

Finally, I myself am intrigued that Boy is called Rupert's 'Necromantick Dogge, his Mephostophelis' (135), since in Goethe's *Faust* Mephistopheles first appears in the form of a black poodle; sheer coincidence, or some common source?

Professor Stoye is to be congratulated on this important and entertaining contribution to both history and folklore studies.

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Cultures enfantines—Universalité et diversité [Children's Culture—Universality and Diversity]. Edited by Andy Arléo and Julie Delalande. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010. 464 pp. illus. € 22.00 (pbk). ISBN 978-2-753-51249-8

When is children's folklore really *children's* folklore? Children's peer culture is no longer what nineteenth-century folklorists put under this label. It used to refer, in quite a narrow fashion, to those games, rhymes, and superstitions that children learn from one another. Now, with the field welcoming new approaches from sociology and cultural studies, the definition appears to be expanding to the point of including more or less any cultural activity involving children. A recent volume gathering the best research on the topic is a fitting place to observe this evolution. Andy Arléo and Julie Delalande have edited a book, comprising thirty-five papers from forty-three authors, that spans the whole range of interests associated with children's peer cultures (*cultures enfantines*) today.

What are children's peer cultures? If most articles in this collection are to be believed, nearly everything children do and say qualifies. More to the point, everything we do or say to children also qualifies. The peculiar inflexions found in conversations between Breton-speaking adults and children is an instance of *culture enfantine*, and so is the schooling of children with special needs; *ditto* for tween girls listening to the pop songs designed for them by the music industry, for adult-organized May Day festivals where children participate, for children-special guided tours of museums. Kipling writing his *Just So Stories* (1902) is not just an adult writing a book for children; he is 'crossing the boundaries between adult culture and children's culture', according to Laurent Le Paludier (359). Two ideas spurred this shift in the definition of children's peer cultures: the insistence on children's agency, and the notion of 'interpretive reproduction', discussed by William Corsaro (59). Many contributors want to set the record straight against a Durkheimian conception of socialization, where children would be nothing but empty vessels—or 'infra-social beings ... passive objects', as Sylvie Octobre expresses it (87). In contrast, everyone insists that children never behave as mere recipients of adult cultures. Everything they meet they manage to make their own.

Some papers indeed make quite a convincing case for this view. Corsaro's study of approach-avoidance games highlights how games allow children to 'create and share emotionally the power and the control that adults hold upon them' (70). Gilles Brougère notes that several products of the entertainment industry (*Power Rangers*, *Cars*) are built from children's games rather than the other way around. Yet at other times the invocation of children's agency has a hollow ring. One researcher, Laetitia Peifer, having asked children to summarize a series of tales, albums, and television cartoons, comments that 'the child takes from the narratives he is confronted with, the narratives that are designed for him, to feed his own culture and thus contribute to building children's very own culture (*une culture enfantine toute singulière*)' (276). Overstatements of children's agency abound, in particular when commenting on their political life. Bumper riding and the '5 cents chocolate war' in Canada are depicted by Carole Carpenter as full-blown rebellions against adult order (54). In two studies (by Amy Shuffleton and Claire Gallagher), organizers ask children to administer a toy city. Both papers aim to demonstrate that

children show political sense and valuable insights. In Gallagher's paper on urban planning, the team of little planners focuses its effort on building a monorail (eventually turned into a roller-coaster), a giant flat screen, a candy factory, a fleet of flying limousines, and a park, called 'Moneyland', where money grows on trees. Children's political views, it seems, boil down to a kind of enchanted consumerism.

In spite of this insistence on putting children first, some of the most interesting papers actually highlight the importance of direct adult influence. Camille Ferdenzi, Olivier Wathelet, and Benoist Schaal's study of olfaction in children shows that mothers have a disproportionate role in shaping their children's sense of smell, which might explain why girls (and women) typically outperform the other sex in this area. Their argument rests on the fact that the level of educational attainment in a child's mother (but not in her father) predicts higher olfactory proficiency. Their hypothesis-driven approach proves fruitful.

The child-centred view works best, of course, when applied to children's peer culture in its narrowest sense: children's folklore. The collection offers remarkable contributions to this research tradition, most of them concentrated in Part Two (97–169). The identification of near-universal formal features in children's rhymes, a long-running quest for students of children's folklore, bears some fruit in those papers. Andy Arléo and Amina Mettouchi explore the phonetics of children's rhymes, in continuity with Arléo's earlier work. Readers will learn many things about the near-universal preference of children for groups of maximally contrastive vowels (such as /a/, /i/, /u/) and internal rhymes (as in *eigele beigele feigele*). Surprisingly similar constraints seem to apply to Sign Language folklore, as Marion Blondel shows in a fascinating paper that belies the claim, made by several authors in the book, that children's traditions are universally oral (121–36). Sylvie Mougin's study of nineteenth-century children's folklore through the work of Louis Pergaud brings an historical perspective to bear on two important rituals: exchanges of insults before fights (from African-American 'dozens' to Turkish rhyme fights) and adolescent quests for birds' nests.

Overall, the book is a precious addition to the literature on children's folklore; although, in this reviewer's opinion, it might have been even more precious, had it focused more narrowly on children's peer cultures.

[All quotations translated from French by the reviewer.]

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Deadly Powers: Animal Predators and the Mythic Imagination. By Paul A. Trout. New York: Prometheus Books, 2011. 325 pp. Illus. \$26.00 (hbk). ISBN 978-1-616-14501-9

I have always believed that as human beings we should be reminded more often of our humble origins and weaknesses, considering that our megalomaniac and narcissistic tendencies push us constantly to do the contrary. In this sense, *Deadly Powers* has a fairly rare virtue among other books of a scholarly nature. It is a text that has the kind of information and insights that will make perfect sense if you have had the uncomfortable experience of being chased by an angry dog, or, even worse, by a larger and more dangerous predator. For some it might be an improbable or forgotten situation. Nevertheless, Paul Trout embraces the fascinating endeavour of reminding us where the primal fear of certain animals and their traits comes from, and how this has permeated myth and storytelling. This sole enterprise constitutes, of course, an important part of its charm because it connects the reader with the very basic aspects that have ensured the survival of our species. So, in an ingenious and complementary way, one has a piece of work that operates at a very intellectual level, but at the same time stirs basic emotions and impulses in the reader.

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