GUERRILLA GIRLHOOD GLITTER GUILD: RESEARCHING HIDDEN HOARDS OF TWEEN TREASURES

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Abstract

Inspired by the recently-discovered Staffordshire Hoard treasures from medieval times, a group of three researchers called the Guerilla Girlhood Guild created a contemporary "tween" hoard of personal possessions, installations, photographs of objects (e.g., cell phones, jewelry, toys), speculative historical documents, and social networking artifacts. In this speculative narrative, my colleagues and I write from the perspectives of archeologists living in 2013, who discovered the tween artifacts from circa 2113. This inquiry illuminates contemporary issues of girl culture, bullying, and iconicity of girlhood material culture. The guild members and specialties include: myself, an art educator interested in gender and adolescent visual culture, a medievalist art historian and gender studies scholar, and a photographer/studio artist who is also the parent of adolescents. Our project suggests feminist reconceptualization of treasure, the acts of hoarding and archiving, and material cultures of girlhood.

Keywords: gender, visual culture, girlhood studies, material culture

Artists, Art Historians, and Art Educators as Hoarders: Introductions

Art education, at its best, is often cross-disciplinary, experimental, and provocative. In teaching and researching within the field of art education, my collaborations with art historians and studio artists enrich my sense of documentation and analysis of visual cultures. For this reason, I was intrigued when my colleague mentioned her exciting project idea inspired by the Staffordshire Hoard[1], a magnificent collection of gold jewelry and weapons discovered in the summer of 2009. My colleague (an art historian) was not simply studying the hoard, but imagining and creating a tween treasure with a photographer in order to juxtapose contemporary girlhood culture with that of medieval warriors. Working together, we[2] hoped to theorize hoards and hoarding of young women productively through our varied artistic lenses. Our research explored the following questions:

1. What if today's warriors were 12-year-olds, or tween girls?
2. What tween objects might be considered secret treasure or hoards (bejeweled cell phones, shimmering jewelry, and colorful accessories)?
3. How might archaeologists and art historians interpret aspects of sexuality, sweetness, and violence through various digital/ social networking artifacts youth culture?

I became consumed by investigating how one might position the personal objects of young people as precious artifacts. I eagerly sought to join the endeavor of creating a hoard narrative, collecting and photographing teen treasures, and comparatively analyzing a theoretical collection of visual culture with my collaborators. As a newly formed group, we began to envision our project as a form of arts-based research that makes art history active and imaginative, probes and reflects issues of gender and youth, and models artistic investigations in the studio.

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1. A huge cache of gold and silver metalwork from Anglo-Saxton England, entirely consisting of martial objects for male use (http://www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk/)

2. The use of "we" in this article represents shared discussions and activities of the three authors.

Hoard Curating

Crafting the hoard itself was a process of collecting, curating, and creating. We began with a rather organic planning period of communicating by phone, Skype®, and email to begin discussing how we would create the hoard. We proceeded by collecting borrowed and saved objects from pre-adolescent girls we knew from teaching, parenting, and research experiences. Our hoard included belongings that we observed as common among tweens: cellular phones, jewelry, charms, dolls, books, and ephemera such as subway passes, notes, and receipts. In some cases, we used replicas, so as to not deprive the tweens of especially treasured artifacts, particularly phones. In the case of cell phones, we invited the preteens to decorate discarded skins or cases in the style they had adorned their actual phones. We wanted to explore the meanings of these personal, personalized objects by creating a sort of backdrop or set of the archaeological dig (Figure 1) where the treasures are buried.

Figure 1. Archaeological dig scene with artifacts.

Our discussions and photographs were generative and evocative of tweens, girlhood literature, and our collaborative memories of pre-adolescence. Sociologist Patricia Leavey (2009) suggests that arts-based research promotes dialogue that "evokes meanings" (p. 14). She goes on to assert that arts-based researchers actually carve out, rather than simply discover, new research tools and spaces. So too, our project sought to illuminate art historical contexts of hoards, artifacts, and gender by creating and discussing a new hoard, even new representations of hoarders and archaeologists in digital spaces. We wanted to investigate issues of tween gender and violence by creating and annotating a collection of treasures inspired by the Staffordshire Hoard discovery. In place of gold crosses and jeweled swords, we collected and photographed kitschy teen rosaries and glittery lip-gloss. We also curated digital collections of tween treasures in teen-friendly digital spaces like Pinterest[3] (See http://pinterest.com/c0urtneylee/tween-culture/ and Figure 2).
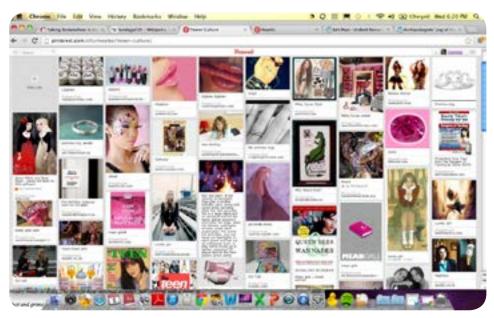

Figure 2: Pinterest board relating to tween culture.

