found is Alma Gottlieb's "Do Infants Have Religion?: The Spiritual Lives of Beng Babies," in *American Anthropologist* 100 (1998: 122-135). She spent over 700 hours with infants in order to counterbalance a potentially "adulto-centric" perspective.

2. See Noyes' discussion of physical experience (and academic discomfort in addressing it) *Fire in the Plaça: Catalan Festival Politics after Franco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). See also Sklar 1994.

3. It would be incorrect to assert that all developmental psychology is clinically "cold" or unconcerned with cultural nuance, though critically speaking, quite a lot of literature suggests Western-centric universals in forming normative bases for comparison with other cultures that has in turn been picked up by the social sciences (see Burman 2008, Hirschfield 2002 for extended discussions).

4. While this assertion would not be hotly disputed in many psychological circles, these two fields of developmental psychology and language socialization differ in many ways. Language socialization is positioned between the quantitative lab analysis common to most psychological studies and qualitative ethnographic research, incorporating both statistical and interpretive elements, with an end focus on what can be learned about cultural values encoded in the medium of language forms and how they are taught and internalized by children (Shieffelin and Ochs 1986, 168).

5. In its most extreme forms, the evolutionary approach risks falling into biological reductionism, taking for granted that there are a set of universals that exist a priori to culture manifesting in its various forms. However, for early infant behavior, where cultural forms are in fact in a nascent and largely unformed state, biology may offer insights — especially when we take as a possibility that certain human behaviors may be evolved just as physical characteristics are, rejecting the idea that evolution is the equivalent of biological determinism (see Bandura 2001 for an extended discussion).

For an excellent critique of this evolutionary position, which in many studies contains at its core the reverse-engineering of culture, see Robert C. Richardson's *Evolutionary Psychology as Maladapted Psychology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007).

6. By exploring this area, I do not mean to conflate protolore and nascent folklore with play, despite some of their obvious similarities. For example, Piagetian sensorimotor-period "practice play," is certainly marked by an intrinsic enjoyment of the act of doing itself, its agents not yet having reached the developmental capacity for symbols or rule-based games, yet it is often done in solitude (Miller 1973, 90). While I do not believe that the ability to derive pleasure from solitary play is unimportant or unrelated to an intersubjective social framework, it does not receive focus here.

7. See McDowell 1979 for an extended discussion of the creativity and variation within riddling sessions.

8. A term generally considered pejorative by the psychological literature, I wonder if we cannot bring some respectability to the idea of "folk psychology" by recognizing it as the way in which humans perceive others, a cultural system which is taught and believed.

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Fathers and Their African American Daughters: Hair Pieces Creating Ties that Bind

Neal Lester

Barbie never told Black girls they are beautiful.
Essex Hemphill, "Soft Targets (For Black Girls)" (2006)

Writing about the "mother-daughter dance over hair" in her article "For Black Girls, Hair and Self-Esteem Are Interwoven," Karen M. Thomas (2006) asserts that hair is both "a mother's way to pass judgment and a daughter's way to rebel." Thomas sees hair as "a sign of independence and self-identity [that] announces to the world who we are," but for little African American girls, the hair "dance" is more complicated, often signaling "a daughter's entry point into racial differences and America's standard of beauty" (E3). Culturally and racially-specific hair stories represent nuanced intersections between adults' choices about girls' hair and young black girls' ability to make their own informed hair and identity-forming choices in an adult world. Kim Green's reflection in "The Pain of Living the Lye" underscores the effect of "good hair" on an African American child's psyche: "I grew up mad at my hair because it wasn't like the swinging manes of white children who surrounded me" (1993, 38). To achieve the "good hair" ideal, heated iron combs or lye-based chemicals become the tools of destruction and temporary construction. African American women routinely talk and testify about a loss of innocence by pinpointing the moment their hair journeys toward selfhood began, testimonials revealing an evolution from hair-straightening to eventual acceptance of self and hair. The beginnings of these self-defining moments in young black girlhood are clear and long-lasting, and ultimately shape the public and private images of black womanhood.

Indeed, the rhetorical ploys that associate straight and relaxed hair care with "good" mothering tugs at the emotional and spiritual bond between African American mothers and their young daughters, evident in this advertisement for a popular children's relaxer: "Mommy gives us PCJ Pretty-N-Silky *because* she loves us!" (Luster Products, 1996, 123 emphasis added). Another such advertisement by Luster Products (1991) offers a similar appeal: "For your daughters, playing 'dress-up' can be wonderful make-believe fun and games. But as their mother, you know that looking out for them also has a serious side. And that includes caring for their hair. That's why you use PCJ Relaxer" (65). Decidedly mixed signals equate mother-daughter love and nurturing with hair relaxing and blur lines between the assumed carefree make-believe of childhood innocence and play with pleas to mothers that they are doing what is best for their daughters. The final tag of the ad is profoundly ironic, a claim that the product is "an original just like your daughters."

If we take our cues solely from Disney and its most recently released 3-D animated flick *Tangled* — yet another spin on the Rapunzel narrative featuring its celebrated long, straight, silky haired blonde damsel — we sense that some things about beauty aesthetics seem never to change. Even the social and political

implications of straight hair for Disney's first African American princess Tiana, from *The Princess and the Frog*,[1] reveals minimal efforts to challenge prevailing ideals about "good" and "bad" hair. On the other hand, perhaps **CHANGE** really is in the air, and in this case, it's all about little African American girls and their hair. This **CHANGE** may or may not have anything directly to do with the running platform of then-Senator Barack Obama and his subsequent election as the first African American US president. Or, perhaps the reality of the first African American First Family with its three generations of Obama females inhabiting the White House residence at the same time creates a new level of social, cultural, and political awareness about difference, especially racial and ethnic difference. Indeed, while public scrutiny of hair has followed past First Family females — Jacquelyn Kennedy, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton, for instance — this current media attention to race and gender as related to hair seems another first.[2]

A decidedly new attitude about the race and gender politics of little African American girls and hair is being attributed to the early October 2010 *Sesame Street* segment that has gone viral on YouTube, in which the spunky brown girl puppet sings with gusto and full commitment the catchy, upbeat tune "I Love My Hair!" This little brown female puppet's bold embrace of her nappy hair is precisely the companion to neo-Soul singer India.Arie's self-affirming "I Am Not My Hair" (2006): "I am not my hair/ I am not this skin/ I am not your expectations, no, no/ I am not my hair/ I am not this skin/ I am a soul that lives within." This same message about loving one's hair as an African American girl interfaces with messages of self-acceptance and African American cultural affirmation projected in a bevy of children's picture books about African American girls and their hair — Carolivia Herron's *Nappy Hair* (1997), Natasha Tarpley's *I Love My Hair* (1998), bell hooks's *Happy to be Nappy* (1999), Joyce Carol Thomas's *Crowning Glory* (2002), and Dinah Johnson's *Hair Dance* (2007), to name a few. Together and individually, these children's books challenge prevailing assumptions about a single beautiful hair ideal: long, flowing, silky, bouncy, capable of being wind-tossed, manageable, and blond. Indeed, "good hair," according to these alternative children's book narratives, is hair that we are born with and hair that makes us happy with who we are. Reiterates poet/ playwright Ntozake Shange (1972) addressing black adults about the hair ideal for African Americans: "the roots of your hair/ what turns back when we sweat, run,/ make love, dance, get afraid, get/ happy: the tell-tale sign of living/" (n.p.).

In addition to planting and nurturing this positive message to African American girls that chemically untouched hair is desirable, acceptable, healthy, manageable, versatile, and a source of pride, socially and politically conscious fathers are stepping in to assist socially and politically conscious mothers already challenging the many forces that negatively impact our brown daughters' sense of their most positive selves. Through this lens of hair, fathers address the sins of glamorizing the straight and silky hair ideal. Chris Rock identifies the impetus for his comedic documentary *Good Hair* (2009) as his five-year-old daughter who, after playing with Barbie dolls, presented him with this disturbingly loaded question: "Daddy, why don't I have good hair?" With this question so steeped in cultural folklore and written so indelibly upon the fabric of America's distinct history of black and white

race relations, Rock set out to explore why this prevailing notion of "good hair" as straight hair**,** presumably like white people's hair — even though all whites don't necessarily have straight hair — still exists and has reached his and surely other young African American daughters. When asked how Rock talks to his little girls about their hair, he responds both seriously and humorously: "Like any dad, I just tell my daughters they're beautiful as much as possible. And I keep chemicals out of their hair until they're old enough to make that decision. Because if you put chemicals in a kid's hair, she's addicted. It's like making the kid a vampire" (Fireman, 2009, p. 122). Another African American parent acknowledges the profound pain at witnessing his/ her child's feelings of inadequacy that can only be countered through creative re-messaging: "I think that at some point, if you have a little girl, we all deal with the day your child comes home from school and says, 'I don't want my hair to look like this; I want it to look like Annie's.' And Annie's hair is blond and long and not what she has" (Sims 2010).

Figure 1. Like father, like daughter: hair's family tapestry. Neal A. Lester with daughter Jasmine Z. Lester.

Paternal nurturing and social and political responsibility are at the heart of *Sesame Street* writer Joey Mazzarino's response to his adopted Ethiopian daughter when "he noticed as she played with her dolls that she wanted long, straight blond hair" (Gray 2010). His politically-charged creative response was the two-minute, upbeat video meant to remind his daughter that her hair was "nice just as it is" (Gray 2010). That the Italian American father's song for his brown daughter addresses years of ambivalent emotions from many African American adult women about their subscribing to a straight hair ideal has been unexpected for Mazzarino, as summarized by an NPR staff writer (2010) in "'I Love My Hair': A Father's Tribute to His Daughter":

> In writing the song, [Mazzarino] wanted to say in song what she says to his daughter: "Your hair is great. You can put it in ponytails. You can put it in cornrows. I wish I had hair like you." That simple message has caused an outpouring of responses from women. Mazzarino got a call from an African woman who told him the song brought her to tears. "I was amazed, 'cause I sort of wrote this little thing for my daughter, and here this adult woman, it touched her."

This message has resonated loudly and clearly with African American women and girls as they navigate the politics of personal decisions; says one African American woman:

> I embarked on a hair journey to revive my curls after getting bored with the polished, broadcaster's look. Tired of wearing my strands bone-straight and looking like "everyone else," I stopped using the flat iron for six months, wore my hair in protective hairstyles like braids and twists, and then had a big chop three months ago to remove the straggling straight ends so that my curls could grow back healthy and strong. And while it took over a decade to embrace my natural hair, when I watch this two-minute Sesame Street video, I can't help but fight back the tears as it sends a much-needed message to young black girls at a pivotal point in their development that will reaffirm why they should love what they've got on top. Who knows if I would've yielded to the hot comb or "kiddie" relaxer had I been exposed to such a positive image of black hair at an early age. I can only hope that little girls who've watched this [video] know that, as the Muppet sings, "there's nothing else that can compare to their hair" (Oliver 2010).

