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2018 REPORT

The Object, Senses and Material World of Schooling SWG was approved by the ISCHE GA in Istanbul in June 2015. Our 2018 activity consisted of organizing a robust slate of panels at the Berlin conference, whose “Education and Nature” them nicely dovetailed with the issues our SWG addresses. A list of this panels follows below.

Despite this success, however, the organizers wish to petition the ISCHE Executive Committee for an early dissolution of our SWG such that it will cease activities and not run panels at the 2019 ISCHE Porto conference. Other obligations of the organizers as well as a feeling that we have not been as successful as we would have liked at really realizing the central focus of the SWG into a coherently orchestrated intellectual exploration, lead us to think that the run of the past 3 years is what we should leave as the accomplishment of our efforts.

**ISCHE Objects, Senses and Material Worlds of Schooling Standing Working Group
Program for ISCHE 40 Conference- Berlin (Germany)
August 29-September 1, 2018**

PANEL 1 - EXHIBITS AND MUSEUMS: LOCATING AND CIRCULATING EDUCATIONAL OBJECTS (4 papers)**CHAIR:** Noah W. Sobe, Loyola University Chicago (USA) Email: nsobe@luc.edu**DISCUSSANT:** Kazuhisa Fujimoto, Keio University (Japan) Email: kazuhisa@ttc.keio.ac.jp**Paper Title:** Circulating Nature: Economic Botany Specimens in British Schools, c.1875-1914 (English)**Author:** Laura Newman, Mobile Museum Project, Royal Holloway/Kew Gardens (UK)**Email:** laura.newman@rhul.ac.uk**Abstract:**

This paper traces the circulation of economic botany specimens from the Museum of Economic Botany at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew to more than six hundred British schools from c.1875-1914. This paper offers an insight into my work as part of the Mobile Museum: Economic Botany in Circulation project at Royal Holloway, University of London and Kew Gardens. As part of this project, my work focuses on Kew’s role as a major supplier of teaching materials that were used to give children and young people a hands-on, intimate encounter with the botanical products of Britain and its Empire.

I begin my paper with a more general discussion of the relationship between museums, schools, and schooling in this period. I look at how Kew was utilised as a centre of both formal

and informal learning and training by both students and teachers from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. I pay particular attention to how Kew mobilised and circulated its material expertise in plants and plant materials to educators through networks of correspondence, periodicals on education penned by its curators, and, finally, through the distribution of specimens.

The second section contextualises Kew's involvement further by tracing the importance contemporaries attached to the object lesson and practices of collecting in this period. Using the School Letter Books housed at Kew Archives, I show how teachers became active collectors of specimens from Kew that equipped them with a novel array of hands-on teaching materials. I reflect here upon Martin Lawn and Ian Grosvenor's work into vernacular teaching technologies, and ask what these letters can tell us about the existence of a 'barter economy' amongst late nineteenth and early twentieth century British teachers and museum curators (2001: 124).

I then move on to how such objects were deployed in the classroom and school museum. Using a variety of sources, I show how teachers aimed to guide students through a sensual engagement with museum specimens. Particular attention is paid to the politics of display, and the ways in which these can be seen as informed by and existing in dialogue with museological practices of the time. Here, I use a variety of textual and visual sources to consider how economic botany specimens were 'installed' within the space of the classroom or school museum (O'Donoghue: 2010). I discuss, also, the importance that was attached to tactility in the object lesson in this period. By doing so, this paper offers a valuable contribution to the history of museum teaching collections, and what the existence of such collections can do to problematise our current understanding of the ways in which museums have traditionally been seen to inhibit touch.

Paper Title: El espacio de la naturaleza en el aula. Los museos escolares en las escuelas primarias de la ciudad de México en el siglo XIX (Español)
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Hacia finales del siglo XIX, la exhibición del mundo natural en los salones de clase tomó importancia no solo como parte de un nuevo proyecto pedagógico, sino también para simbolizar el aula como un lugar diferente a cualquier otro, que se distinguía por la racionalización en el orden de los objetos y la secularización del aprendizaje.

