

THEY CAPTURE THE HISTORY OF CULTURAL SPIRIT AND IMAGINATION

Nineteenth century German doll maker, Max Von Boehn, includes the obvious when he notes the doll "...is the three-dimensional representation of a human figure....[existing] for thousands of years before the first child took possession of it. For adults, it possesse[s] an occult significance with mystical-magical associations, which in an inexplicable way unite[s] the present and the past and reache[s] deep into the world of the unseen." (1956, 1, 2)

While dolls are the toys of youth, they are a creative skill expression for adults and a way of exploring cultures—ancient, modern, or fictional—as dolls reveal much about the social history of the people who create and collect them. The research to replicate physical features and the costumes helps endow dolls with individuality and unique cultural ‘personalities’ resulting in objects that preserve a humanity and stir feelings and imagination about life.

Doll collector Janet Pagter Johl advises, “In the little hobby room of my home, in glass cases which reach from the floor to the ceiling, my large doll family dwells in peace and harmony. There are no international barriers nor [sic] racial problems within a doll cabinet. (Gordon, 1949, xi)

The annotated bibliography presented here is a selected topical sampling from Rohrbach Library’s collection. It is intended to serve the delight and interests of a variety of enthusiasts and scholars from anthropology, history, cultural geography, art to include those from costume design and wood carving, political science, and sociology...

All color book of dolls/ Kay Desmonde; photographs by Angelo Hornak. London: Octopus Books Ltd., c1974. NK 4893 D47A64 1974

This book tells the story of dolls made mainly in Europe—even the gender-neutral Kewpie doll created by a Wilkesbarre-born artist, Rose O’Neill is said to have been manufactured mostly by Europeans. The text is valuable for its historic perspective and for the large color illustration of dolls posed in a setting giving a helpful period context

Anatomy of a doll/ Susanna Oroyan. Lafayette, California: C&T Publishing, 1997. TT 1754 O7597 1997

Considered an exercise book or practice manual by the author, this treasure is a rich photographic collection of sculpted dolls by various artists that also outlines many techniques for constructing dolls, manipulating materials and medium, and for following the creative process. Facial close-ups of the dolls, the section on body joint options, the appendices and index make the book especially useful.

Children of cottonwood: piety and ceremonialism in Hopi Indian Puppetry/ Armin W. Geertz and Michael Lomatuway’ma. Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, c1987. E 99 H7G44 1987

There is a goal of letting the people tell their story with this ethnological field study in the form of a series of translated ‘Texts’ (conversational narratives of the common people) about the puppets made of cottonwood from the Third Mesa of Hopi territory (an Arizona reservation) used in important ceremonies and their relationship to the internal workings of Hopi religious ritual instructive in preparation and performance for Hopi children—a

unique work that includes a substantial bibliography, an index of Hopi words and a subject and name index.

The collector's history of dolls/ Constance Eileen King. London: Robert Hale Limited, c1977. NK 4894 A2K56 1978

This comprehensive text is a written and illustrated chronology of doll popularity affected by the times, tastes, trends, opinions, economic class, and the availability of materials over the years before WWII, documenting the evolution of amusement, whim and interest by children and adults for dolls within a social context for educators, sociologists, psychologists, and collectors

The doll book: soft dolls and creative free play/ Karin Neuschutz; translated from the Swedish by Ingun Schneider. Burdett, N.Y.: Larson Publications, Inc., 1982. GV 1219 N4813 1982

Instructions for making inexpensive, versatile and simplistic soft dolls (rag, yarn, sack, knot...) are used along with anecdotal essays to underscore the importance of play in the development of the child and the important role of the adult in providing natural opportunities and environments for play so the child is able to experiment with interests, grow an imagination and curiosity, perform tasks for skill outcomes, and interact with others—indispensable preparation for life as an adult.

Doll making: a creative approach/ Jean Ray Laury; photographs by Gayle Smalley. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., c1970. TT 157 L27 1970

A book about handmade fabric or fabric and papier-mâché doll forms such as nylon stocking, sock, and steam-shaped felt dolls, with examples of dolls created from cast-off materials like old shoes, clothespins, tube-forms from tin cans and paper product rolls, Styrofoam, dried apples, bread crumbs, corncobs, pinecones, and the hollyhock flower and buds. This is a richly illustrated creative how-to and why guidebook.

Dollmaking for everyone/ Helen Young. South Brunswick, N.J.: A.S. Barnes and Company, c1977. TT 175 Y68 1977

By viewing doll-making as without a historical or topical beginning or end, Young acknowledges the wealth of information and dolls still in need of expression/production in this book of patterns and instructions that encourages its use as a starting point for creating unique doll designs from available or inexpensive materials, as an adventure via research travel to other countries, and even as income.

Dolls: traditional and topical: and how to make them/ by Mary Benbow, Edith Dunlop and Joyce Luckin. Boston: Plays, Inc., 1970. TT 157 B37 1970

Another one of Benbow's illustrated how-to books for making the "historically accurate" dolls of diverse traditions and locales along with their accessories, materials needed, and the methods to use that is practical in format and description.