As an African American scholar who is also a parent, I began researching, teaching, and lecturing on the race and gender politics of head hair when our daughter was born twenty-one years ago. This work started not because our biracial daughter had ever asked questions about her hair**,** but rather because others were so consistently preoccupied with labeling our first-born's hair as "good hair" or "nice hair."[3] During our daughter's childhood years, I was her primary hair groomer because my more flexible job schedule as a university professor allowed that morning ritual. Plus, my Italian-Argentine spouse hadn't a clue what to do with our daughter's hair. As our daughter has moved into the young adult world, I have missed those days of bonding through detangler and hair-grooming sessions that united us on what I hope was some spiritual level. That she consciously alternates between flat-ironed straight and curly hair means that some spoken or unspoken lesson about her hair's healthiness and about self-acceptance must have been absorbed. Joey Mazzarino shares details of a similar bonding-through-hair grooming-ritual with his young daughter: **"**My wife is an actress and if she was away I would be in charge of my daughter's hair. I made sure it looked good … I'm still not great at braids, but I try. I do standard braids. I don't know what I'm doing. It was hard to get used to but I love doing it with my daughter…. [The song I created] really comes from a place of love for my daughter" (Darden, 2010). Basking in the glory and creative possibilities of braids, afro puffs, afros, dreadlocks, and plaits, and then with various fun and funny hair adornments, this little unnamed brown girl puppet's proclamation and dance performance underscore Joyce Carol Thomas's (2002) message of self-affirmation: "'What is good hair?'/ I ask my daddy/ And Mama answers, 'Why it's understood,/ Sister, if it's on your head it's good!'" (n.p.) Even Willow Smith, the tween child star of actor parents Will and Jada Pinkett Smith, sends a message of self-affirmation in her chart-topping single, "Whip My Hair" (2010), wherein she uses her proportionally too-long braid extensions as a metaphor of resistance to those who demand conformity to another's unreasonable and arbitrary expectations:

"Don't let haters keep me off my grind/ Keep my head up I know I'll be fine … I whip my hair back and forth/ I whip my hair back and forth (just whip it)/ I whip my hair back and forth."[4] Since we fathers and mothers are also trying to help our African-American daughters find their voices of self-acceptance, it seems appropriate to leave this final word on the race and gender politics of hair to our newest young cultural warrior as she prances confidently across the *Sesame Street* stage and onto our computer screens belting out this challenge and declaration of "I Love My Hair!" to every brown woman and girl — and by extension every brown man and boy — caught in this maze of American beauty aesthetics:

> Don't need a trip to the beauty shop,
> 'cause I love what I got on top.
> It's curly and it's brown and it's right up there!
> You know what I love? That's right, my hair!
> I really love my hair.
> I love my hair. I love my hair.
> There's nothing else that can compare with my hair.
> I love my hair, so I must declare:
> I really, really, really love my hair.
> Wear a clippy or in a bow
> Or let it sit in an afro
> My hair looks good in a cornrow
> It does so many things you know, that's why I let it grow
> I love my hair, I love my hair
> I love it and I have to share
> I love my hair, I love my hair!
> I want to make the world aware I love my hair.
> I wear it up. I wear it down. I wear it twisted all around.
> I wear braids and pigtails too.
> I love all the things my hair can do.
> In barrettes or flying free, ever perfect tresses you'll see
> My hair is part of me, an awesome part of me
> I really love my hair!

African American women and girls still journey toward a day when their sense of themselves and their assessments of other African American women and girls are not based on futile efforts to achieve a hair ideal rooted in someone else's limited and limiting constructions and images of beauty. This hugely important and popular vocal and visual cyber performance of "I Love My Hair!" in a little brown female puppet's own exuberant voice extends this father's message of positivity to his daughter far and wide in ways that books alone simply cannot and will not. African American parents can only hope that the combination of this father's effort and other parents' will be the **CHANGE** that nurtures, celebrates, and sustains their African American daughters as who will become African American women and mothers.

NOTES

1. See Lester 2010.
2. See Eleveld 2008, Desmond-Harris 2009, and Jones 2008.
3. See "Nappy Edges and Goldy Locks: African American Daughters and the Politics of Hair" and "Roots that Go Beyond Big Hair and a Bad Hair Day: Nappy Hair Pieces," in Lester 2007, 79-111.
4. The popularity of "I Love My Hair!" has led to a mash up with the *Sesame Street* video and Willow Smith's hit "Whip My Hair": http://hiphop.popcrunch.com/willow-smith-whip-my-hair-sesame-street-i-love-my-hair-mashup/.

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Sidewalk Songs, Jump-Rope Rhymes, and Clap-Hand Games of African American Children

Mona Lisa Saloy

Back during elementary days when everyone walked to school, the neighbors checked kids' bad behavior, then reported it to your parents, where you'd really get it again for doing what you had no business doing in the first place. In those days, not everyone owned a television set. Those who did had to patiently wait for TV time after the news and those God-awful "variety" shows for grown ups. By then, it was bedtime. Left to our own playful imaginations, we creatively filled time with various sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games. There were no headphones, no Sega games, no video arcades, no boom boxes, no CD or MP3 players, no palm pilots, no cell phones. This was before the "Mall," and most shopping was done downtown at back counters during Jim Crow. In many ways, it was a simpler time when many parents walked their kids to and from the bus stop or school in the neighborhood because few folks on the block owned cars. We lived in Black neighborhoods, shopped at neighborhood groceries, and sat in Colored-only balconies at the Saturday matinee. It was just us kids. We had each other; we had time. We were creative; and mostly, we just had good fun together.

While still in graduate school at Louisiana State University (LSU) at the end of the 80s, I wondered which of those kids' games and rhymes continued in Black communities some twenty years post-Civil Rights and integration.[1] Were these rhymes unique? What were kids doing at the end of the twentieth century? These questions led me to collect kids' lore in New Orleans, from the mid-80s through 1999. While I lost everything (a life-long collection of books, unpublished research and creative works) in Katrina flood waters, thanks to archives such as the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation[2] and the Louisiana State Division of Folklife, the raw data is recreated here. In the longer study, a complete listing of all games, rhymes, and songs is further classified.

My initial purpose in collecting kids' lore in New Orleans was to unearth connections from kids' play to the blossoming adult. Were there similarities in the function of kids' lore in New Orleans to other places to the scholarship in general? Did this generation of boys join the girls, how, when, why? For New Orleans pre-Katrina, in what environment did these activities occur? For that decade or more of collecting, here is a sample of the kids' culture existing prior to the devastation of hurricane Katrina. This data set is in sharp contrast to games and rhymes of their parents' generation (boomers) and even greater gender distance from the current generation post Katrina. The purpose here is to provide part of the overall study to portray the kids' culture as evidenced prior to 2005.

In New Orleans at the end of the previous century and up to 2005, Black children performed the songs and rhymes in a family and extended-family environment. The youth were sometimes left attended by elder brothers and sisters, cousins, or neighbors, who might get them started and urge them to continue, especially in New Orleans — a city of families where it is common for

several generations to live in the same neighborhood where they were born,[3] on the same street, or within blocks of one another. The result has been a sustained culture evolving over centuries. According to the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, prior to Katrina, nearly 70% of Louisiana residents never left the state. This does not mean all is love and kindness. Many families retain that geographical closeness and do not speak because of old grudges. For the sake of the children, a nurturing and extensive children's society continues.

This city of families, though many are at or below poverty level, remained in the same neighborhoods for half of the last century on the average, prior to Katrina. The result was a breeding ground for a culture of children, who were supervised by the loving eyes of family, extended family, and neighbors. That culture of kids produced sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games, which reflected not just rhythm and rhyme, but a developing sense of cultural identity, gender, social mores, and in more recent years, comments on society incorporating popular culture.

At that time, the existence of children's sidewalk culture depended on adults who believe that children should socialize separately. Even though they considered their children to be blessings from God, in New Orleans pre-Katrina, many believed that children should not be a part of adult talk and that children should play with children. Neighbors also functioned as extended family, so an element of safety existed because of not-too-distant watchful eyes, especially for younger kids. The result is that many hot Louisiana evenings are still spent in this way. This allows Black children to talk about "grown things" with their friends and siblings in a way they can get away with, in a song.

Doing just cursory research, it was clear to me that this kind of urban fun, that is playing sidewalk games, is not exclusive to African American Children. For example, such rhymes as "Teddy Bear" can be found in some form around the world and can be traced to early explorers who brought it with them most likely from England; generally, many scholars suggest that "Teddy Bear" has been around for some 300 years. "Teddy Bear" is used as a rhyme, with jumping single-rope games, and also in clap-hand games. This one was collected in Detroit in 1989 or 1990.[4]

> Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn around
> Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, touch the ground
> Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, tie your shoes
> Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, watch the news
> Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, climb the stairs
> Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, go to bed

Though a tried-and-true centuries-old model of kids' lore, here in Detroit at the end of the last decade, it is updated with the phrase "watch the news." In African American urban areas, these sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand Games serve different functions, foster quite original traditions, and continue strongly; but the way this process developed is unique; how these games evolve gave rise to generations of gifted young folks, and these activities provide a

nurturing environment in a protected neighborhood setting.

This research into the songs, games, and rhymes of African American children suggests strongly that it is no accident African Americans have contributed to world music, to an original American literary landscape. It is no accident that "rapping" is now a commercial commodity, and the lyrics of rhythm and blues music is legendary. The roots of Black music and literature are inseparably linked to urban and rural kids' games, songs, and play. Much in the way that the early blues, work songs, and sorrow songs gave rise to gospel music, jazz, and rhythm and blues, these sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games replace nursery rhymes very early and become the African American child's strong connection to the word in performance. As a result, this lore is the core of an oral literature, the beginnings of literacy, and a training ground for verbal repartee and verbal dueling necessary for survival in urban communities. The verbal prowess of African American children played on sidewalks in urban spaces is a direct link to the popular culture, music and story-telling nature of what become commercial raps. This folklore of Black children builds confidence and prepares these children to meet and assess the world in which they find themselves.

Africans brought to American against their wills took with them a great sense of rhythm and song. Hand-clap games such as those involving elaborate clapping under raised legs, slapping thighs and chests rhythmically while reciting the rhyme can be traced to working in fields during Reconstruction, the rhythms and recitations resembling work songs. Note this common example of Handbone. It is performed in a call-and-response fashion.

> Leader: Handbone, Handbone, where you been?
> Respondent: Round that corner drinking gin.
> Leader: Handbone, Handbone, what you know?
> Respondent: I'll pick this corn and drink some more.[5]

Rhymes with claps such as this one were surely pass-the-time entertainment, like Little Sally Walker, which can be traced to the days of slavery. African American children today should know that their games, rhymes, and songs are from a long-standing tradition of verbal strength maintained throughout the difficult times when education was prohibited for Black people. Another question arose: are contemporary games, rhymes, and songs, still functioning, and how?

My fear was that with so many contemporary distractions and trends, the advent of hundreds of cable TV stations, video games, headphones, and integration, these traditions are sometimes wearing thin. It was to document these traditions that I began this work. What I found is that these sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games, these traditions of oral lore among African American children, continued to function as teaching tools as much a play.

African American folklife determines whether we grow up learning from our moms how to quilt or how to sing gospel. Folklore is the sum of African American jokes, stories, rhymes, and songs. Folklife combines the ways of African Americans and influences how Blacks pass on what we make and do for generations. Folklore is what all people learn outside of school, outside of church, the

traditions we pass on face-to-face, by word-of-mouth, generation-to-generation. Sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games are significant examples of the folklore of African American children: what we do among ourselves for ourselves, but what is passed on to us, mixed with what each age adds to it.

Verbal artistry among African American children is expressive and creative, although the forms are different. Children's lore in New Orleans' Black neighborhoods bears a necessary developmental function. Sidewalk songs pass on attitudes and knowledge of self, imitations of adult life and values, with distinct criticisms of adult life and society norms. This is demonstrated in such circle games as "When I was a baby." There is nothing in the boomer repertoire like this one.

In this circle game, an imitation game, "When I was a baby," which looks so simple and fun on the surface, there is some resemblance to the antiphonal pattern, since one girl jumps into the center of the circle and begins the song, which is then repeated by the girls surrounding the caller. All in the circle sing the response together, adding physical representations of the actions of the particular subject. Literally, they recall how a woman develops and lives her life, how she experiences disappointment, and how she handles conflict.

When I was a baby, baby, baby
When I was a baby, baby, baby
I went a wan a wan a wan wan wan (imitating baby sounds)

All night long. All night long. (This girl re-joins the circle, and another girl steps into the center of the circle reciting that next part. This swapping of the central leader continues with different girls leading until the game is completed. Depending on how many are involved, everyone will get a chance at the circle center; or in the case of just a few girls, the each new stage of a girl's/woman's life is lead).

When I was a girl, girl, girl
When I was a girl, girl, girl
I went a umph a umph, umph ump humph (imitating smiley faces while pretending to jump rope; but they actually swing an invisible jump rope)

All night long. All night long.

When I was a teenager, teenager, teenager
When I was a teenager, teenager, teenager
I went a hum a hum hum hum hum (imitating a teen on the phone; the girls hold up one hand thumb up and forefinger out to resemble the headset of a phone.)

All night long. All night long.

When I got married, married, married
When I got married, married, married,
I went a kiss, a kiss, kiss, kiss, kiss (imitating a full-blown embrace, sticking out their lips pursed as in kissing; all movements animated and exaggerated throughout).