Dentro del espacio de la escuela, la simbolización del salón de clases se definió por una serie de elementos entre los que destacaron la exhibición de imágenes de animales, de plantas, de mapas, esferas celestes y figuras anatómicas. El museo escolar era el lugar en el que se mostraban "objetos de poco valor y abundantes en cosas de aplicación diaria": un ala de murciélago, un pájaro disecado, una serpiente, una colección de insectos.

La incorporación de la naturaleza en el aula fue importante para la significación del lugar, como un sitio para el aprendizaje. Las imágenes y los objetos denotaban una preocupación por el realismo y el interés por lo coleccionable. Se presentó el fenómeno de "lo natural" como un medio de instrucción independiente de los libros. Los adelantos teóricos y prácticos de la enseñanza suprimieron las prácticas de la enseñanza memorista, enciclopédica y dictatorial en las que se basaba la instrucción, para dar paso a una educación práctica.

La enseñanza que se consideraba "objetiva", posibilitaba al niño para aprender de lo que lo rodeaba y para ello, la didáctica proponía el método intuitivo, a través de preguntas y

respuestas. El arreglo del salón de clases, como una exhibición del mundo natural, privilegió la vista y la observación. El conocimiento del mundo natural adquirió connotaciones científicas y a la manera ilustrada, se interesó por nombrar, etiquetar, describir y examinar.

La historiografía hispana y latinoamericana ha abordado la creación de museos escolares desde las directrices de los manuales escolares y con relación a los intereses de los docentes y autoridades para crear una cultura nacional. Sin embargo, el museo escolar generó ciertas prácticas en el salón de clases, así como códigos y significados a partir de las representaciones de la naturaleza. Como resultado de su puesta en marcha, el museo escolar detonó flujos e interacciones con los museos de historia natural en la ciudad y con las ferias internacionales como resultado de la circulación de imágenes.

El objetivo de esta ponencia es entender cómo se modificó el espacio del aula en las escuelas primarias urbanas en México a partir de la exhibición de imágenes de la naturaleza. Analizo cómo este cambio fue resultado de una multiplicidad de relaciones sociales, culturales, económicas y políticas que se entrecruzaron para dar lugar a una nueva configuración del lugar.

Paper Title: Building the Modern Swedish citizen: modernity, objects and pedagogy (English)

Author: Martin Lawn

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Abstract:

The Stockholm Exhibition of 1930 was a national exhibition with a dual aim; to promote Swedish design internationally and to create a new internal market for aesthetically pleasing goods for mass consumption. The Stockholm exhibition was focused on the education of the public; indeed it was intended to construct a new public. Parallel to the new functional approaches to design in objects and architecture was a social modernization, in which the public would be able to view new designs and understand how they were to be used. The Expo and what followed was intended to be a soft power approach in which the citizen was encouraged and persuaded through a new public pedagogy.

The Exhibition presented designs within a new 'street' or corso of buildings and exhibits. Visitors walked along the corso and into apartments in which objects were placed in ideal settings. It was a new and particular way to manage the new European problem of mass consumption and mass production. These Exhibition aims were set high. It was a key element in the construction of a new identity of the person and the nation –'intellectually trained, morally mature' [Pred p135].

The 1930 Stockholm Exhibition and its subsequent effects show that it was not just designed objects and modern architecture that created impressions of the future, but a deliberate and intensive pedagogical and research programme. This programme was a civic exercise in the adoption of a new Swedish identity and a social programme in which it could be fostered. In 1932, a cohesive state housing policy was established. The ideal democratic society was to have as its building block a domestic interior which was tasteful and rational. To achieve this, Swedes needed guidance and information and a new pedagogical form was invented, the study circle. Courses on the furnishing and decoration of the home could be ordered and a speaker organized. All this took place within a 'democratic and participatory form' and the study circles grew in number [300 in 10 years] from 1944. Good taste was not just a question of good objects, but of achieving an ideal home. The Swedish innovations in exhibition design after the Stockholm exhibition were about leading the citizen through rooms of well displayed and furnished rooms in which an imagined future could be believed in.

Paper Title: Exhibit with emotions (English)
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Abstract

In the late 19th century new ways of comparison through international exhibitions (Dittrich, 2010) were created. The international World's fairs were among the "few genuinely international cultural institutions" of their time (ibid., 17).