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3. Pinterest is a large digital community and tool for creating, collecting, and organizing images or *pins* with captions within categories or *boards*, creating visual collages around topics from travel to lesson-planning, wedding-planning, and art history.

The items in our fictional hoard included cosmetics, cellular phones, jewelry, accessories, and other objects likely to be found in a pre-teen's purse, messenger bag, or backpack. As we researched literature relating to hoards, we considered a range of pre-teen's tendencies in collecting, borrowing, stealing, and defacing personal effects from friends and rivals. Experimental psychologist Steven Pinker (2011) has thoughtfully juxtaposed various forms of aggression in his history of violence, observing that "women's competitive tactics consist in less physically perilous relational aggression such as gossip and ostracism" (p. 517). So too, we looked at forms of clans, fighting, and aggression in contemporary youth culture, often masked as seemingly non-violent social behaviors through social media and personal devices (sarcastic text messages, passive aggressive Facebook® wall posts, anonymous latrinalia or bathroom-stall graffiti, etc.). When we consider such aggression among friends and enemies, cellular phones and tablets can become like swords (and makeup like war paint or camouflage). We began to craft a historical fiction in which a group of girls and their rivals steal and stash belongings such as purses, jewelry, and cell phones from one another in symbolic battle.

Girlhood Culture

Working as an interdisciplinary group, we aimed to meaningfully infuse our youth culture discussions of symbols with inquiries around art history and contemporary art. Another interdisciplinary arts research group: Desai, Hamlin, and Mattson (2010) have theorized how the works of contemporary artists help us re-imagine ways we teach histories of the past. Through artistic re-presentations of objects, archaeological sites, and histories, we too wanted to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar within a contemporary cache as both art and ancient artifact. (Figure 3 is a related passage taken from our preliminary Google Doc[4] of notes about hoards).

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4. Google Docs is an online resource for sharing text/word documents and other files over the Internet. We utilized this resource because it enabled us to share and edit our writing both asynchronously and simultaneously.
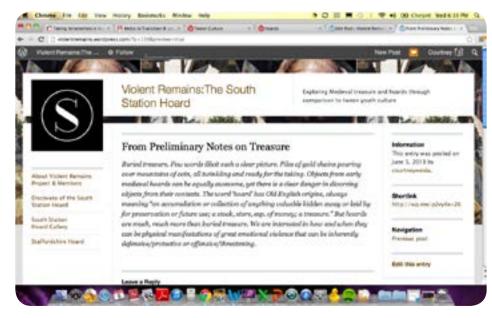

Figure 3: Passage from project notes.

By focusing on items of girlhood culture that may be seen as shallow at first glance by adults, we searched for new insights about the visual culture of young women, and the ways in which visual, digital, and material cultures can be seriously explored by artists, art historians, and art educators. We also drew inspiration from art collectives of other interdisciplinary researchers. For example, the Material Collective (2012), a working group of Medievalists, suggest in their manifesto a useful alternative framework for investigating objects that influenced our research, including practices of cooperation, encouragement, sharing, promoting transparency, touching, desiring, destabilizing, amusing, and blundering. There was a great deal of transparency of process for us in laying bare the various steps of locating, touching, and documenting the artifacts as well as their histories. We particularly enjoyed our fluid processes of blundering (from mishaps in digital technologies to losing artifacts by mailing them back and forth), cooperating across disciplines and geographies, and sharing over email, Google Docs, Skype, and WordPress which we discuss further in the following sections. Responding to a collective aesthetic of treasure troves and troubling treasures

from older tales like Beowulf to recent film depictions from the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise, we aimed to explore parallel ideas of cursed artifacts, but with a crucial distinction of prioritizing the treasure of young women as treasure: valuable, powerful, and worthy of study.