All night long. All night long.

When I had a baby, baby, baby
When I had a baby, baby, baby
I went a rock, a rock, rock, rock, rock (imitating a woman rocking their baby to sleep or comforting the child held tightly in their arms).

All night long. All night long.

When my husband beat me, beat me, beat me
When my husband beat me, beat me, beat me
I went a unh, a unh, unh, unh, unh (imitates the anguish of being severely beaten to the ground, afraid, hurt, crying out in pain).

All night long. All night long.

When I beat my husband, husband, husband
When I beat my husband, husband, husband
I went a bam, a bam, bam, bam, bam (imitates vigorously fighting back in retaliation with no fear and profound vindication and power; they enact the beating of the husband to the ground, laughing all the way).

All night long. All night long.

When I lost my baby, baby, baby
When I lost my baby, baby, baby
I went a sigh, a sigh, cry, cry, cry (imitates great grief, making crying faces all the while, sometimes laughing but fiercely pretending to cry).

All night long. All night long.

When I died, died, died
When I died, died, died
I went a humph, a humph, humph, humph, humph (imitates what it is like to be dead, arms folded akimbo, faces stern).

All night long. All night long. (This ends the game).

At the time, the core group of girls were aged six through ten. They lived within walking distance and most worshiped together, while a few attended St. Raymond Catholic School, just a few blocks east. They were not shy about reenacting their play and enjoyed having an adult audience. It was shocking to hear such young girls at play reflecting on the dominant gender themes of the day as well as the taboo topic of marital sex, resulting in birth, domestic violence, and the woman's power not just to fight back but to successfully retaliate and live out her life.

Circle games allow everyone to play; no one is left out. Sometimes, they are elimination games; in this one case, it is not. "When I was a baby" is an imitation game, something like more common Simon Says, but it is much more contemporary and light years away from the child-like concerns of my youth. Here, the gender roles are clearly defined, yet the "little" girls are not fazed by the content; this is typical of what they witness on TV, in movies, in neighborhoods.

At its core, children's folklore in African American urban areas is not just play but a comment on the world. Some rhymes are downright vulgar, with profane shouts and responses, and others are more respectful, editing offensive words cleverly during the game with the kids not skipping a beat. Some attitudes are imposed by race, sex, family, and individual ethnic and economic situations. New Orleans, with its Black majority, imposes a dominant and varied and varied set of adult examples, values, barriers, and opportunities. How did these come to be?

As with all folklore, transmission is key. With the oral songs and rhymes of these sidewalk games, Black youth learn typically from other children. They learn these songs and rhymes from their parents, often before they can talk. In many ways, this is the earliest literacy of African American kids. Once in the children's repertoire, sidewalk songs take the place of nursery rhymes and reflect pre-adult concerns. Children then learn them and pass them on to each other in the street, on the front porch, on the sidewalk, or in the public parks.

How do these elements function? Children's folklore, in general, fulfils certain functions: it reflects and criticizes society and transmits values. For most kids, their lore entertains them, teaches them how to manipulate words, helps to develop their group identity, and creates a bond. Especially for Black kids, these rhymes and songs provide opportunities to practice "handling" authority and inform them of their sexual roles.

The sidewalk songs of children's folklore perform a particularly important role in African American culture. When Black youth perform these rhymes and songs, they practice and learn to contribute to their rich African American verbal culture, a continuing historical legacy. By puberty, if not earlier, Black children must learn to "hold their own" for protection from the verbal abuse of their peers, sometimes avoiding or allaying physical abuse. It is a common Black custom to be able to "rap" oneself out of a street fight or "jive" your parents out of a deserved whipping. Therefore, this early verbal play becomes a vital link to what will later become "jiving," "sounding," "woofing," or "selling wolf tickets," especially "the dozens," and eventually "rapping," all of which are common African American verbal-dueling traditions. The dueling, dozens and rapping have been incorrectly attributed only to Black male culture. Girls may be the instigators of this tradition, and they participate in these early raps frequently with boys. From the start, boys

participate and play with girls to varying degrees depending on their exposure to sisters, girl cousins, and neighbors. Therefore, a Queen Latifa is no accident, and she is not just imitating a male rapping tradition. This is demonstrated in the group of youth that I researched, dubbed The Perlita Street Kids by their parents for the name of the street on which they lived and played at the time.

Any rules? Each youth is expected to contribute. If one doesn't know a rhyme, he or she is expected to make one up or learn one from someone else. No one wants to be known as not able to "talk stuff." These unspoken rules have existed for generations. In some cases, the environment creates a healthy competitive spirit, the kind that will produce a "jam" session as in Jazz where no one wins but everyone contributes creatively–which is the essence of "jamming" word play, and games creatively, communally. In other cases, kids can be cruel and pressure or taunt the person into producing, or the person will not be in the game, what is called "OUT" a fate considered worse than death. Nevertheless, the resulting product is children's lore, African American style.

Topics range from familiar rhymes and songs to adult-style "bragging" strategies. These songs are much more relevant to their day–such as the one expressing their knowledge of the existence of crack cocaine. This example is sung to a sidewalk dance or stomp (a group line dance popular in Black communities long before country music line dances). It is a simple rhyme but shows a prophetic awareness of trouble:

> Yo momma, yo daddy, they betta leave that pipe alone
> yo sista, yo brotha, they betta leave that crack alone
> yo auntee yo uncle, they betta leave that pipe alone
> Yo family you friends, they betta leave that crack alone
>
> (they do an elaborate turn)
>
> Do wha'cha wanna, Do wha'cha wanna
> Do wha'cha wanna, Do wha'cha wanna
>
> (they do an elaborate turn)
>
> Yo momma, yo daddy, they betta leave that pipe alone
> yo sista, yo brotha, they betta leave that crack alone
>
> — John, Sunni, Treshon, Natasha, Corey, Jason, 2 June 1990

In this sidewalk song, the children are aware of the impending fate of "crack" cocaine addicts. Crack cocaine is an enemy of the people they love, and it becomes something to avoid firmly. Here, they perform a prophetic service to each other, reminding themselves of the boundaries they must face to achieve a long and healthy life.

From these brief examples, it is demonstrated that at an early age in New Orleans, African American children actively participate in their verbal development

trough the years prior to Katrina devastation. The rhymes were not collected in the schoolyard. Like my childhood decades prior, these kids lived in neighborhoods within a mile of each other and walked to each other's homes to play after school. They brag, they duel, they dance, they sing of the world as they understand it. These rhymes, games, and raps serve to define group identity, address adult concerns, and help children learn verbal prowess and entertain one another. These sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games of African American children were still strong on the streets of New Orleans throughout the 1990s and early 21st century in the historic 7th Ward neighborhoods, as evidenced in the lore of the Perlita Street kids.[6]

NOTES

1. Many thanks to folklorists Dr. Rosan Jordan and Dr. Frank de Caro, who guided and encouraged my early training in folklore; and additional special thanks to Dr. Joyce Marie Jackson, also folklorist at LSU, who pushed me to collect, and continued to provide opportunities for me to present this work at the African Heritage Stage of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival for a series of years.

2. Special thanks to Archivist Rachel Lyons and the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation Archives for saving my work; I am deeply indebted to you for all you do.

3. Many of our names can be dated some 300 years and accessible in the older resting places, St. Louis cemeteries No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3.

4. This collecting, for two summers at the end of the 1989 and 1980, was made possible by generous support from the Michigan State Museum Festival of Michigan Folklife, while I was there to present Detroit kids demonstrating Double Dutch.

5. I heard numerous variations of this hand-clap rhyme throughout my life in Louisiana, and also in Black communities where ever I lived in the Bay Area of California and in Detroit and even in Washington D.C. when I visited for research.

6. Once invited, I presented these kids performing their games and rhymes at the Louisiana State Folklife Festival twice in the 90s, and numerous times at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival also in the 90s. Presenting our living traditions helps folklorists document contemporary culture. Festivals help everyone understand each other better and so promote respect as well as employment in the field for budding and experienced scholars. Certainly, it taught the children of Perlita Street a greater appreciation for their culture, exposed them to other cultures in an educational environment, and perhaps helped them develop a continued interest in folklore and folklife. Because the children did "perform" their traditions, the Jazz Festival paid each child $20.00 for the performance. No child participated without parental permission.

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Genetic Bubble Wrap

Karin Phillips

When considering my own childhood, it becomes apparent that I simply was not a risk taker. In fact, the most dangerous game I ever participated in was sled riding in my neighborhood. The hill was steep and there was a building to be avoided at the bottom but there isn't any way I can squeeze it under the heading of dangerous games. Luckily, I married an adrenaline-driven daredevil. His childhood stories quite literally make my jaw drop and his antics over the last couple of summers of high school unmistakably flash "DANGEROUS GAME" in brilliant neon.

The summer following tenth grade, my husband Scott and some of his friends from school would ride their bikes near where they lived. "It started in Chenango Bridge," he explained. The boys would take turns jumping into the Chenango River from a rope swing hanging from a tree limb on shore. "It was exciting," he said. "We didn't even think about getting hurt. It was just fun and a good way to cool off." This relatively mild level of risk-taking carried them through that summer and into the next.

Toward the middle of the summer following eleventh grade, the same boys heard about a rope swing into "Boland's Pond" from some older kids. This location was a little further down the river. Boland's was a topsoil company and the land around their business was a stone quarry. They would excavate the soil, essentially creating gravel pits. One of the largest pits was filled with water that seeped from the river. At the edge of this pit was a tall tree, conveniently outfitted with a rope swing. The boys would take a running start and jump into the standing water from the bank. "It was about a ten to twelve foot drop before you hit the water," according to Scott. The boys were undaunted. "This was even more exciting. The jump was better with more distance from the bank. It was great!" he enthused. It's significant to note that these summer rituals were deeply rooted in the childhood underground, as none of the boys' parents had any awareness of this activity. It's also interesting that part of the appeal of these activities was defying the murky legends of injury or even death surrounding them. "You'd hear that so and so had broken his leg or even his neck," Scott said.

As the boys got older, the level of danger in this particular game was amplified. By the end of the summer before their senior year, Scott and his friends moved their sport to the bridge between Boland's Pond and Chenango Valley High School. They would climb out on the steel beams under the bridge and drop approximately 25 feet into the river below. They would "preventatively" scan the river for potential dangers like logs or other debris. They made sure the surface looked clear, ignoring the potential threats below. This overconfidence and oblivion regarding real hazards is addressed in *Children's Folklore: A Handbook*, "Dangerous games let children prove their courage and skill. Insulated by the assurance of youth, players may not hesitate to jump into a game that looks risky" (Tucker 2008, 36). Scott and his friends quite literally jumped into their dangerous

game without a lot of consideration for the possible consequences. "I felt a little risk, sure, but what I really felt was freedom. I didn't feel scared," Scott shared.

The pinnacle of the boys' jumping adventures and, ironically, the *coup de grâce* took place the summer after their graduation from high school. At this point the boys were no longer confined to the area reachable by bikes. They had motorcycles and cars to facilitate broadening the range of their fun. They spent the summer exploring various gorges in Ithaca, New York. One favored location had a rope swing that hung from a tree on a large cliff. "I felt a little trepidation," Scott said. "I never went first. I had to swim downstream and climb all the way back up. It took quite a bit of time."

One hot day that summer a lot of kids were gathered at this location. "It was a party spot," Scott explained. They heard some kids talking about the "devil's punchbowl." They followed some people there. "We followed these railroad tracks, walking along the top of a ravine. As we got closer I could hear a lot of activity. There were about twenty people in a little gathering spot. Beyond that spot was a narrow path to the edge of a sheer cliff. It looked like a punchbowl," Scott remembered.

Scott also remembered the awe he felt at the height of the overhang some of the kids were jumping off of. "It was at least two telephone poles high," he said. He and his friends received instructions from the "veteran" jumpers. Scott watched two of his friends jump ahead of him. "I was very reluctant," he admitted. "Still, all eyes were on me and I felt that peer pressure. It was intense. I followed the directions I was given, pointed my toes, crossed my arms and jumped. The water was unbelievably cold. The impact jammed my knees up and almost into my face. My tailbone hurt so bad that I had trouble moving my legs to swim back. I swam with my arms."