Dolls and puppets/ by Max Von Boehn; translated by Josephine Nicoli with a note on puppets by George Bernard Shaw. Rev. ed. Boston: Charles T. Branford Company, 1956. GV 1219 B62 1956

A dated important historic accounting of the form, use and accessories of dolls—predominately female representations—from primitive sculpting exemplifying the spirit

life transferring to material beings, to substituting objects of adoration or sacrifice in proxy renderings, to preserving the soul of the departed with ancestor images (house idols, talisman, amulet...), to using fertility magic, to more modern uses as illusionary depictions of reality for fantasy escapes, fashion statements, and as companions in play.

Dolls in color/ text by Marjorie Merritt Darrah. [Des Moines, Iowa: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., c1971]. RareBk NK 4893 D3 1971

A valuably descriptive color-photographed catalog registering an interesting mix of dolls—e.g., a 10” doll with a head made of a nut from Lancaster Co. PA—once found in the Merritt Museum which apparently “closed its doors for the last time on December 31, 2005” and auctioned its contents (see under URL <http://www.merritts.com/store3/main/default.asp>).

The dolls of yesterday/ by Eleanor St. George. N.Y.: Charles Scribner’s sons, 1949. GV 1219 S3 1948

A book for doll collectors by a doll hobbyist about ‘dollology’ or doll knowledge and experience among collectors, yet for the ‘uninitiated,’ it is George’s charming conversational and sometimes ‘exposé-like’ narration which creates a bit of intrigue in chronicling the genealogy of doll makers and owners, sharing romantic historical accounts and inspirations for designing dolls (such as the rumor about a bride doll presented to a jilted Union soldier or the arrest of a WWII Madison Ave. antique doll dealer), while revealing some of the advertising, some bargaining transactions, and the descriptive features of so many recognizable dolls. There is a welcome chapter on ‘Negro’ dolls, some unfortunate remarks about the Japanese, and a useful index even though the text is worth a cover-to-cover read.

Dressing dolls: clothing patterns for rag, baby, toddler, older action and fashion dolls, and many, many others/ Charlene Davis Roth; photography, James A. Davis. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., c1976. TT 175.7 R67 1976

As a doll’s clothing is so important in determining its ‘personality,’ Roth’s book is a very useful, clearly written book containing full-size clothing patterns for the commercial dolls presented in the included photographs (some in color) with the measurements, and instructions for altering and designing from the patterns. The glossary and index increase the value of this handy book.

Hopi kachina dolls: with a key to their identification/ by Harold S. Colton; color photographs by Jack Breed. Albuquerque, N.M.: University of New Mexico Press, c1959. E 99 H7C6 1959

A book of textual and illustrated descriptions, and a key to facilitate the recognition of kachina dolls mainly for collectors wanting to identify any of more than 200 dolls that are crafted by one group of northern New Mexico and Arizona pueblo Indians, the Hopi who make the representative supernatural beings for their children to learn their community’s history.

Naked Barbies, Warrior Joes, and other forms of visible gender/ Jeannie Banks Thomas. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, c 2003. GR 105 T46 2003

Inspired by her interest in gendered sculptural forms, the author compiles research about “how people use, personalize, and ‘folklorize’” the gendered statuary in cemeteries, yard figures, and mass produced dolls as sexualize female (when often presented nude or

partially so) and the male depictions, clothed, and armed with action/embodied aggression. It is a study that traces the history of the one way culture is commercialize and made popular.

A pageant of dolls/ by Lesley Gordon. N.Y.: A. A. Wyn, Inc., 1949. GV 1219 G67 1949

Gordon has a practical two-part arrangement of her text—by type of doll and by countries—about dolls throughout history progressing from the Ushabti of Egypt to the huacas of the Incas of Peru, the ancestor dolls of the Greeks to talisman in parts of Africa, Baghdad, the Ojibewa, the Irish, etc.; from dolls to represent adult to those to represent babies. She writes of dolls used to carry fashion styles into foreign countries, those used for signage, for edible treats (e.g. the gingerbread man). The book includes clear black and white drawings and beautiful plates of dolls illustrated in color plus an index.

Strange and secret peoples: fairies and Victorian consciousness/ Carole G. Silver. New York: Oxford University press, 1999. GR 141 S55 1999

A statement about cultural preoccupation with elfin peoples during the Victorian era said to be reflective of a Celtic, Norse, and Saxons cultural infancy that connected to a supernatural enchanted lost primitive legacy. It becomes an interesting study of what equates to the fascination surrounding the archetypal transformation mysteries of birth, death, growth and change.

Two hundred years of Pennsylvania dolls/ by Marie Ketterman. Plymouth Meeting, Pa.: Mrs. C. Naaman Keyser, 1949. RareBk NK 4894 P4K47 1949

This illustrated text is the story of the variety of hand made (in whole or in part) dolls of York and Lancaster County Pennsylvania and the little girls who owned them from 1690 through 1900 beginning with early renderings from porcelain, wax, or a single piece of pine or maple wood, to those without legs masked by long full skirts and those with movable arms and legs; includes collecting information, and clothing patterns.