Trappings and Treasures: The Power and Politics of Girls

Throughout our processes, we also wanted to draw parallels between contemporary precious devices and electronics as highly personal (and often personalized) artifacts and those pieces of ancient jewelry and weapons that were similarly important medieval resources, which often even served as currency. Our project also aimed to explore how teen artifacts represent middle class status in the United States, as well as gender roles. Looking at girlhood studies literature, we were inspired by definitions of girl power identified by Ivashkevich (2011) as a combination of sweetness and femininity with strength and feminism embodied through a mythic, impossible super girl. Her analysis was also useful because she viewed girl power from a case study of two pre-teen girls in summer camp, situated in a Midwestern town. Ivashkevich examines girlpower through the lens of an adult arts researcher who grew up in the Soviet Union, whereas we approached tween and contemporary culture of the hoard through the removed perspectives of adult researchers from the future. Through our explorations of popular teen websites, we found objects that were symbolically violent and strong, yet sweetly pink. We were dazzled by a glittering array of heavy gothic crosses, revolvers and guns, razorblades, and impaled, bleeding hearts mixed with girlie colors and jewelry objects as we mined stores popular among suburban tweens we knew from teaching or parenthood experiences like Limited Too, Hot Topic, or Claire's. Rather than dismissively assume shallowness in these objects, we wanted to probe and problematize the layers of these symbols further as part of our work within girlhood studies. For example, tween possessions are not quite toys, but they may be toy-like (miniatures, charms, and non-functional versions of functional objects).

Teen artifacts often straddle the line between luxury and necessity, as complex accessories. A 12-year-old girl doesn't actually need a cell phone in the same way food or shelter is required, but we may anticipate that K-12 students frequently have cell phones if living in suburbs of the United States. At the same time, adolescent (and often adult) longing for these items are great. Our own tween students and daughters are fearful of losing access to phones during instructional time, disconnecting them from emailing, text messages, and social networking. Visual culture researcher Sarah Hentges (2006) observes how cell phones and personal items of teens exist in popular culture "as a set of myths and markers for adolescence" (p. 10). A younger student primarily has a cell phone to contact relatives, whereas a tween may phone or text a growing hoard of acquaintances, all collected in her phone. Further, she may personalize or "dress up" her device, revealing personality and preferences (through colors and symbols of cases and 'skins,' as well as sounds and songs serving as ringtones and message indicators).
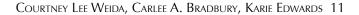
Girlhood researcher Sophie Wertheimer (2006) has meaningfully noted adolescence as "a space where the body becomes a central locale for expression and experimentation with different selves and subjectivities, through the help of technologies such as clothing, toys, and cameras" (p. 220). The self as a sort of canvas, armature, or mannequin for visual culture, and digital accessories (often including cameras) could be likened to creative and documentary tools. Cohen (1996) adds, "The personal body is a text across which is written a cultural narrative" (p. 5). In the case of our hoard, we imagined that the jewelry we found might be understood through the recovered images of the girls in their cell phone devices.

Sociologist William A. Corsaro (2010) emphasizes, "children are active, creative social agents who produce their own unique children's cultures while simultaneously contributing to the production of adult societies" (p. 3). Along these lines, we also noticed that the objects we associated with children in our homes, our classrooms, and teen and tween clothing stores were in some cases present in our collective and individual memories as adult women. As former (recovering?) adolescents, we noted that a central part of being a tween is being seen, particularly within the various lenses of peers, parents, and educators. Adults often joke that women dress up more for the benefit of friends than romantic partners. Younger girls may primp, pose, and post for a variety of viewers and purposes. In some ways, perhaps, digital and fashion-related pos-

sessions are paradoxically markers of adulthood for tweens (relating to visions of independence and consumption), and markers of tween-hood for adults (relating to perceptions of youth, freedom, and youthful transgressions/regressions into Facebook, socially-based texting, Instagram®, etc.).

Beyond the rich symbolism of the artifacts, issues such as the size and scope of the hoard that a group of pre-adolescent girls might collect intrigued and puzzled us. Thinking of hoards in the British Museum and other museum collections, we decided to focus upon about a dozen objects for the sake of our collection and analysis. This choice of scale also reflected our reasoning that the most precious tween hoards tend to be pocket or purse-sized, for portability. Our collection reflected our vision of two rival cliques (or hoards) of girls who would each carry one or two prized objects in their pockets and purses. This framework encouraged investigation of public objects such as cell phones and more private objects like diaries. In examining the Staffordshire hoard, we also drew comparisons between medieval crosses and swords with the objects of protection and religion and those teens might carry. If pre-adolescent bullying could be likened to battle, we wondered how tweens' possessions might be offensive or defensive, representing status, power, and protection. (See our digital collections of hoard objects from Hoards Pinterest Board: http://pinterest.com/c0urtneylee/hoards/ and Figure 4).