The myriad ways in which this story could have ended tragically didn't hit my husband until he was safely out of the water and experiencing a painful motorcycle ride home. "We really pushed it to the limit that day," he acknowledged. "I knew how stupid it was. When it sunk in, I felt duped by my friends. I felt like I had cheated death. I learned to trust myself more."

When I hear the details of this dangerous game I wince. As the mother of three boys possessing their father's thrill-seeking DNA, I shudder at the thought of the games they have yet to invent or participate in. I can only hope that my prudent DNA will temper their play, at least a little.

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Failing to Fly, But Free Falling: Jumping as a Form of Childhood Release

Pamela Weintraub

Throughout my childhood, I was usually the responsible one. Indeed, I was THAT kid — the child who thought about what would happen if we got caught playing Ding Dong Ditch, pointed out how terrible it would be if we got lost in the local nature preserve after night had fallen, explained why we should not go to that keg party at the beach, and so on. Part of this was a serious fear of getting in trouble, but another aspect was the fact that I was never allowed to go anywhere or do anything by my extremely overprotective mother, so if I managed to discourage my peers from going to places I wasn't permitted (out in the neighborhood alone, the preserve, the beach, the mall, what have you), I would be preventing my own inevitable exclusion from such fun. However, despite my mother's best attempts to keep me safe from the world (I could write an entire paper on that alone), I still found ways to push the boundaries of dangerous play — my jumping games.

Although prevented from engaging in certain activities at home, while on the schoolyard I was able to experiment with the laws of physics on a regular basis. While it was most definitely not intended, the way in which my elementary school's playground was built easily facilitated a number of delightfully risky activities. Perhaps suffering from what Peter and Iona Opie termed "misplaced audacity," where children take risks with common objects such as "knives, swings, and roller-towels" (Tucker 2008, 36), my friends and I utilized a number of playground structures in our pursuit of thrills. The first of these was a metal, dome-shaped, web-like construction named "the spider hut." When we were little, our favorite thing to do was climb to the top of the "hut" (which was rather large, in retrospect), and drop our bodies through one of the spaces between the bars, dangling by our hands for as long as we could, and then letting go, falling six or seven feet to the ground below. This was a calmer form of jumping, because really, it was more of a carefully orchestrated drop and carried less risk than the variations we later engaged in. However, it was still quite high up and our parents would have had heart attacks if they had known about it.

When we grew older and moved to the "upper grades" section of the playground (since there were designated spaces for k-3 and 4-5), we upped the danger factor significantly. One favorite activity was to climb the acrobatic bars (which were two vertical metal bars with a single horizontal one held between them, and there were several of these structures at varying heights) and to jump, feet first, to the ground. These jumps ranged from three to probably ten or twelve feet in height, and there was concrete below (not a smart move on the school's part). The higher you were willing to jump from, the braver you were considered to be. That said, it was perfectly acceptable if a person was only willing to jump from so high. However, if people climbed to a higher point, made a big deal about it, and then seemed like they were going to "chicken out" they often found themselves pushed. It was far worse to be pushed because not only

was it embarrassing (since one lost quite a bit of credibility afterwards), but it was also significantly more dangerous, since there was less time to prepare the jump properly. With respect to my experience, heights didn't faze me, and the greater challenge was being able to climb the higher structures since I was so short. However, my taller friends were quite helpful in getting me up there, and when it came to jumping off, I was fearless. Occasionally I would get a scrape or bruise, and there were one or two of my classmates who got more seriously hurt (more than one sprained or broke a wrist), but that never really deterred us, since accidents usually happened with those who tried to jump from a certain height without experience or had not jumped properly. However, despite the fact we plummeted a full story on a regular basis, this was not the most dangerous variation of "jumping" that we engaged in. That was saved for fifth grade.

Every recess during our final year of elementary school, there would be a mad rush on the part of the girls (for whatever reason, this variation failed to catch on with the boys) to grab one of the swings at the far end of the playground, away from the eyes of the teacher monitors. The closer swings, well within their view, were not suitable for what we had in mind---swing bouncing. Swing bouncing was, and still is, an obsession at Forest Lake Elementary, and strangely enough, a tradition my year started, though I am told it is popular at other schools as well. The idea is to swing in a normal fashion, but at the same time try to swing as high as possible. Then, once maximum elevation is achieved, the swinger "bounces" off the seat and flies through the air, eventually landing several feet away. While dangerous in its own right due to the acceleration from the swinging, swing bouncing was particularly dangerous for us because of the five-foot-high metal fence that was set up several feet from the swings, running the length of the area, to protect passers-by from being kicked.

Although it was a well thought out protective measure in theory, all it actually did was create a challenge for us bouncers. The key was to place your jump short (landing a couple feet before the fence), or long (clearing the fence). However, it was extremely difficult to clear the fence, and only a few of us (mostly the smaller, lighter ones) pulled it off. But the pursuit of this goal was quite fun. Yes, people hit the fence on a regular basis, but with the exception of one large dent made by a friend of mine (which is still there ten years later and apparently revered as a warning sign), most people bounced right off of it. The real danger was if one landed on the fence, which never happened while I was there. However, someone from my brother's grade did break a leg on it four years later, so apparently it was possible. There also have been many attempts on the part of my old school to eradicate swing bouncing, but I still see it on the playground when I pass by during the summer.

When I think about why jumping and swing bouncing appealed to me so greatly, I always go back to the feeling that it created. The sensation of flying through the air, hurtling towards the ground, anticipating the impact — it was all exhilarating. There was something about being utterly free while falling that gave me a rush. I think there was the fact that when I jumped, I was completely in charge of myself. My life, my body, literally depended on my ability to land properly. Being raised in an environment where I was never in control of anything

and cooped up beyond all reason (to this day, I cannot walk around my incredibly white bread, suburban neighborhood alone … at least as far as my parents know), there was something wonderful about flat-out defying every single rule of safety and toying with gravity. As mentioned in *Children's Folklore: A Handbook*, "dangerous games let children prove their courage and skill" (Tucker, 36), and I think that for me, jumping was my way of proving to myself that even if my parents did not believe so, I could handle myself in the outside world.

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The Appropriation of a Commercial Trademark: The Golliwog as a Cultural Marker

Robert Macgregor

Peebles is an ancient small rural town in the border region of Southern Scotland. It was granted a Royal Burgh Charter in 1140 by King David I of Scotland. A major claim to fame is that it is the home of and a key breeding center for the world-famous Border collie.

Infamy surrounded the town in June 1991, when what should have been a joyous annual children's parade turned into a national incident over a small number of children who were "blackened" up in a minstrel/Samboesque mode of dress. Critics of the costumes and "blacken-faced" young people saw them as golliwogs, a highly criticized doll-like figure from Enid Blyton's "Noddy Series" of children's books. Others saw them as a golliwog, the international trade character, of a major British jam manufacturer, James Robertson and Sons. Numerous dimensions that surrounded this incident and many other related points of view will be critically analyzed.

The Golliwog, a Brief History

Historically, in Britain, Florence K. Upton (1873-1922) used a golliwog figure in a series of children's books. Soon after the publication of the first book in 1895 it became a commercially used symbol to sell a large array of products, such as toys, games, dolls, postcards, novelties, dishes, packaging, and, in the 1920s, food products. From the late 1920s until 2001, the golly was used by Robertson's, the jam manufacturer (Nicholson 1981; Hartlap 1984, Fisher 1975).

Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, controversy has ranged from the local grassroots to public debates, discussions of the golliwog in the House of Commons, letters to her Majesty the Queen, and many other avenues of discourse. All of these discussions have basically focused on whether or not the golliwog was a cherished doll, a cultural icon, an integral toy/doll that many British children had played with and loved; or was it a racist image, a play object that could instill racist values in children and psychologically harm minority, non-white British children?

January of 1987 marked a watershed point in this ongoing heated debate. British book publisher Macdonald Purnell decided to delete the Golliwogs from Enid Blyton's "Noddy Series." The director of children's publishing at Macdonald Purnell said:

> We have produced a completely new Noddy library and the decision was taken to revise the text, the illustrations and characters. A decision was taken to take the golliwogs out. A lot of people feel uncomfortable about gollies either because they are felt to be racist or because they always seem to be villains (Bates 1987, 2).

The new Noddy books of 1987 were welcomed by the Commission for Racial Equality (C.R.E.). A spokesperson said, "We had a number of complaints from people who felt that the depiction of the Noddy characters was insensitive."

Writers and critics of children's literature Dixon (1978) and Mullan (1987) discussed at length the serious, damaging implications that these grotesque, malevolent characters may perhaps have conveyed to young minds. Dixon believed that the golliwog was a part of most children's fictional nursery. He suggested focusing upon two considerations. Firstly, the golliwog was a standardized racial caricature, the Sambo, the minstrel, a creation of whites. Secondly, the names of the characters were widely used as racial epithets.

Seemingly, this grotesque doll, Dixon believed, was meant to confirm the connection and association of fear with black faces in particular. These naughty, mean, evil and menacing roles allowed Blyton to portray blackness a la golliwogs a sufficient cause for their dislike by young readers. Her "The Three Golliwogs," published in the early 1940s, had three golliwogs called Golly, Wollie, and Nigger who were disliked by Angelae, their mistress, because of "the blackness of their faces." The names, as stated previously, did not change until 1973, and the "Three Golliwogs" book was sold into the early 1990s. As early as 1964 some libraries phased out the Blyton books.

Mullan reinforced the outlook that it was extremely important not to perpetuate racism by drawing misleading stereotypes of cultures and races in literature, especially those focused on children, where the images tended to work on a symbolic and unconscious level.

As Elaine Moss (1986) has argued, the 1970s were years in which "Britain was coming to terms with its post-Imperial role as a multicultural nation" and this had its effect on the content of the content of children's books. The editors of Children's Books for a Multi-Cultural Society (1985) argued that unless:

> we want our children to develop an inward-looking, insular perspective, educating them for the future must imply educating them to live and play a positive role in a society where cultural diversity is recognised and respect (Mullan 1987, 124).

Wilkinson (1984, 1987) discussed the psycho-cultural analysis and impact of black dolls and role stereotypes. She believed the vivid symbolic artifact called the golliwog was a most grotesque example of frightening images. Ironically, she stated, psychologists continued to criticize children's play with golliwogs "on the grounds that the black face, the pop eyes and the red mouth are the unconscious source of many childish nightmares" (Wilkinson 1987, 21).

Forster (1989) condemned Blyton's *The Little Black Doll* (1937, 1964) because of its character 'Sambo' and Oliver Tinkle's *The Golliwog* (1982). Forster stated the golliwog had rapidly established itself among the characters of the English nursery, but by way of its longstanding use as a commercial trademark, it had entered the repertory of contemporary racist abuse (73) ; more on this point later.

Opposition to Macdonald Purnell's decision was immediate. Critics of the changes saw it as a process of degollification, a bowdlerisation of the 1940s

classic. Newspaper columnists called opponents of the golliwog 'barmy', 'the loony left', left-wingers, labour councillors, left-wing councils dividing the right from the left with political labels such as those forementioned. Newspapers that carried articles on the Macdonald Purnell decision would include the *News of the World*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Star*, the *Guardian*, the *Sun*, the *Daily Mirror*, and the *Daily Telegraph*; see works cited for more complete details.

As previously stated, many other forms of protest against the golliwog gained national momentum in the 1980s. Although protestations against the trademark had begun approximately 30 years previous to the Blyton affair, historically, Robertson's golliwog appears to have been used by the firm since about 1910. It was in 1928, however, that the lapel badge began to be used as a three-token redemption item. Children and mothers were encouraged to buy a jar of jam, cutting from the label a small stamp-like token, collect three, mail them to the company, and receive an enamel badge of the golliwog. To date, well over twenty million badges of the golliwog have been distributed. The golliwog also appeared on cups, towels, pens, pencils, writing pads, erasers, cutlery, ties, and other items, all purchasable from Robertsons (see examples).

