



**WOLFSONIAN**

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**'CHILD'S PLAY: PROPAGANDA PUZZLES, WAR GAMES, AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS FROM THE  
WOLFSONIAN-FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY'  
ON VIEW IN THE GREEN LIBRARY**

MIAMI BEACH, FL (December 21, 2007) – Join The Wolfsonian-Florida International University as it presents ***CHILD'S PLAY: Propaganda Puzzles, War Games, and Children's Books*** on display in the Green Library at the Florida International University Park Campus through January 22, 2008. The exhibition organized by The Wolfsonian's chief librarian Francis Luca features children's propaganda books, magazines, board games, puppets, and puzzles created as a means to enlist even the youngest members of a nation in the broader cause of the war effort. A reception and talk to celebrate the opening of the exhibition will be held in the Green Library on Thursday, January 17 at 3pm.

During the early twentieth century, both democratic and totalitarian countries introduced children to political and war-related messages through books, magazines, and games that transformed war into "child's play." In some books, children are depicted as actual combatants; in others, young readers are encouraged to actively support the war through participation in scrap drives or by saving coins to buy victory stamps. Games also aimed at instilling patriotism, glorifying national heroes, and training future combatants in the strategies and art of war.

The works on view represent the major conflicts of the twentieth-century: the South African [or "Boer"] War (1899-1902), the First World War (1914-1918), the Italo-Ethiopian War (1935-1936), the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), and the Second World War, (1939-1945). Virtually all of the participants in these struggles are represented, including Great Britain, Germany, France, Australia, the United States, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Japan, and the Soviet Union. Together, these items highlight the active role that graphic design plays as an instrument of political persuasion, and invite viewers to compare shared imagery produced by countries with very different political systems.

Many of the children's propaganda books exhibited here were recently donated by Pamela K. Harer to The Wolfsonian-FIU. The Harer collection comprises more than one hundred children's books primarily from the First and Second World Wars and the Cold War era. In addition, the exhibition is augmented by works from the private collection of Wolfsonian founder, Mitchell Wolfson, Jr., and The Wolfsonian Special Collections Library.

About The Wolfsonian-Florida International University

The Wolfsonian is a museum, library, and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design. The collections comprise approximately 120,000 pieces from the period 1885 to 1945 — the height of the Industrial Revolution until the end of the Second World War — in a variety of media, including: furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass; ceramics; metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals. The curatorial goal is to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world.

The Wolfsonian-FIU is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida. Admission is \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors, students, and children ages six to twelve. Admission is free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, children under six, and Miami Beach residents with ID. The museum is open Monday, Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday from noon-6pm; Thursday and Friday from noon-9pm; and it is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at [www.wolfsonian.org](http://www.wolfsonian.org).

The Wolfsonian receives ongoing support from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council; Crispin Porter + Bogusky; Continental Airlines, the preferred airline of The Wolfsonian; the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation; and Karla Conceptual Event Experiences.

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