We were also concerned with tropes of archaeology, ruins, and caches. Hazardous materials garments, also called hazmat suits (used by scientists to explore archaeological sites) and dust intrigued us (and became thrift store treasure to us). Cultural theorist Carolyn Steedman (2002) writes of the allure of the archive, defining its contents as "consciously chosen documentation" (p. 68). We continuously added and took away from the physical inventory list that formed in our imaginations and conversations–particularly in the case of dolls. We wondered about how tweens might carry and utilize dolls. In our memory of having "worry dolls" as teenagers, we remembered imagining the dolls would somehow allay angst about friendships and peer struggles. The very idea of treasure suggests talismans, prized collections, and personally curated objects of individual need or longing. Yet some transitional, incidental, or even
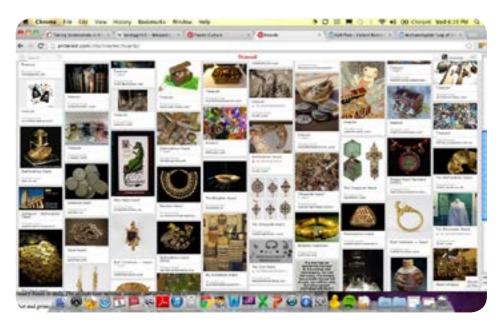

Figure 4: Pinterest board pertaining to hoards.

ironic objects that are collected spontaneously (like an old action figure or sexy teen doll) seemed possible, and we observed that some of our tween acquaintances had them, even if often concealed in purses and school desks. In addition, doll-like digital alternatives from Sims, avatars, and other non-physical figurines were possibilities contained within the tweens cellular phone.

We found it intriguing to note which items remained in our shared archive and which ones did not. For example, might one of the girls carry a leatherette bible? Ultimately, we decided not, because it seemed this was more of our own preoccupation. Omitted objects had a ghost presence in our analysis, because they were not realized in the final collection. We catalogued potential hoard objects and functions as a comparison of the medieval warrior and the millennial tween (see Figure 5).

Symbolism	Early Medieval Warrior	Tween Girl
Defense	Armor: Helmet	Cell phone, rosary, Bible
Offense	Weapon: Sword	Pepper spray, cell phone
Apotropaic	Iconography	Religious objects
Religion	Circa Synod of Whitby (not Celtic but also possibly not Roman)	Chastity Jewelry, etc. not Vatican approved
Value	Gold, Silver	Technology, "Bling"
Placement on Body	Hips, Waist/Belt, Shoulders, Head, Torso	Hips/Pockets, Waist/Belt, Attached to Backpacks
Usage	Daily	Daily
Personalization	Made by "smiths"	Bought and then personalized
Text	Biblical charm	actual pink or jeweled Bible, "WWJD" or themed jewelry
Iconography	Serpents, Interlace	Glitter, gems, crosses, hearts
Representative	Beowulf	Selena Gomez or Miley Cyrus

Figure 5: Chart of objects from the hoard.

Style was a major concern in collecting objects and creating the archaeological aesthetics of their dusty but glittering images in photographs. Style is a value shared by tweens and art historians, albeit in different contexts. Relating to girlhood research, Shauna Pomerantz (2006) observes "style fashions the body into a fluid social text that bridges private and public space, or the interiority of the mind and the exteriority

of the corporeal self" (p. 176). Objects such as lip-gloss may be not only about social mores of cosmetic make-up, but also address more personal aesthetic choices of flavor, name, brand, and other components that are personalized to a girl or clique.

We also negotiated religious iconography in the hoard, considering possibilities that young women might be employing crosses and rosaries within popular culture, ironic/Goth or Emo subcultures, and with more serious ideological/personal stylistic meaning. We looked at how items like cell phones and iPods could be personalized with decorations representing one's personality and favorites in terms of colors, symbols, and ideas. We were also concerned with the transitional nature of objects of girlhood, the trappings of an ideal girl becoming an ideal woman. Psychologist Sharon Lamb and human development researcher Lyn Brown (2006) compare some examples of the reality of girlhood (babysitting, sports, drawing, playing online, etc.) with the imagined/idealized versions of being a teenager as represented in television and other media (fixations on boys, preening, partying, socializing, and shopping). In this way we viewed some objects as sincere talismans and others as tongue-in-cheek props, all of which tweens may approach ambivalently as protective armor, or as a costume/disguise.