One major campaigner against the perceived racist promotional items was the National Council Against Racism in Children's Books; other institutions would include The Commission for Racial Equality, the Greater London Council, the Camden Council for Community Relation, *Searchlight* magazine, *Dragon's Teeth*, the North Lewisham Project, the George Jackson Media Collective, the Merseyside Labour Council, and many, many individuals from various walks of life. All protesting discourses intersected on the complex, multidimensional, widely circulated stereotype. The 'grotesque' golliwogs, whether portrayed in books, commercial trademarks, or numerous and varied commercial items, all had a wide, simple grin, large, bulbous, round eyes, a shock of fuzzy/wool-like hair, and thick lips. The clothes are always in bright, basic colours: usually red blue, green and yellow. The trousers frequently have blue and white stripes; the brightly colored jacket is short, and the golliwog usually wears a bow tie. This image clearly indicated the historical associations, the southern Sambo, the Minstrels of 'burnt cork', vaudeville, theatrical fame and infamy. One must also remember that until the 1973 Pan edition, when golliwogs' names change, the three Blyton characters were called 'Nigger', 'Wollie', and 'Golly'. These racial and racist epithets were changed to 'Wiggie', 'Waggie', and 'Wollie'.

Examination of racial labels and their conventional meanings, as in Blyton's golliwog trio, reveals some insights into Britain's racial outlook towards such names; that is, they were acceptable. MacGregor (1993) highlighted examples where the word 'golly' and golliwog epithets were used in numerous social settings. Salman Rushdie, in Hamilton's New Yorker article (1996), recalled the school life of the well-known author in England. In 1961, at the age of 13, Rushdie was sent to Rugby Public School in England, His time there was one of taunts and anti-Indian jokes. He described catching a studymate crayoning "wogs go home" on a wall. The slogan, he thought, was clearly aimed at him. He said, "I went insane … I banged him as hard as I could against the wall he was writing on " (94). Rushdie has called this a determining moment in his school career; indeed,

his whole attitude toward life in England. It was the moment when he learned how to strike back. Later, in an end-of-term satirical revenue during his final year, he heard himself lampooned: "What is this shape 'midst the nebulous fog?' Merely the resident Bradley House wog" (95).

Rushdie, in his book of essays, *Imaginary Homelands* (1991), openly discussed racism in Britain; he believed that the English language historically coined many terms of racial abuse such as 'nigger' and 'wog' and posed the question, "Can there be another language with so wide-ranging a vocabulary of racist denigration"(130). He went on to say, "Yes, the golliwog, too; at football grounds, black players are taunted with the cry, "Get back on your jam jar'" (146). This last example was widely used as one of many racist slogans that football hooligans hurled at black soccer players in the 1980s.

Describing in some detail numerous examples of racial labeling and role stereotypes from various written sources, we now turn our attention to the 1991 Golly Parade at the Peebles Beltane Festival.

The Golliwog Controversy: Beltane Festival

On February 15, 1991, The *Peebleshire News* reported that the wearing of golliwogs costumes had been banned from the 1991 Beltane Festival Parade in Peebles. It was found that the costume contravened the spirit of the Regional Guidelines on Multicultural Education. The costumes owned by the Beltane Committee and stored at the town's Kingsland Primary School were not to be used in the Children's Parade. In 1990, a Mrs. Margaret Macintosh, a retired schoolteacher living in Edinburgh expressed her concern about the costumes She was shocked when she saw ten children riding on the back of a truck dressed as golliwogs and in blackface. She thought that the costumes and blackface were racist and she offered fifty pounds to help replace the gowns. The Festival Committee met with the local school board and the "no" golliwog decision was reached, reluctantly.

Figure 1. Marchers in the Beltane parade in Peebles, 1991.

It is worthwhile to note that the Regional Guidelines on Multi-cultural Education were established in 1986 by a special working group under the title "Multi-Cultural Education in Primary Schools." It was up to the head teachers to

decide on the implementation of the Guidelines and until Mrs. Macintosh's protest no one locally had thought about or given their opinions on the Beltane costumes. The document stated: "Everyone involved in education must instill in children a respect for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, color, or creed." It was not clear why it took five years for the guidelines to be applied to the Beltane costumes and why other stereotypical costumes — Arabs, Chinese — were also not affected and eliminated.

Once the banning decision was made public, there arose much local protest against that outcome. The first major player to enter the fray was the former principal and teacher of history at Peebles High School. Ted Smith "begged" the committee to reconsider its decision. Part of the text of his letters follows:

> Two of the highlights of the Beltane Festival are the Children's procession and the parade of floats containing numerous characters, some of which represent real-life people but not all. The rest may be mythical creatures, animals, or even toys such as soldiers and golliwogs. The latter simply depict dolls or inanimate objects which like teddy bears are usually to be seen on a child's pillow. To pretend that they are racially offensive is so ludicrous that one is inclined to retort 'You cannot be serious' (Keddie 1991, 1).

Mr. Turnbull, the chairperson, of the annual general meeting for the Festival, went on to read a second letter that had been sent to a national newspaper. Scott Kerr believed that Mrs. Macintosh's offer of fifty pounds was offensively patronizing. He believed that she evidently failed to understand that education was about establishing children's community identity and had nothing to do with indoctrinating socialist shibboleths. This is an interesting last comment, particularly since it invokes the word 'socialist,' which has somewhat specific politically ideological overtones. This reference to socialism and the political left reappeared in numerous ways throughout the Golliwog debate.

During the week of March 15, 1991, the Beltane Festival Committee announced that it had reached a compromise with the head teachers of the three local primary schools. The members felt that under the Education Guidelines covering Multi-Cultural Education in Schools the following changes would be made:

> As far as the Beltane Committee is concerned these costumes were never intended to be seen as any form of racial jibe, but were meant to represent a Golliwog doll, as they have done for many years. However, we agree that perhaps the term 'Golliwog' was now outdated and could, in some eyes, cause offence.
>
> The Golliwog costumes will be used within new characters to be created, called Rag Dolls. They will be placed in the Beltane Programme under 'Toyland.'
>
> It is hoped that this clarification of the much loved character will end this controversy (Golliwogs 1991, 1, 2).

The statement did not specify if the new characters would be "blacked up," but one committee member believed that the black make-up would cover the entire face and not leave white rings around the eyes and the mouth, as had been the case with the previous golliwogs. He believed that the woolly wigs would continue to be used.

The golliwog compromise did not succeed and one week later, it was announced by lan Thorburn that although there had been initial agreement, the staff of Kingsland Primary School, who had to handle the costumes, refused to accept the compromise. On March 22, the school staff gave Mr. Thorburn the following statement:

> Although it was felt after a meeting between Beltane Committee office-bearers and the head teachers of Peebles Primary schools that a compromise could be reached as to how the golliwog's costumes may be used in future years, this has proved not to be the case.
>
> The staff of Kingsland feel that to use the costumes with accompanying blackface and hair is unacceptable.
>
> It is with regret, therefore, that we have decided that the costumes be returned to the Beltane Committee (It's Goodbye Gollies 1991, 1).

Head teacher of Kingsland Mrs. Marlene Galashan, who had agreed to the compromise solution of renaming the dolls, said that her staff believed that the costumes were still "golliwogs with another name" and felt unable to administer them (Golliwogs Renamed 1991). Reaction to the banning of the golliwogs was quick and, at times, demeaning. Ex-Provost Alex Walker told the Peebleshire News:

> I can contain myself no longer. As far as I can see there are a few jackaroos who are posing a threat to our way of life and creating problems where none existed.

Howard Purdie, the local self-styled bard of Traquair, had the following satirical article published in the local newspaper. He called Mrs. Macintosh a Mrs. Mary MacIntrouble who, at 91, objected to the Peebles police wearing black uniforms: "Your policemen, I see a black-and-white minstrel. That is a racial stereotype and should not be tolerated." When she was asked what sort of uniform would fit the situation in Peebles:

> "Oh, I envisage something really colourful," trilled the excitable lady who used to teach Mixamotosis at the Golliwog's Primary School. "Something like funny-worded t" shirts, tartan boxer shorts and American baseball caps."
>
> "After all, our friendly bobbies should keep up with fashionable trends" (1991).

In the satire, Mrs. MacIntrouble sent the fifty pounds to the desk sergeant for new-style uniforms. The bard asked the policeman, Al Jolson, aged 113, if he was concerned about the lady in question.

> "Mammy!" sang the policeman, frantically waving his white-gloved hands. "I'd walk a million miles for one of your smiles, Mammy!"

Eyes bulging enormously, our friendly bobby tap-danced on the pavement outside the police station, causing acute embarrassment to a person from Edinburgh (Keddie 1991).

By May 31, the controversy had reached a national audience and more and more attention was focused on the parade and the town. Sides in the issue were chosen, and it was rumored that the National Front would be at the Festival to defend the pro-golliwog side and that anti-racists groups would give their support to the ban the golliwog position. The situation was getting out of hand. There was also a proposed mass "black-up" by Peebleans protesting Mrs. Macintosh's 'outside interference' in seeking to have the golliwogs banned.

A Mr. White, a local businessman, put up a prize of fifty pounds for the 'Best Beltane Golly.' Mr. Edge, a local hotel owner, announced that he would change the name of his hotel, The Green Tree, to The Golliwog's Rest, for June 21 and 22. Doug Mann, the Peebles singer-songwriter, saw his protest song "I Wanna Be a Golly in the Beltane Parade" become a local cu!t hit and eventually sell almost 2,000 copies (Mann 1991). A well-known black dancer and television personality, Clive Donaldson, would support the pro-golliwog group. Ironically, his stage name is Wiggi, which is one of the golliwogs in the Enid Blyton series *The Three Golliwogs*. He read some of the newspaper reports, and he was not offended at all by the golliwog costumes.

Two weeks before the six days of festivities, some of the local officials started to worry about the "untold damage" to the event and to the future well-being of the event. An editorial of June 7, 1991, tried in an objective manner to clearly outline the two positions in the golliwog controversy. The writer went on to say that in fact the picture of the pros and cons of the golliwog were more complicated than they seemed and the nuances might be lost in some of the stories that were published in the tabloid press. A golliwog parade might be portrayed as some kind of Ku Klux Klan rally in a red-neck backwater of Scotland. Throughout the newspaper articles, there appeared to be a growing acceptance that there would be a golly protest parade. Seeing this protest as an inevitability, the local authorities pleaded with the would-be marchers to take to the street on Friday night and not to interfere with the Saturday's Red Letter Day Parade for the local children.

Throughout the major protest time frame, the *Peebleshire News* started a "Golliwog Forum" to allow people to voice their opinions with letters to the newspaper. From February 22 to June 28, 1991, 37 letters were printed in the paper. From February 22 to June 28, 1991, 37 letters were printed in the paper. There were twenty-eight letters for keeping the golliwog costumes, eight against keeping the costumes, and one neutral reply; approximately seventy-five percent

of the respondents wanted to keep the golliwog costumes and the woolly hair and the blacked face.

Trying to discover just how long the golliwog imagery had been part of the children's parade was difficult. Some of the age estimates say that the golliwogs had been in the festivities since 1901 (ninety years), one said seventy years or sixty years. Whatever date was the real one was not that important; what was more germane was that the tradition of the golliwog was old and firmly fixed and accepted by the majority of the respondents. Initially, Mrs. Macintosh was the lone dissident, with some slowly growing support.

The major theme that repeatedly appeared in the golliwog support letters was basically that the costume and the blackface were traditional images that were part and parcel of Britain's heritage. The image was simply that of a harmless doll and only that, with no possible racist connotations.

Numerous people also strongly indicated that Mrs. Macintosh was a limousine liberal from Edinburgh, a sociologist, and not a true native Peeblean (a Gutterbluid). In fact, Mrs. Macintosh was born in Peebles and had worked in the community before moving to Edinburgh. This idea of an outsider causing trouble in a local community was echoed time and time again, as my on-site interviews and correspondence will show.

As a Stoorie Foot (someone who had left the community), Mrs. Macintosh defended her opinions and her six-month campaign to get rid of the golliwogs in the following manner:

1. She firmly believed that this was not the most important issue but it is an issue. She believed that to many people the golliwog was an offensive image.

2. The abusive term 'wog' which black people have to endure daily comes from this innocent source.

3. Britain in general was becoming more racist and there were many ways of combating it. This protest was her way. She believed that schools should be promoting positive images of all ethnic and racial groups. She believed that golliwogs were unhelpful and were an impediment to good teaching.