During the late 20th century Sweden decided to participate with exhibitions at the World's fairs. What arguments were used, what critical points were raised and what experiences grew out from this?

Investigating the mediating role that the World's fairs had on educational ideas and technologies implies a transnational perspective on history. Transnational history is about contacts among communities, polities and societies and their exchanges, interactions, integrations and de-coupling. Having a transnational perspective on history means acknowledging and assessing foreign contributions to design, taste, strategies, politics and future hopes (Saunier, 2013). We also need to acknowledge the emotions involved when it comes to internationalization.

In the case of education, the power of the World's fair exhibitions has been related to the notion of accountability (Sobe & Boven, 2014) and to aesthetic normativity (Lundahl, 2016). In this paper governing with exhibitions is elaborated as an 'appeal to emotion' or argumentum ad passions. Appeals to emotions are about the manipulation of the recipient's emotions in order to win an argument, especially in the absence of factual evidence. This can include appeal to consequences, to fear, to flattery, to pity, to ridicule, to spite, to wishful thinking etc.

This paper is about the arguments used in when Sweden started to participate at the World's fairs. More specifically it is about the parliamentary debates in Sweden where it was decided how much Sweden could afford to pay for participating with own exhibits at ten major World's fairs (1851 – 1904), and the arguments used. The paper will show that the winning arguments were more often about nationalism than about international gains. Further, if rational 'cost benefit' arguments would have won, Sweden would most probably not have participated, rather, emotional arguments – often related to patriotism – tended to nullify every other kind of argument, allowing for participation.

The paper highlights the importance to take into account appeal to emotions as a way of governing that sometimes actually can be more, or at least as, successful as commonly recognized governing strategies such as 'governing by numbers'.

PANEL 2 – SPACE, SCHOOL AND THE SENSES (3 papers)

CHAIR: Noah W. Sobe, Loyola University Chicago (USA) Email: nsobe@luc.edu
DISCUSSANT: Pablo Pineau, University of Buenos Aires (Argentina)

Paper Title: Sensory memory, everyday spaces, and school life in Hong Kong 1921-1961 (English)

Author: Meng (Stella) Wang, The University of Sydney (Australia)
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Abstract:

This paper responds to the ISCHE 40 Objects, Senses and the Material World of Schooling SWG's call for papers by addressing more than four decades of changing production and consumption of educational space in colonial Hong Kong through the architecture of two government schools. Through examining school architecture in relation to the curriculum employed and children's everyday sensorial experiences in the designed architectural spaces, this paper underscores the intricate ways in which children inhabited the colonial education spaces, and the interplay between colonial schooling, architecture, and lived experiences.

Children's spatial experiences at school were in part shaped by the architectural layout of school buildings, and also, perhaps to a greater extent, shaped by the articulations of the classrooms, the corridors, the changes of level, the actual representation of the movements required by the timetables (Fass, Gutman, & De Coninck-Smith, 2008). The spatial encounters enabled by timetables and curriculums, and the activities and experiences children participated in the indoor and outdoor spaces formed children's everyday life at school. Yet how children inhabited and experienced school spaces remains less known. Merleau-Ponty (1996) suggests that we experience and remember spaces through senses. Building on this sensorial paradigm of space, in this paper, I focus on children's movement through and sensory experiences of school spaces. By tracing the interior and exterior design of school with particular attention to the connections between space, activities, and sensory experiences, I aim to reveal the ways in which colonial school architecture shaped children's moral and physical condition through everyday spatial practices.

Throughout this paper, I further argue that spatial experiences, encompassing both activities and senses, were shaped simultaneously by architectural forms and bodily movement. Children inhabited schools-classrooms, corridors, playgrounds-by sitting, reading, reflecting, thinking, playing, and exercising, all of which entailed varied levels of engagement with the material element of the inhabited space. The interactions between activities, bodily movement and senses therefore connects the physicality of everyday life and the materiality of architecture, which in turn defined the children's mode of being in the very space.

Concerning sources, this focus on children's everyday life- their sensorial experiences in particular-at school, in colonial Hong Kong, necessitates specific archival practices. To restore the schooling experiences and address the role of school architecture and curriculum in shaping children's spatial practices, I draw upon a range of archival sources, including: school floorplans, education reports, school newsletters, photographic records, newspapers, oral histories, and diaries.