Jewelry was a stylistic and symbolic theme for us, as we observed it is often central in the culture of young women. Jewels have a rich history as treasure within the most precious hoards of the wealthy and affluent. As fashion and jewelry historian Anderson Black (1981) observes in his history of jewelry: "Since the dawn of civilization, jewels have compensated for three of [hu]man's basic insecurities: vanity, superstition and the desire for material wealth" (p. 13). The jeweled accessories we included often addressed these three needs. All the jewelry seemed to express and accentuate the beauty of the wearer, and several accessories related to real or imagined rituals in the case of rosaries for girls (see Figure 6 and 7) or lip-gloss. Rings and pendants revealed the economic status of the wearer through their materials and/or brands. In addition, jewelry remains an obvious symbol of treasure. This symbolism is especially present within gold-plated or gold-painted jewelry and objects encrusted with large plastic gems, evoking past conceptions of jewels and gold with a faux or cubic zirconia style. Meanwhile, we

noticed that plastic gems adorning cell phones seem to underscore the preciousness of these mobile communication objects. We may consider the complexities of jewels not worn on the body, but rather decorating the device. As observed by women's studies and art researcher Rebecca Russell (2010), jewelry may indicate "control, honor, and sex" (p. 1), relating to marriage, engagement, and inheritance practices throughout history. For tween girls to decorate their phones with jewels, instead of wearing jewelry, may subvert to-be-looked-at-ness, a term associated with Laura Mulvey's (1975) theories of the gaze. The jewels are not worn to be seen by others, but rather arranged, touched, and seen primarily by the girl herself while the adorned cellular device is being used.

Figure 7. Blue Rosary in the hoard.

Figure 6. Red Rosary in the hoard.

Digital Devices, Digital Natives, and Digital Narratives

These days, many jewelry treasures are perhaps in danger of being superseded by personal electronic devices in terms of economic value as gifts and other purchases. For us, the cell phones in the hoard were not only treasures but also communication devices that might illuminate the nature of the hoard and hoarders. A contemporary hoard, unlike a medieval one, has important differences in its vast digital contents. Foucault (1982) usefully defines an archive as "that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in unbroken linearity" (p. 129). In contrast with limited archaeological space for collections, the digital archives of Twitter® and Facebook may be accumulating in this way, making hoarding in electronic formats eerily endless.

We noticed how our technological considerations of the imagined communications of the girls paralleled our online interactions with one another. MIT researcher Sherry Turkle (2008) has observed, "studying people and their devices is, quite simply, a privileged way to study people" (p. 11). As most hoards are not left with documentation, we wanted to explore how digital cultures and artifacts provide unique additional context (ranging from clarification to confusion) of the artifacts and its owners. Turkle (2008) also muses that:

the fantasy of a complete record for all time—a kind of immortality— is part of the seduction of digital capture. But memoir, clinical writing, and ethnography are not only about capturing events but also about remembering and forgetting, choice and interpretation (p. 26).

As we compared experiences of crafting girlhood identities from our own childhoods, those of our students, and in some cases our daughters, we wanted to honor the incompleteness of documentation and the perspectival bias uniquely contained in each document and digital space. However, we felt it was important to examine how young people might understand and represent themselves as collectors, conquerors, and hoarders in digital space. As Hentges (2006) notes of adults' conceptualization of teenage girls, "We gaze, but we rarely listen" (p. 202). We wanted to theorize several voices, those of the girls themselves in the pages of diaries and notes not intended to be shared publicly, those filtered through digital social networks, and those of imagined future archaeologists and art historians.

We also invited young women in our lives to share, then to recreate their actual cell phones and decorations (see Figure 8).

Lamb and Brown (2006) point out a crucial distinction, which we also hoped to illuminate: while a majority of middle school girls are online, they characterize themselves as less technologically savvy than their male counterparts. Therefore, the voices of girls online are neglected and minimized in ways we aimed to counter, through our artifacts as well as blog posts responding to actual news items of girls and teens being cyber-bullied.

Figure 8. A cell phone decorated by Ella-Grace Antle, Julia Pemberton, and Emily Bastin.