4. Her offer of a cash donation for the cost of the replacement costumes was neither generous nor patronizing. She felt if change occurred because of her action she should contribute to that change (Macintosh 1991, 7).

For the persons who saw the costumes as unacceptable, their basic point was that the United Kingdom was becoming a multi-racial society where greater tolerance and humanity to others were a necessity. Peebles was seen as a town that was parochial, insular and unsympathetic to the needs and feelings of ethnic minorities.

What I have tried to convey in the previous pages about the golliwog is that the image and name, in many different forums, have been controversial for many years. Considering the length of the controversy and the widely debated, widely reported nature of the various incidents, it is difficult to believe that some people of Peebles were not aware of the incidents; more and more the image of the golliwog was being seen as racist by a substantial segment of the population in Britain.

Within the town itself, a number of local "poets" and a well known folk singer had their works published and recorded which in themselves are revealing, The three verses of George Lewis clearly showed his sentiment and the frequent tie-in to the Robertson's jam product:

> "THE BIRTH OF A RAG DOLL"
> Sin-How nice to learn my Golliwog wasn't just a jolly wog, but sad his smiling black friendly face, not longer will my table grace.
>
> The golden shreds, and orange jelly too, hot buttered toast, and tea to brew, there's something missing, this I know, I don't want my Golliwog to go.
>
> But nothing now can bring him back, you see his face was much too black for two-bob-bits afraid to see, he's just another chap, like thee and me (1991).

Part of the wording in "The Birth of a Rag Doll" clearly echoed the long held outlook by the traditionalists that the golliwog image is nothing more than a doll, a cultural artifact, of folkloric and commercial Britain; note the references to jams.

Perhaps the artistic endeavor with the greatest longevity was Doug Mann's recording of "I Wanna Be A Golly in the Beltane Parade" (Golly Song Released 1991, 2). The words suggest the importance of rules, the interference by outside forces, yet acknowledge the golly problem did exist. Doug eventually became so identified with the song that he was called "The Golly Man." All the sales, the attention, and the controversy apparently delighted the artist. These words were recorded from the tape of the song sent to the author by the writer Doug Mann:

> I WANNA BE A GOLLY IN THE BELTANE PARADE
>
> I'd just one ambition when I was but a boy, Just one ambition tae fill my heart with job,
>
> No to enter a profession or tae tak a trade
> But just to be a golly in the Beltane Parade.
>
> *Chorus*:
>
> In the Beltane parade, in the Beltane parade,
> I wanna be a golly in the Beltane parade.

> A wifie up in Edinburgh frustrated aw' my plans, Declaring golly's racial and said they should be banned, She read it in some guidelines and guidelines must be right, And who would are tae argue when it's Doon in black and white
>
> Tae dress as an Egyptian I hear wid be just fine,
> A geisha or a gaucho frae distant Argentine,
> A songie Hielan laddie or ev'n an Injun brave,
> So what's so wrong with gollies in the Beltane Parade?
>
> Peebles golly problem is important there's nae doubt, Ye'd think from a' bickering, sae bitter is the rage, Small wonder they're a symbol on a jar o'marmalade.

The Parade and The Gollies' Protest

The first evidence of a "golly" protest took place on Wednesday, when two gollies waded across the River Tweed. Some say there were fifty; some counted seventy-six, and other observers say over one hundred golliwog protesters marched in the parade. The actual figure was not all that important, but the fact did remain that despite the national media attention given to the event a sizeable section of the community dressed as gollies and blackened their faces, all to protest the withdrawal of the ten children's golly costumes. Some of the titles and images that I researched include the following: Kingsland Escapees (Primary School "home" of the costumes), Gollie Busters (Ghost Busters film), Golly For Us, I am no Golly, Robertsons, Oily and his golliwog, Persil washes gollies whiter, Jollie Gollies, Rev. I. M. Golly, A Funeral Cortege, A Golly Detector Van, and Mrs. Maclntrouble. For some of the actual costumes that were used in the parade, see figure 1.

Rumors had circulated throughout the town on Friday that contingents of the National Front and the Anti-Racist League would be making an appearance, but they did not prevail. Nevertheless the media was out in force, and a BBC television crew did record the parade. Their interviewer and spokesperson was the black actor Craig Charles. Charles told the viewers of the eventual program "Them and Us" that he found the golliwog costumes "a hideous caricature of black people and offensive." After interviewing the owner of the Green Tree Hotel who had changed its name to The Golly Rest for two days, he turned to the still running camera and said: "I think the people of Peebles need a good kick up the backside."

Some other media personnel believed that the golly protesters showed "a good humored gesture of defiance." Mrs. Galashan, of Kingsland Primary School, closed off the school's involvement by saying:

> As an educational establishment we are concerned with the academic and social education of our pupils in preparing them for life in the modern world. We must not be seen to promote anything that might be taken as racially offensive.

Sadly, however, the staff of Kingsland Primary believed they had been let down by the Border's area School administration. Mrs. Galashan took a swipe at the educationalists by saying:

> We have not actually had any official backing from any official body even among professionals, the whole of the Region. I don't know what that says, but I find it rather sad (It's Goodbye Gollies 1991, 1).

As one writer from the region wrote: "If golliwog costumes in a children's parade are an anachronism they are not alone. Why it happened this year, and not during the Jam Jar row of the '70s, is still a mystery."

Cultural Markers and the Appropriation of Names and Images

Said (1993) believed that self-definition is one of the activities practiced by all cultures. It has a rhetoric, a set of occasions, such as festival, and a local and regional acceptance and familiarity all its own. Peebles had its Beltane Festival and parade for close to one hundred years.

This festival and parade were part of the local cultural traditions. In 1991 an 'outsider' threatened the longevity and continuation of a black-face' tradition. The 'insiders,' the locals, took to the walls and defended this cultural icon atavistically. According to Said, people were mobilized, throwing their outlooks and discourses back to an earlier imperial, colonialistic time (1993, 37). He also believed that culture comes to be associated, often aggressively, with a nation that differentiates 'US' from 'THEM.'

Rehin (1975, 1981) discussed the long history of the Harlequin character, Jim Crow, to blackface minstrels in Victorian London and its seaside resorts. Hern (1967) discussed blackfaced minstrelsy in England's seaside resorts and theatres. Pickering (1986) was interested in how minstrelsy symbolically worked out questions about the status of white Victorians posed within a framework of social and biological and class orders and distinctions. He went on to say that minstrelsy in Britain was responsible for crystallizing and establishing certain stereotypes of blacks and black 'racial' characteristics in Britain. In helping to shape a symbolic lexicon that people carried away in their minds after leaving minstrel shows, the presentations contributed to the development of racial prejudice. Later, when scapegoating took place towards blacks and other visible minorities, they had a ready-made lexicon of derogatory ideas, images, and names at hand: 'Sambo', 'Wog', 'Golliwog', and 'Nigger'.

As of November 2000, this lexicon, this ideological legacy in Britain had still to be overcome (Pickering 87). Lively (1999) briefly mentioned the successful television show in Britain 'The Black and White Minstrel Show,' which, in the 1960s, attracted an audience of over twenty million viewers on approximately fifty percent of Britain at that time. It ran until 1978. Even today, a continuing debate appears in the media concerning AI Jolson impersonators who appear in British benevolent venues and local halls (Kuttner et al. 1987).

Britain has a long tradition of differentiating blacks as 'THEM' from its white population as 'US,' the insiders; this ideological outlook almost always is discussed with some degree of xenophobia. Culture and its racial markers provide a source of identity. The numerous arguments that have been presented in this paper against changing the cultural icon known as the golliwog were linked to the 'loony left' a liberal discourse and philosophy associated with hybridity and multiculturalism. Culture conceived in this way can become a protective boundary, an enclosure supported in some instances by manufactured commercial constructions such as the golliwog stereotype.

Ziff and Rao (1997) have defined cultural appropriation as 'the taking' from a culture that is not one's own of intellectual property or cultural expressions. Expressions include artifacts, history and knowledge (1). Cultural appropriation is a multidimensional phenomenon. In the case of the golliwog, the 'black-faced' minstrel-like figure, where and when and how did the act of cultural blackening one's face begin? Lively and Rehlins both discussed the very origins of the practice of' 'blacking up.' In the context of English Morris dancing, Lively traces its origins to Africa and especially Morocco. The French Harlequin, or Italian Arlecchino, may have had its origins in the late Middle Ages. Rehlins discussed the early English example of 1377, when the Lord Mayor of London visited King Richard II at Kensington. Then and there mummers disguised as African princes, for example, danced and entertained the audience. In 1510, at the court of Henry VII, foreign ambassadors were entertained by Henry in a 'blackface' disguise, dressed as a Turk accompanied by twelve torchbearers "like Moreskoes, their faces blacke" (Rehlins 1975, 686). The humorous Negro made his appearance on the English stage in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Throughout most of the nineteenth century Negro minstrelsy was popular as vaudeville, theatrical entertainment. The idea, the process of taking, appears to have a long, long tradition: maybe first African, then European, with other appropriations of the Jim Crow representational format from America. The doll-like images, the representations of a minstrel-like, Samboesque figure, however were already widely seen and accepted by large sections of the British public. The stereotype of the dandified, brightly clothed persona of the black comic figure had already been somewhat fixed with British theatrical and other venues of popular culture, parades, dances, children's puppet shows, jokes, cartoons, and vernacular expressions, for example. What seems to have happened is a chronological serialization of cultural appropriation taking place over many centuries.

The pro-golliwog protesters in 1991 were a fleeting continuation of this adaptational process. They basically converted a 'black-faced' brightly costumed child into a somewhat parallel, similar image, the Robertson's golliwog. Much of the discourse and protestations for and against the golliwog clearly used the commercial trademark as the anchor, the cornerstone for all discussions.

In 1991 the golliwog, as a cultural icon, was part of the symbolically constructed social order of Britain. However, as we have previously discussed in this work, there has been a growing demand from 1950 to the present, for a recognition and re-allocation, of social status by visible minorities in British society. The historically collective identity was fragmenting, due mainly by the

large influx of non-whites, and images such as the golliwog were oriented and constructed with the view of a white Britain.

With the growing awareness of their own collective identity and power, black Britons and their supporters began to express their displeasure with numerous institutions (publishing houses and football teams and manufacturers, for example) and demanded change. There was a victory in 1991. The Beltane Festival stopped the 'black-faced' dolls. Robertson's and Sons, in 2000, continued to use the golliwog trade character. The pressure for change in the symbolic cultural capital in Britain is changing, but resistance to change also presently continues into the new millennium.

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Disastrous Alternatives: Boy Scout Disaster Stories and Legends and Imagining the Natural World

Spencer Lincoln Green

Introduction

Hiking the Narrows in Zion National Park as an adolescent, I remember well the stories we shared of the flash flood that killed an entire Scout troop earlier that year or the year before. It was recent. The troop had been hiking up the Narrows just like we were, on a clear day, just like this was. Although they had taken all necessary precautions, the clear sky above them hid the fact that farther upstream a storm was adding large quantities of water into the canyon. Out of nowhere the flash flood came and killed the entire troop. Although we may have wondered why we hadn't heard about it at the time, or why we were allowed to hike the same area, we did not challenge the veracity of the tale since someone had read, or had heard from someone who had read, the news article or seen it on TV. This was news, not legend we were sharing. The similarities between the ill-fated troop and ours gave it an ominous reality. Just like us, the Scout troop had come from Northern Utah and just like us, they had walked past these narrow sandstone canyons with the detritus of past flash floods as living proof that the stories were true. On another trip, a Scout cuts a green branch to roast a hot dog. Another Scout warns him that green branches have poisons that can seep into the hot dog when it gets hot. The Scout abandons his green branch to find one less likely to kill him.

Scouting legends such as these do more than exert social control on Scouts liable to damage local trees or get themselves into danger in the outdoors; they express deeply felt fears and values in how humans relate to the outdoors: the scene and subject of many of these fearsome tales. Jay Mechling suggests that campfire legends and lore, with their thematic obsessions with death and disaster, meet the psychic needs of those who share them. Beyond the obsession with death and injury we see here, Mechling notes a preoccupation with sexuality and resistance to authority (1980, 43). These are the taboos against which children's folklore often pokes and prods, looking for a way to handle these serious issues about which they are aware, but unable to talk openly for fear of censure.