Paper Title: **Nature Tables and Pocket Museums: from the Leicestershire classroom to the Mountain View Center for Environmental Education, Colorado (English)**

Author: Catherine Burke, University of Cambridge (UK)

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Abstract:

This paper is part of a wider research initiative which is tracing the travel of ideas and practices from Leicestershire infant and primary schools to the USA during the 1960s and 70s. It takes as a starting point a drawing of a 1969 classroom detailing precisely the site of furniture, material objects, display boards, water sources, 'growing things' live animals, book racks and floor space. The drawing, executed as a birds-eye view, has been reconstructed by the teacher who had inhabited that space from memory and with reference to a 1972 publication detailing an approach to environmental education that found its way to influence teacher development in the United States. The nature table contains a display of bones; another a display of shells and

there is a stream table. Pocket museums or 'treasure tins' were small boxes that were given to pupils to encourage their curiosity in the nature of tiny things.

Dorothy and John Paull were Leicestershire teachers who collaborated with American educationalists David and Frances Hawkins providing summer schools for teachers in Vermont, Boston and Boulder, Colorado. Those they worked with included Sioux Indians from South Dakota. Now in their 80s, they reflect on the work they did together in Leicestershire, the USA and with Ladybird books.

Matters of space and materiality are discussed as key elements in a pedagogy that was grounded in an understanding of primary school pupils as natural curators of their worlds. The paper draws from personal testimonies as well as the publications produced by the Paulls supported by Ford Foundation funds at the Environmental Education Centre, University of Colorado.

Paper Title: **A Tasteless History of School Food in the United States (English)**

Author: Lynn Fendler, Michigan State University (USA)

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Abstract:

National School Lunch Act (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act 79 P.L. 396, 60 Stat. 230) was signed into law in the United States in 1946. Since that time, educational policies and scholarly research on food in schools have focused on the following five issues: food safety, nutrition (including health and fitness), effects of school meals on academic performance, qualifications for school-food subsidies, and cost effectiveness of school food programs (including studies of waste and ease of preparation). Curiously, however, taste has not been included in historical discourses related to school food. With the exception of very new research by one anthropologist (Trapp, 2018), and one course taught at Yale in 1999 by Jacques Pépin, I could find no other references--educational policies or scholarly research--that focus on the taste of food provided in US schools. In this paper, I am using *taste* in a narrow specific sense to refer to gustatory, tongue-based sensations.

This paper asks, "Why is taste absent from the history of school food?" Historiographically then, this study responds to Burke and Grosvenor's (2013) theorization of absences in the historical record as rich sources of historical inquiry. Their work inspires a "particular use of the historical imagination" to explore "a montage of gaps."

This paper begins with a brief overview of school food policies in the United States since 1946. Then it maps the major topics of scholarly research on school food in order to characterize the major foci of twentieth-century discourses about food in US schools. I analyze historical discourses about school food for the purpose of identifying the limits circumscribing how it has been possible to think about food in schools. Following this analysis, I draw from cultural histories of food while exercising "historical imagination" to raise several possibilities that could generate ideas about the absence of taste from the history of school food. Sweeney (2007), for example, suggests that gustatory taste was replaced during the nineteenth century as part of a post-Kantian abstraction from taste to aesthetics. Korsmeyer (1999) suggests a hierarchy of senses that privileges vision and devalues taste in the priorities of modern science. Probyn (1999) suggests that the taste of food is associated with bodily pleasure and is therefore suspect as a prurient interest and inappropriate for discussions about children's experiences with food in schools. The conceptual distinction between the proximal and distal senses also provides a generative launching point for thinking about the absence of taste in the history of school food.

The paper concludes by calling attention to some newly emerging discourses on school food including school gardens, commercial fast-food, critiques of nutritionism, and environmentally responsible food sourcing.

PANEL 3 TITLE - VISUALIZING PAST SCHOOLING: USING MONTAGE

Organizers: Ian Grosvenor, University of Birmingham (UK) & Martin Lawn

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This panel is based on workshop that took place at the 1998 ISCHE Leuven conference. At Leuven, the workshop was used as a provocation following the discussions which taken place in the series of seminars which constructed 'Silences and Images' (Grosvenor, Lawn and Rousmaniere Peter Lang 1999). At the outset, we asked that, in studying the modern school, historians of education found new ways of exploring the tensions between 'design and desire' as expressed in the spaces of the school and [as it evolved as an idea later] the layered sedimentation of the histories of this tension present in the school.