Given that young women's voices may not always be available publicly or in digital forms to adult viewers due to privacy settings, text-speak, and code-switching available to tweens, we also examined models of girlhood culture from works of art. A Girl's Life (2002), by book artists Johanna Drucker and Susan Bee, is an unusual and wonderfully perplexing artist book, comprised of collaged clippings that echo children's primers of the past, along with teen magazine ephemera, and several written references to popular and digital culture. The plot of this somewhat disjointed collaged work takes shape as a "plague of passionate data streamed through the flesh connection" (n.p.) of its pre-teen characters, within various forms of media, including: beepers, tabloids, webcasts, television, movies, and even alternate realities. Like Drucker and Bee, we were fascinated by tween stories, and yet limited by our own positions as post-tween adults. We realized that having a similar sort of creative narrative and digital documentation to frame our work was central to attempts to theorize, experience, and connect the objects, the makers/users, and the discoverers/archaeologists. One of our primary creative tasks after collecting the objects themselves was forming a sort of future hoard discovery narrative to frame the hoard (see Figure 9).

The violent context of this particular hoarding (as imagined in our narrative in Figure 9) was underscored by our musing that the future societies might become completely peaceful with time. The passage of time would also render dust-covered electronics non-functional, yet their presence would point researchers to old digital sites and textual messages related to the deceased users. Dust, as noted above, also becomes a special temporal consideration in the artistic process and the symbolism of the hoard, serving as a foil to the sleek, digital artifacts. Historian Joseph Amato (2001) notes association of dust and magic in fairy tales (which is perhaps not unlike the dusting of treasure in Western consciousness via Indiana Jones films (Marshall, 1981; Watts, 1984; Watts, 1989) and previously mentioned motion pictures). Amato (2001) also observes that dust has a metaphorical quality as an elemental substance that indicates shadowy caves, cellars, and corpses, making it a must for our sensibility of treasures and hoards.

Figure 9. Hoard discovery narrative.

For our hoard, we started out with pristine relic objects and added dust through a sort of reverse archaeological process (see Figure 10). Our dusting process not only transformed the objects, but also represented our projected transformation from contemporary arts researchers to an archaeological community in the future. For us, dust also related to a certain aesthetic of antiquity, that a treasure is something that is precious because it is observably ancient, an unequivocal part of the past.

Buying, Bullying, and Burying

In addition to considering tween possessions as ancient artifacts, we hoped to examine how archeologists might elevate the daily activities of girls to the importance of larger historical events. We crafted a narrative that posited girl gang(-like) aggression as a parallel for medieval battles. To parallel medieval warriors, we imagined that one group of girls had stolen and stashed the precious belongings of a rival group. As Lamb and Brown (2006) note, "girl meanness is far from new territory.

Figure 10. Composite image of hoard relic process.

Wicked witches populate most fairy tales, and we have plenty of stories with evil women in powerful positions" (p. 76). Competition and subtle fighting for power and position is a part of mythic and lived relationships among females.

Meanwhile, the related jewelry and accessories at teen stores—while not functional as weapons —do evoke a certain violence and toughness, tempered by femininity. Inversely, the idea of talismans and defensive precious objects is both idealized and somewhat real for young people. Cell phones are both attractive and practical in times of need, while jewelry can take the form of crosses and rosaries that can relate directly to protective prayer for the devout, or to a more generalized form of spirituality/faith, as well as protection via charms and amulets. We also experienced both curiosity and anxiety around the damage that the objects would encounter from both the fall-out of disaster, as well as earlier destruction resulting from aggressions of the young women who stole

them. Our considerations of violence towards the objects included defacing (or de-facing in the case of dolls with actual faces) as well as vandalism, enabling us to take on uncomfortable roles of destructive forces of nature and bullies.

Our explorations resulted in some damaging of the dolls belonging to the girls, reflected from our memories of childhood experiences, archaeological research, and review of girlhood literature. Dolls have a long history of inclusion in girls' hoards, dating back to the 2nd century CE, when dolls with elaborate hairstyles and large breasts were often buried with deceased pre-teenage girls (Dolansky, 2012). We began noting the ubiquitousness of dolls and doll destruction around us, with the dolls often stripped, divested of long hair, and abandoned on sidewalks (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Stripped and altered doll found in Bronx, NY circa April 2013.