Mechling describes these camps as an "exaggerated male group experience" for pubescent boys seeking to differentiate themselves "from the other gender" (1980, 45, 47). While I did not observe nor recall explicit needs to differentiate from the other gender in the present legends, there is an intense masculinity at work, and young boys seeking to differentiate themselves from their urban lives and the authority figures who dominate it become their own authority figures in a frontier or wilderness setting which hearkens to past modes of manliness.

The Scout troop I was part of included fifteen to twenty boys, ages twelve to seventeen, all Latter-day Saints, all members of the same ward, and all from an upper middle-class neighborhood of Provo, Utah, a college town of about 100,000

people. Our troop was fairly informal. While we did have different patrols, they were rarely, if ever, recognized or used in camp activities; we rarely brought our uniforms on campouts and were organized loosely in terms of camp duties. We hiked and associated with our usual friends rather than having to confine our activities to those in our patrols. The older boys sometimes gave orders to the younger boys that were usually followed. We shared tents, scattered around our site in the National Park's campground, with our friends and siblings. We were boys camping with three to four adult supervisors who also came from our LDS ward.

Scouts at camp are betwixt and between in many ways. As adolescents, they are between childhood and adulthood, the worlds of sheltered life and direct confrontation with the world. With limited oversight at camp, they are between the stricter parental oversight they know at home and the freedom of being with their peers. They are also between the city and the wilderness, where they imaginatively play out various possible consequences and dangers of life in their wilderness setting.

Bill Ellis notes that camping, in the United States, "involves playacting, by its very nature. Adults and adolescents, mainly from the city and the suburbs, voluntarily give up modern comfort to live for a while in an imaginative recreation of the 'frontier' world" (1981, 486). The world they are going out to experience is fueled by nostalgia and full of the drama, heroes, and excitement of the Old West. And just as the homesteaders and pioneers encountered a land that did not conform to their myths and ideals, modern campers do not find a land that conforms to the dreams of nostalgia that often propel them there. More than a place to experience nature and prove one's manhood, the Scout camp can be a place of tedium and struggling to participate in domestic chores that are more tedious and difficult than they were at home. Rather than trading the comforts of home for the excitement of the wilderness, they find they have traded the comforts of home for greater difficulty in accomplishing similar menial tasks. Cooking is more time consuming; cleaning requires multiple trips down to the river; only making your bed is easier, and the absence of expectations to wash mitigates the increased difficulty of many necessary tasks. The role of these disaster narratives, the poison lurking in branches, or the death that can descend without notice on a clear day are ways of infusing the quotidian experience of camp life with the intensity of the frontier drama. These stories bridge the gap between lived experience and the world of the legend by transforming the natural surroundings of the Scout camp into the world of the legend.

How is this done? Victor Turner speaks of liminal monsters that are not intended to terrorize initiates but to startle them "into thinking about objects, persons, relationships, and features of their environment they have hitherto taken for granted" (1967, 105). Often the legends told between Scouts at a camp involve fearful figures who inhabit the geographical area like Bigfoot, the Wendigo, or more local figures like Jack Haggerty of Northern California (see Gyemant 1965). The Zion Narrows legend does not involve a fearful figure so much as the fearful presence of nature. Hiking up the Narrows, river debris and drying tree stumps seen high up the canyon walls act as reminders that a flash flood would rise far above the Scout's ability to escape and come with such power that we would be overwhelmed.

Seen in this way, stories of death and injury in the outdoors can foster a ritualistic experience with nature that prompts a reevaluation of the teller's relationship with the land. In this case, the legends and stories transform the land into the setting of the legend, which the scouts are then able to inhabit with its attendant masculinity and independence. It not only allows adolescents to change their relationship with the land, but also their relationship with reality.

Are these stories legends, though? There are documented accounts of people experiencing some versions of the story that was told in my Scout troop in the summer of 1994. While the story we heard and shared involved the deaths of an entire Scout troop in the Zion Narrows, where we were hiking, there is an account of a group of three leaders and five explorer Scouts descending nearby Kolob Canyon when, due to high water levels, the canyon became dangerous and two of the leaders died. The remaining leader and all five boys were rescued after four days in the canyon (see Burrows 2002, Canyoneering 2005, and Hanscom 1996). This was certainly a real event that was well documented and debated. The debates surrounding the tragedy center on the dangers: who was responsible for those dangers, the leaders or the park rangers, and how to avoid them for one's own group. But those sorts of debates do not make a legend according to Linda Dégh who, in *Legend and Belief*, writes that a legend "entertains debate about belief … informs, explains, instructs, warns, or exemplifies through the telling of an extraordinary, unexplainable experience that a known person has encountered" (2001, 97-98).

The original story does not entertain debate about belief, although it is often used to explain, instruct and warn. One informant, inspired by some beautiful pictures, planned a hike in the Zion Narrows in the summer of 2003 with a roommate. Another roommate's girlfriend, hearing their plans, told him to be careful because "my cousin went to hike the narrows with his Boy Scout troop and got caught in a flash flood. A wall of water came and he died" (Ellsworth 2009). Similar to the stories we shared on our Scout trip, my informant was told that "A storm up in the nether regions caused a flash flood that came down and killed him." Certainly the message of the story was one of warning. Another informant heard about a Scout troop camping in a dry creek bed "somewhere in Southern Utah" when a flash flood during the night — "which often happens in those areas" — wiped most if not the entire troop away (Rife 2011). This version lacks many of the specifics of the other accounts but maintains some of the story's most basic elements: the desert of Southern Utah, Boy Scouts, death, water, and unseen danger.

While news accounts of disasters in Zion are not numerous, an article in the *Salt Lake Tribune* sought to identify the major disasters that have occurred there since 1927. The two leaders dying in Kolob Canyon is mentioned as well as two hikers dying in the Narrows in 1998 in a flash flood (Havnes 2009). The article adds that most people die falling from cliffs rather than drowning. However, in the world of our Scout camp, it was not the precipitous cliffs our stories led us to fear, but the canyon and the unpredictable water. It seems it is the unlikely fear that is most compelling. Looking over the side of a cliff, the outcome of inching towards it is obviously death. But in our Scout disaster narratives, it is the unlikely danger

of being drowned in a desert, the rare surge of massive amounts of water where there is so little, that inspires fear and the excitement of danger.

Zion National Park's website contains a page outlining safety information. Steep cliffs come in at the top of the list, followed by water (as in drinking and staying hydrated), driving, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, hypothermia, and firearms (Your Safety). The main warnings that have anything to do with the Narrows come from hypothermia or the temperature of the water, rather than the amount encountered. On hot days walking up the knee-deep waters, the temperature doesn't seem to be a major concern, nor does the amount of water, so why do these fearsome tales center on them? Why these many discrepancies in the accounts versus the stories we told ourselves?

There were many differences between the stories we told and the event we were supposedly recounting. We told stories of an entire Boy Scout troop from Salt Lake City being wiped out by a flash flood in the Narrows, the canyon we were then hiking. The facts of the story had been altered in transmission. The original troop was not Boy Scouts but Explorer Scouts, older and more experienced. We imagined the disaster hitting the Scouts when it was the leaders who died in the real event. And while the two troops did indeed come from the same area, Northern Utah, the Explorer Scouts were hiking in nearby Kolob Canyon, not the Narrows. While geographically near each other, they are vastly different canyons. Kolob Canyon, the site of the disaster, is a narrow slot canyon requiring a wet or dry suit, rock climbing gear for one hundred fifty-foot rappels, and a permit that indicates the water flow expected based on the release of a dam above the canyon. The Narrows, on the other hand, while sounding like a narrow canyon, is wide enough for two to six lanes of car traffic through most of its length and requires very little equipment beyond what any hiker might need. The Narrows do not require a permit, though they do post general conditions for the causal hikers who come to hike part or all of the canyon.

Looking closely at what changed, we can piece together how this local story went from a news story to a local legend told and modified to apply to those telling the story. Returning to Dégh's definition of a legend, we see that some of the changes involved making the story come more from a "known person." What we lacked in actual knowledge of these people was made up for by making the characters as similar to ourselves as we could. Thus the Explorer Scouts were made into younger Boy Scouts, the tragedy fell on those we identified more closely with, the Scouts, rather than the leaders, and, what needed no modification, they were a troop coming from Northern Utah to Southern Utah, and the differences of the specific canyons were erased by trading the one we were hiking for the one where the tragedy actually occurred. Were the events extraordinary? Extraordinarily regrettable, certainly. The increased drama involved in the eradication of an entire troop was certainly an extraordinary aspect of the event as we knew it. The story did entertain debate about belief, in that the apparent veracity of the tale was part of what gave the tale so much force in our young minds. As Robert Gyemant writes, "As it is with most legends, there is historical detail enough to imply historical truth" (1965, 106). The accuracies and

inaccuracies indicate that folkloric processes were at work in digesting the facts of the event into the details of the legend.

On the same trip to Zion's, as with many Scout troops, we hiked not only the Narrows, but Angel's Landing, where more people die and where the danger is more apparent. So why hadn't we heard or why didn't we share any stories about that hike? We certainly enjoyed it through the heat and the arduous hike and the amazing panorama of the three canyons meeting in the valley around us. At times on the trail, cliffs drop away on either side. It is a site of actual excitement and danger that does not inspire stories like the seemingly placid and safer Narrows. Why that discrepancy? Part of it may be in the combination of thrill and safety in the Narrows. With less immanent danger, we are left to enjoy the thrill of danger at a safe remove through story and imagination rather than through bodily risk. The thought of danger is, in this case, far more enjoyable than actual danger.

Water holds a mystery of danger that heights and heat, which kill more people in the park yearly than does excess of water, do not. Part of the reason is found in the material conditions of the West. Scouts growing up in or familiar with the West know the importance of water and their reliance on it. Droughts, water rationing, and children's folklore in the West emphasize the importance of water. "One two, three, water hog!" and "Save some for the whales!" are good examples of children's folklore emphasizing the importance of water.

As LDS youths, the Scouts were familiar with scenes of water-based destruction. Biblical stories including the flood, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, Jonah and the fish, and even Christ calming the Sea of Galilee as he walked on the water show that water can be a source of punishment and an unruly element. Although water is used in one of the holiest ordinances in Mormonism, baptism, and symbolizes a new birth, it also symbolizes death and is a frequent scene of hardships. The *Book of Mormon* tells of the dangers for Lehi and his family as they crossed the ocean to the Promised Land. Later the Jaredites also experience difficulty as they cross the ocean. Further, when Christ visits the Americas, he punishes the wickedness by sinking many cities in the ocean (see 3 Nephi 8 and 9). In the Doctrine and Covenants, a more modern book of scripture, there are many pronouncements about the dangers of water. In a revelation given after some dangers experienced by early church elders as they canoed down the Missouri and after one saw "in a daylight vision … the destroyer riding in power upon the face of the waters," warning about the dangers of water abound: "behold, there are many dangers upon the waters, and more especially hereafter" (D&C 61:4), "For I, the Lord, have decreed in mine anger many destructions upon the waters; yea, and especially upon these waters" (meaning the Missouri) (D&C 61:5), "Behold, I, the Lord, in the beginning blessed the waters; but in the last days … I cursed the waters" (D&C 61:14), "Wherefore, the days will come that no flesh shall be safe upon the waters" (D&C 61:15), and others. While water as an evil force is certainly not a pervasive doctrine and receives such specific focus in only one chapter of scripture, combined with the stories, they may account for a tendency to vilifying water. Combine that with the West's reliance on the peskily absent element, and water becomes a dangerous element in need of such legends to explain, warn, and instruct us to be wary.