Following Walter Benjamin [history breaks down into images, not into stories], we tried to introduce the idea of the montage into our studies of schooling. In addition, we placed the school within contexts of urban fragmentation, commodification and surveillance.

The Leuven Workshop was treated as a creative disruption, an enjoyable and confusing event, after which we could not forget the historian of education who asked 'what is the answer'! Historiography has expanded in the last twenty years and we would like to add the new historical approaches of the last twenty years and to continue devising ways of thinking about the 'totality of fragments', for example, on the senses, and on the use of new technologies in historical practice.

The Workshop will raise questions about a central Birmingham school, built in 1880 and still in operation, to focus on what happened in this space over time; it will include working and altering designed spaces, installing and mislaying technology, and finding evidence of the disappeared. Juxtaposition of 'evidence' and dissolution of the narrative will be suggested.

PANEL 4 – COMPLICATING THE EDUCATIONAL OBJECT (3 papers)

CHAIR: Kazuhisa Fujimoto, Keio University (Japan) Email: kazuhisa@ttc.keio.ac.jp

DISCUSSANT: Lynn Fendler, Michigan State University (USA) Email: fendler@msu.edu

Paper Title: From crystallography to kindergarten (English)

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Friedrich Fröbel is known as the founder of the kindergarten and for his design and systematization of the learning materials, named Gifts and Occupations. The Gifts were six sets of geometric solids introduced to foster children's understanding of volumes and their composition in space according to a geometrical and orthogonal pattern, while the Occupations were sets of materials introduced to work on the frame of a plane aimed for improving the composition skills reached during activities with the Gifts. Fröbel's kindergarten and the Gifts and Occupations played a determinant roll in the transformation of the Early Childhood Education of the second part of the 19th century and the preschool educational vision of the 20th century in Europe and North America. In comparison with other learning

materials developed in the 19th century, the Gifts are still in use at the actual kindergarten to foster the learning activities of children through play. Fröbel's notion of education is based on a dynamic system of interaction among “nature, people and God”. This pantheistic view does not comprise a difference between nature and culture. Children’s understanding of this system should help them to their self-development. These aspects have been documented and analyzed from the perspective of the pedagogy during the last century serving for the understanding of Fröbel as a representative of Romanticism. Less is known, however, about Fröbel's notion of nature in relation with his formal background as a crystallographer and the influence of crystallography in the development of the Gifts. This paper proposes to examine the Fröbel’s development of the Gifts more carefully. I shall reconstruct the parameters on which the six sets of the Gifts were designed and introduced into the learning activities at the kindergarten. For this purpose, I will compare Fröbel's German texts, his letters, his personal notes and the models of crystals he may used during his work with the crystallographer Christian Samuel Weiß. The aim is to show how Fröbel's understanding of nature, mastered in his studies on crystallography, directly influenced the design and systematization of the Gifts. Historians have long pointed out that Fröbel’s studies in natural sciences and particular in crystallography may have influenced the development of the Gifts. This paper should highlight this relation more clearly.

Paper Title: **La enseñanza de Ciencias para sordos en el siglo XIX y el método intuitivo (Español)**

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Abstract:

La educación de niños sordos en Brasil tuvo inicio en el siglo XIX en el Imperial Instituto de Surdos-Mudos, en Río de Janeiro, en 1857. El Imperial Instituto de Surdos-Mudos fue fundado por D. Pedro II, a través de la petición de E. Huet, profesor sordo francés (Rocha, 2007). En el Imperial Instituto de Surdos-Mudos el programa escolar para alumnos sordos presentaba, a partir de 1856, varias asignaturas y la enseñanza de ciencias naturales también ocurría por medio de actividades que envolvían la experiencia. El objetivo de esta investigación es presentar cómo se desarrollaba la enseñanza de Ciencias para sordos en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX (de 1856 a 1889), con base en el método intuitivo, en el Imperial Instituto de Surdos-Mudos. La investigación tiene un enfoque cualitativo y es del tipo documental. Las fuentes documentales utilizadas fueron primarias, tales como: informes de los directores del Imperial Instituto de los Surdos-Mudos, de los Ministros y Secretarios de los Negocios del Imperio, Colección de Leyes del Imperio, entre otros. Con base en los estudios desarrollados percibimos que la enseñanza de Ciencias para alumnos sordos ocurría de forma transversal, es decir, por medio del desarrollo de una serie de actividades: experiencias sensoriales en el museo que fue creado en el Imperial Instituto de Surdos-Mudos, trabajo en el plan de horticultura para los alumnos sordos, etc. Lo que llama la atención es que en el período observado la disciplina de Ciencias Naturales no forma parte del currículo para los alumnos sordos y en contrapartida aparecía en el currículo de otros colegios en la misma época (colegios para oyentes y para ciegos), pero aún así contenidos de esa área eran trabajados.

Paper Title: **Inanimate and animate nature between object lessons and open air schools**

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Abstract:

The object lesson was an important Nineteenth and early Twentieth century pedagogical innovation in many school settings around the world. Object teaching was praised for its modernizing qualities in improving teaching practice far beyond the traditional school. They introduced a deep didactic innovation in schools, giving life to collections of objects and real educational museums for the objective teaching, still little known in historiography. Concerning the didactic level, the objective lessons allowed the students to see and touch the objects of nature, a cold and inanimate nature but at least real and visible to the eyes and touch. This type of teaching spread in Europe in the second half of the Nineteenth century and was practiced at least until the twenties of the Twentieth century and then was replaced by a 'live teaching' from the new schools' movement and the open air schools' movement. In particular, open air schools - spread since the early Twentieth century - have introduced new teaching practices such as gardening, slow trips, classroom pets, didactic specimens and plant care in a natural context where the pupils have experimented an animate culture and a different link between bodies and nature compared to the model of pedagogical positivism of object lessons. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the practice of the object lesson created through the collections of objects of nature collected in the Educational Museum for schools started by Luigi Bombicci in Bologna (Italy, 1883) during the pedagogical positivism and still used in primary schools, as an example of *longue durée* of the material culture of schooling. I will analyze the objects of this educational museum, the teaching practices realized by teachers and the relationship between the bodies of the students at school and the inanimate nature of the objects. This relationship will be compared with some teaching practices of Italian open air schools in the first half of the Twentieth century, to grasp the difference in the way of considering the body at school related to an animated nature: nature and bodies now perceived as 'lived' and alive.

Paper Title: **Materializing American Progressive Education: Spinning Wheels and Book Covers**

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Abstract:

This paper takes up the cover illustration of John Dewey's best-selling 1899 *The School and Society* as itself a particularly provocative intervention within the pedagogic reform movement known in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century as "progressive education". Detailing the philosophy of and work of a cadre of teachers at the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago, *School and Society* is arguably the publication that launched the American pragmatist philosopher's reputation as a nationally and internationally renowned educational thinker. Fascinatingly and ironically, on the face of it, the book's cover illustration ostensibly represents neither a "school" nor "society". Instead the reader is presented with a line drawing of two children adjacent to one another but not precisely engaged in a shared activity – except that both are involved in textile arts. One is spinning wool on a hand-powered spinning wheel. The other is bent over, caught up in what seems to be a needle-point or embroidery activity. In deliberately not showing a recognizable school and in not invoking any traditional motifs for representing society, the cover of Dewey's text arguably helped to produce some of the purported difference between "new", progressive education and older "traditional" methods. Similarly, the absorptive interest that both children take in their activity is evident and echoes the commonplace progressive education idea that the interests of the child should drive educational processes. Yet, there is more to the illustration than just the representational plane and this paper attempts to delve deeper into the cover illustration of the first edition of Dewey's *School and Society* as a material object. Dewey's book, as an influential pedagogic text, is part of the "material world of schooling" and the cover, with its depiction of children with objects reveals something of the material world of

schooling at the Laboratory School. This paper focuses on the textile work portrayed, with a mind towards establishing what this single artifact (the book cover specifically) can tell us about the cultural and social politics of turn-of-the-century educational practice in the United States.