Tara Kuther and Erin McDonald (2006) researched the widespread violent treatment of Barbie® dolls by male and female adolescents—cutting hair, biting heads, melting faces, and placing Barbie dolls in real/simulated danger through play or actual modification of the doll (p. 42. According to Kuther and McDonald, young people note (and at times mimic parents' concerns) that Barbie's appearance is unrealistic. We also wondered if torture play represents, in some cases, a sort of resistance to the idealized Barbie body. Torture play directed towards Barbie also demonstrates boundary testing; although cutting the hair and changing the clothes is a part of play, more extreme and violent engagement potentially disrupts the possibility for future use of the doll. Instead of Barbie, we selected a Bratz® doll as part of our hoard. These dolls were sold as child-like figures in skimpy and sexually-provocative clothing. It may be noted that Bratz were recently discontinued after a dispute with Barbie's distributor, Mattel®, not because of the controversy surrounding their clothing, but because the dolls' creator originally conceived of their design while under contract at Mattel (Reuters, 2008). We chose the Bratz doll because of its availability, and because its tween-related controversy highlighted some of the tween issues we hoped to explore around dolls and pre-teen's ambivalence. The subtext of Barbie and the Bratz rivalry as dolls was also a parallel for our fictionalized narrative of rival tween girls.

Examining newspaper articles around cyber-bullying of young women and research on the subject, we were presented with several provocative examples of bullying and digital media, which we discussed and included on our project blog. Lamb and Brown (2006) observe that in such girl aggression,

> "Bee-atch" is the fun way to call someone a bitch, and it sends seventh graders into giggles if they haven't already developed a mock sophistication about such   things. "Slut" seems to be used by girls against girls a bit more regularly than by boys. "Lesbo[,]" can be used by boys or girls as a joke to make a girl seriously unhappy, bringing her in line. (p. 125)

As we looked more deeply at these issues, the meanings and symbolism of words was a matter of concern. To embrace an aesthetic of pink and pretty clothing while bullying a tomboy sends particular symbolic messages about the boundaries and affordances of femininity.

Examining various definitions and complexities of the word bully throughout history, we found that the term sometimes referred to a friend or a lover. This juxtaposition of friend and foe persists in the contemporary friend/enemy role of the frenemy. The association we so frequently use to describe

a person who is cruel and intimidating would only come later. These shifts over time perhaps parallel duality in the bullying process, where a supposed BFF (best friend forever) can become a girl's worst tormentor, who usurps social status, steals boyfriends, and deprives her victim of metaphorical booty or treasure. It is frequently a former friend or romantic prospect, who is likely to engage in bullying behavior. In some cases, the boundaries of bullying and being a friend can be rather murky.

Similarly, the very idea of a hoard is protective, perhaps suggesting its power in both aggressive and defensive situations. Hoarding means to hide, and there is a certain feminine, even corporeal association with a hidden cache and the womb. Saving objects and saving people can be somewhat parallel processes, with both often characterized by care and thoughtfulness. For us, as a parent of a tween girl, parent of toddler girl, and expectant parent, hoarding can take on a certain maternal meaning as with time capsules and hoarded heirlooms. Hoards have this interesting duality of hiding and seeking, keeping and giving that is temporal and shifting.

Hiding and Seeking: Concluding Possibilities for Hoarders

In our exploration of hoards and treasures of young people, admittedly through our adult and artistic lenses, we have discovered hoarding and treasuring as multidimensional, relational, and interdisciplinary processes. Certainly, looking at the objects of young people allows adults to reflect (and perhaps to project) much of their own anxieties and joys about objects and relationships. As media researcher Lynn Spigel (2001) comments of youth culture as studied by adults, "the discourse of victimization that surrounds the child might . . . usefully be renamed and reinvestigated as a discourse of power through which adults express their own disenfranchisement" (p. 211). We found it useful to observe how the objects that we celebrated and hated were part of the symbolism of today's young people (as well as our own histories). When we shared our hoard with other women they too, often spontaneously, exclaimed that they have always saved (or hoarded) a small selection of their own baby dolls, rhinestone jewels, or old diaries curated from childhood.

Our work aimed to illuminate not solely violence and despair, but also some nuances of pleasure and joy in collecting relics of tween culture. As educators, we mused how adolescent girls might interview women in their lives to compare and contrast those 'girlie' possessions they had or still have in comparison with those of today. We encourage other educators to examine the parodies, caricatures, symbols, reflections, and idea(l)s associated with personal treasuries

instead of preemptively condemning, celebrating, or neglecting them.