Legends of disasters in the wilderness often act as explanation, instruction, or warning. When Brant Ellsworth heard from his roommate's girlfriend about her cousin who had died in the Narrows in a flash flood, she told it, and he heard it, as a cautionary tale. The warning included the knowledge that the danger might be unseen, "You won't see it overhead. But ten miles upstream there could be a massive downpour which will cause the flash flood," and summarized by his roommate's words "yeah, people die down there" (Ellsworth 2011). Here, Dégh's interpretation of the function of the legend fits perfectly with its function in the urban world, but to read the meaning of the legend as it was told in the setting where it occurred, we look at Elliot Oring's definition of the legend. Oring writes that legends are about "the creation of a story which requires the audience to examine their world view — their sense of the normal, the boundaries of the natural, their conceptions of fate, destiny, and coincidence" (1986, 126). Beyond requiring the audience to examine their worldview, these stories allowed our troop to re-imagine the boundaries of the natural world and place ourselves in the most dangerous, exciting version of that natural as exemplified in the legend. Rather than live in the hot, weary, sometimes menial and tedious world of camping, it allowed us to immerse ourselves in a world of dangerous possibilities where we could play with the possibilities of death and disaster.

Part of what makes that playing possible is the immediacy of the natural details of the legend. While there are many definitions of what makes a legend, the "message" is only part of what makes this legend so persistent and vivid. The immediacy of the physical facts of the legend, and how that immediacy imbues the geographic area with a heightened sense of excitement, is what lends the legend such force and narrative power. While tales of entire Scout troops being washed away in desert floods are amazing enough, walking the very banks of the calm river while noting the stumps and debris of the flood forty feet above you on a cliff wall, a vivid reminder of the tale's reality, emphasizes the potential threat and actual excitement.

In *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* Jan Brunvand discusses the function of legends. They can be entertaining, validate cultural ideals or institutions, explain the unusual or supernatural happenings of the world *or* they can "show that the prosaic contemporary scene is capable of producing shocking or amazing occurrences which may have actually happened to friends or to near-acquaintances but which are nevertheless explainable in some reasonably logical terms" (1981, 12). The legends and legend telling can infuse a boring situation with more excitement because of the possibility that something amazing will happen. In *One Space, Many Places* Mary Hufford makes the observation that "Through stories people deepen their relationship to the places surrounding them" (1986, 8). These particular stories deepen that relationship by infusing it with the drama, excitement, and mythos of the frontier where life was hard, but real men were made.

This kind of play with danger is distinct from legend trips and what Bill Ellis terms "mock ordeals," in that the legends and stories are evoked by the place rather than the other way around, as in legend trips. Further, the ordeal is real only in that there is a heightened sense of *potential* danger while experiencing

the more mundane discomforts of camping life. And here is where playing with masculinities and adulthood enters into the stories and their appeal. The adult world, as well as the natural world, is largely unknown and as such can be a source of anxiety and fear for adolescents. Imagining the dramatic danger transforms the discomforts of camping life into more exciting, manly adventures; gives them a handle on perceived, real, but unrealized fears; and serves as an outlet for the fears and anxieties of wilderness, manhood, and adulthood.

Conclusion

Legends lie on a spectrum between the real and the imaginary. These Scouting stories and legends, like many others, are drawn from real stories and become legends only in their telling and retelling as fact surrenders to a good, gripping story. In moving each way, towards the more imaginative and towards the more real, an interesting picture of why we create, share, and perpetuate stories of disaster emerges.

If we move first towards the more fictive side, Susan Sontag, in *The Imagination of Disaster*, contends that the strength of science fiction films is "their immediate representation of the extraordinary" (1976, 119). In what she calls "sensuous elaboration," these films allow viewers to participate in the fantasy of their own death, or the destruction of the world itself. Sontag privileges the spectacle over the words or story, but in the case of disaster narratives in and of the wilderness, they combine to create a vivid, participatory narrative the boys can enter and come to the edge of death and destruction, take a look around, and return unharmed and victorious. Similar to the monsters in science fiction, nature as liminal monster seeks not only to kill them, but to obliterate them, just as it has the other Scout groups in the stories (127). Sontag concludes that the imagery of disaster in science fiction is above all the emblem of an *inadequate response* … which shows "the inadequacy of most people's response to the unassimilable terrors that infect their consciousness" (130). Sontag's hyperbole aside, the terrors being dealt with in science fiction are the same ones being escaped in the wilderness: an urban world dictated by forces more powerful than the boys such as parents, mothers, or school or work schedules.

Moving towards the more factive, we might look at the anticipatory response to Hurricane Irene this summer. The wind of Irene held many comparisons with Hurricane Katrina, which was similar in size and force to Irene. CBS news warned that "Irene could bring Katrina-style flooding to coast" (Condon 2011). While other predictions were more accurate, like the loss of power to much of the affected areas, the comparison of Katrina to Irene seemed to ignore some vital facts — such as the levees in New Orleans which caused most of the deaths and damage and their absence anywhere in Irene's path — and focus on mother nature as monster and force of immanent destruction. She "slammed" into the coast, "marched" up the coast. Similar to how Scout legends can imbue an area with potential danger, many news accounts wrote of the potential dangers of the real storm, the "potentially affected population" and "potential damage" (Ranii 2011). Anticipation of the actual event, while very different from the imaginary

anticipation experienced by Scouts hiking in the Zion Narrows, shared with the Scout's anticipation an entrance into the realm of fantasy. Just as legends combine truth and fiction, so too do our views of the future, even the immediate future, partake of imagination. While the Scouts were able to use this imagination to imbue the present with greater excitement, intensifying that potential danger even a bit can turn it into the great fear and panic in anticipation of Irene.

Sacvan Bercovitch, in *The American Jeremiad*, explains how this might happen. The particularly American form of the jeremiad, he explains, rhetorically fused the sacred, supernatural world of God's will with the secular, natural world of man's actions (1978, 9). The legend, for many and these disaster legends in particular, seems to elevate the commonplace and everyday into a world of the supernatural. There is something proleptic in this exercise when we compare the legends with its cousins on the extremes of the fictive/factive spectrum. In all of them, science fiction, fact-based Scouting legends, and anticipation of natural disasters, we are again fusing those supernatural and everyday worlds in mixtures to excite, appall, or amaze ourselves or others. As such, legends, like news and science fiction, are a way we invent and interpret the world. As invention and interpretation they can be productive or destructive: ways to increase excitement, ways for urbanites to respond to the crushing demands of modernity, and added fuel for widespread panics. Seen this way, the legend is not merely a way to negotiate the possible and the actual, but is a persistent and pervasive human negotiation between our imagined world and our lived experience.

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Children's Folklore Section: 2010 Annual Meeting

The Children's Folklore Section met on 14 October, 2010 in Nashville, Tennessee with Secretary-Treasurer Priscilla Ord acting for President Libby Tucker, who could not be present and Chip Sullivan acting for Priscilla.

The Minutes from the 2009 meeting were approved.

Priscilla explained (1) Libby's desire to step down from the presidency (which had nothing to do with her not being at the meeting) and explained the duties of that office, (2) the need to add a person to the Aesop Committee and decide who will chair that committee this year, and (3) the request from *Journal of American Folklore* for a history of the section.

There was a printed President's Report and *Children's Folklore Review* Report from Libby.

Priscilla gave the Treasurer's Report. Subsequent discussion of the Treasurer's Report involved the fact that the section is well in the black and there are currently only minor expenses for *CFR* and for the various awards.

Old Business:

Discussion of epublication of CFR resulted in a decision for at least a one-year lag between print publication and epublication of upcoming issues.

Aesop Prize winner and accolades were announced.

The Newell Prize was given to Trevor Blank for "Cheeky Behavior: The Meaning and Function of Fartlore in Childhood and Adolescence." Trevor is a student of Simon Bronner's.

Other prizes were discussed.

New Business:

Kevin Cordi was elected to the Aesop Committee and Kate Schramm was appointed chair of that committee.

Spencer Green, Penn State Harrisburg, was elected president by acclamation.

Priscilla and/or Spencer were asked to find out more details about the section history *JAF* has requested. Simon Bronner did a history of the section some time ago for *CFR*, and Chip Sullivan did a history of *CFR* sometime before he passed the journal on to Libby Tucker; both of those histories were published in *CFR* and could be consulted for the *JAF* piece.

The membership voted to increase the Newell Prize effective for the 2010 prize.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chip Sullivan
Secretary Pro Tempore

Notes and Announcements

Newell Prize

The Children's Folklore Section of the American Folklore Society annually offers the William Wells Newell Prize (which includes a cash award) for the best student essay on a topic in children's folklore. Students must submit their own papers, and published papers are eligible. Instructors are asked to encourage students with eligible papers to enter the competition.

Papers must be typed, double-spaced, and on white paper or a Word document. On the first page, include the author's name, academic address, home address, telephone numbers, and e-mail address. Deadline for this coming year's competition is September 1, 2012. Submit papers or write for more information to Dr. C.W. Sullivan III, English Department, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC, 27858-4353; electronic submissions should go to sullivanc@ecu.edu.

Book Reviews

Children's Folklore Review is seeking book review submissions for its next issue, to be published in October of 2012. This is an excellent opportunity for graduate students interested in building their writing credentials and demonstrating breadth in folklore, literature, and childhood studies. Books are selected for review in *Children's Folklore Review* according to their relevance to the field of children's folklore and their year of publication (within the past two years). If you would like to request a book for review, please contact the book review editor, Li Cornfeld (licornfeld@gmail.com). Book reviews should not exceed 750 words.

Contributors

Spencer Lincoln Green, co-winner of this year's William Wells Newell Prize, is finishing his PhD studies in Penn State Harrisburg's American Studies program. He completed his B.A. and M.A. at Brigham Young University in English with minors in editing and folklore. He researches folklore and the environment. His thesis used personal hiking stories of British ramblers to examine changing attitudes towards landscape in the UK. His dissertation looks at how technology influences American's ideas about wilderness and how those ideas are expressed in folk and popular culture in the digital and physical worlds.

Neal A. Lester is Professor of English and Dean of Humanities at Arizona State University. With specialties in African American literary and cultural studies, Dr. Lester is an award-winning teacher and the author or co-editor of four books. He has written or lectured extensively on such topics as the "n-word," black/ white interracial intimacies in popular music, Little Black Sambo as a non-trickster, the race and gender politics of African Americans and hair, African American children's literature, black masculinities in hip hop music, Disney's first African American princess, and personal ads as African American autobiography and biography. His writings have covered such authors as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, ntozake shange, Ernest Gaines, bell hooks, Carolivia Herron, Sapphire, and Richard Wright. Dr. Lester chairs the Board of Directors of the Arizona Humanities Council.

Robert MacGregor is Professor Emeritus at The Williams School of Business Administration, Bishop's University, Sherbrooke, Quebec. The major focus of his research interests includes cultural analysis of national, racial, and ethnic identities visually represented in many forms of communication conduits. Folkloric texts are also critical to his research especially concerning African Americans. The author has received three certificates of excellence from various academic groups. Publications of his have been published in *The Journal of Eastern Township Studies*, *Contemporary Legends*, *The Canadian Journal of Administrative Science*, *Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *Proceedings of The Administrative Sciences of Canada*, *Proceedings of World Marketing Congress*, *Journal of Professional Marketing Services*, *Atlantis, The Journal of Popular Culture*. Numerous essays have been published in books.

Karin Phillips is a senior at Binghamton University majoring in English. Her Children's Folklore field research begins at home, observing husband Scott and sons Devon, Dylan and Aidan. She's an aspiring graduate student and full-time dangerous games monitor.

Mona Lisa Saloy, author and folklorist, is currently Professor of English at Dillard University. Most recently, Dr. Saloy's essay "New Orleans Black Indians

at Mardi Gras" appears in *New Orleans: What Can't be Lost!* (Lafayette: University of Louisiana, 2010). Saloy's article on Zora Neale Hurston collecting lore along River Road will appear in the next issue of *Louisiana Miscellany*, the journal of the Louisiana State Folklore Society. Dr. Saloy presented research on kids' lore at the 70th conference of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Merida, Mexico (March, 2010); she has collected kids' lore since the late 80s in Louisiana, Michigan, California, and Washington State, where she taught folklore after Hurricane Katrina.

Katharine R. M. Schramm is a doctoral candidate of the Indiana University Department of Folklore & Ethnomusicology, and a two-year member of the Aesop Prize committee of the Children's Folklore Section. While her M.A. research centered around proto-folkloric expression and ritualization in infancy, her doctoral research will center on community ritual and its visiting deity figures in southern Okinawa, Japan. She is the chair of this year's Aesop Prize Committee.

Pamela Weintraub is a student at Binghamton University.