

CFP: PLAYTHINGS IN EARLY MODERNITY: PARTY GAMES, WORD GAMES, MIND GAMES (edited collection)

Contributions are sought for an interdisciplinary collection of essays to be edited by Allison Levy and published by Ashgate Publishing Co. in the new book series, *Cultures of Play, 1300-1700* (see <http://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=5166>; series editor Bret Rothstein). Dedicated to early modern playfulness, this series serves two purposes. First, it recounts the history of wit, humor, and games, from jokes and sermons, for instance, to backgammon and blind man's buff. Second, in addressing its topic – ludic culture – broadly, *Cultures of Play* also provides a forum for reconceptualizing the play elements of early modern economic, political, religious, and social life.

Within this framework, *PLAYTHINGS IN EARLY MODERNITY: PARTY GAMES, WORD GAMES, MIND GAMES* emphasizes the rules of the game(s) as well as the breaking of those rules: playmates and game changers, teammates and tricksters, matchmakers and deal breakers, gamblers and grifters, scripts and ventriloquism, charades and masquerades, game pieces and pawns. Thus, a 'plaything' is understood as both an object and a person, and play, in early modern Europe (1300-1700), is treated not merely as a pastime, a leisurely pursuit, but also as a pivotal part of daily life, a strategic psychosocial endeavor: Why do we play games – with and upon each other as well as ourselves? Who are the winners, and who are the losers? Desirable essays will also consider the *spaces* of play: from the stage to the street, from the pulpit to the piazza, from the bedroom to the brothel: What happens when players go 'out of bounds,' or when games go 'too far'? We seek new and innovative scholarship at the nexus of material culture/the study of objects, performance studies, and game theory. We welcome proposals from a wide range of disciplines, including gender studies, childhood studies, history, languages and literature, theater history, religious studies, the history and philosophy of science, philosophy, psychology, and the history of art and visual culture.

PLAYTHINGS IN EARLY MODERNITY: PARTY GAMES, WORD GAMES, MIND GAMES will be an illustrated volume, with individual contributors responsible for any permission and/or art acquisition fees. Final essays, of approximately 8,000 words (incl. notes), and all accompanying b&w illustrations/permissions will be due no later than January 15, 2015. For consideration, please send an abstract (max. 500 words), a preliminary list of illustrations (if applicable), and a CV to Allison Levy (allisonlevy2@gmail.com or playthingsvolume@gmail.com) by September 15, 2014. Notifications will be emailed by the end of September.