A colleague teaching art at the middle school level shared a particularly successful tween project in which she invited teens to collect and arrange belongings that were valuable to them for still-life projects and as backdrops for their yearbook photos. Our project balanced actual objects of tweens with a sort of imagined posse of young girls, perhaps at times, not unlike the recent YouTube® hoax "lonelygirl15" (supposedly a teen weblog, but revealed as a scripted series actually created by adults), or any fictionalized underdog versus "mean girl" depiction in U.S. films, from Heathers (Di Novi, 1988) to Mean Girls (Shimkin, 2004). These imaginative fictions of girlhood provide parodies and parallels with actual young people, often encouraging discussions of pre-teen culture in an admittedly constructed, though artistic and imaginative space.

Although we have focused on a potentially negative tween encounter with bullying, we also explored ways in which pre-adolescent group behavior often involves a dance of more negotiational practices. Corsaro (2010) contextualizes tween conflict thoughtfully, observing how "the chief cause [of conflict] may be the increased differentiation in friendship groups in pre-adolescence, but conflict, especially arguments and teasing, can also bring children together and help organize their activities" (p. 212). We might ask ourselves how educators can meaningfully use objects such as these to explore the stories and relational shifts of befriending, bullying, and even re-friending (all of which take on additional meanings in digital social media such as Pinterest, Facebook, or Twitter).

In addition, we intentionally looked at conflict through objects, and not only young women's interactions of textual messages and digital discussions through social networks. We made this choice to focus on objects not only because of our object-based orientation as makers, historians, and educators, but because transitional items that young people carry around are personal, carefully selected, and variously representational. We realized retrospectively that we contrasted those personal possessions, which girls carry for themselves and with their selves, with those static decorations and public objects of their rooms and shared spaces. Lamb and Brown (2006) meaningfully contextualize the items and spaces of many tween girls' rooms "everything . . . is fabulous, dreamy, the cutest, the softest, beautiful, flittery fluttery, pretty, or lovely . . . What is the

message? Girls' rooms are their worlds" (p. 249). Instead, we wondered how those select objects obscured from public view but often carried by young women might reconfigure and revise such restrictive notions of both girlhood and girlhood visual culture into a more fluid, moving picture. For example, we found that popular cell phones are individually decorated, jewelry may represent both public and personal self, and private messages reveal different selves than shown in public digital media. The digital device can become an artistic tool of identity expression. Earlier in our analysis, we noticed that tweens often aim to be seen, both with and through these devices.

It should also be mentioned that spectatorship of teenage girls and their possessions is omnipresent, and perhaps, suspect. As Lamb and Brown (2006) note, other girls comment upon fashion, dress codes regulate apparel and accessories, and a certain visibility and monitoring of girlhood life is both annoying and intoxicating. Particularly in schools, bag checks and bathroom passes in schools regulate girls' movement and belongings. Teachers and parents may impose dress codes to protect girls, their decency, and/or privacy while also limiting their expression. Perhaps our project had a nuanced quality of voyeurism via its focus on tweens and removed stance from actual young women's private possessions and communications. However, we also employed a sense of possibility and creativity that seemed to afford us a criticality and reflexivity.

As researchers, we were able to reflect more personally on youth culture from a creative distance. It was consistently interesting to revisit our own childhoods though the objects and the archive, to briefly peer into the roles of our children and our younger students, and to imagine composite children through this project. Our hoard was not an inquiry into the past, but rather a sustained speculation into the present and future. Museum curator Catherine Johns (1997) observes:

> The archaeologist draws inferences from a transitory moment in the "lives" of the objects which he/she studies, the moment when the artifacts . . . were set aside, whether deliberately or inadvertently, until rediscovered much later.… In the case of hoards we see a particular association of objects which passed out of human control at a moment in the past, and from this grouping, we attempt to infer their previous history and the events and intentions which led to their deposition and their continuing sojourn in the ground. (p. 3)

Indeed, a hoard is a set of belongings that becomes preserved for future use and discovery, making incidental, or spontaneous hoards of history and more planned, intentional archives, such as our project, not entirely dissimilar.

The acts of discovering and archiving also serve to symbolically reunite owners with their lost treasures, by linking them once more through inquiry and historical narrative. We sensed hopefulness to hoarding that tween suffering and tween treasures will become more memorable and be of greater art historical importance in the future. So too, our imaginative project functions as a special sort of hoard in this manner, aiming to collect and curate in service of more nuanced interpretations of, understandings for, and collaborations with future youth cultures and artifacts.

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