



The Politics of Focus: Women, Children, and Nineteenth-Century Photography (The Critical Image)

Lindsay Smith

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Starting with Walter Benjamin's analogy of photography with magic, Lindsay Smith reconstructs nineteenth-century photography by considering its history and theorization, with reference to both the figure of the child and the photographs and photographic practices of Victorian women. She provides an engaging, inter-disciplinary perspective of her subject and its "politics of focus." "Focus" serving both as a photographic condition, and as a sign for broader questions of historical and cultural emphasis, in accounts of photographic discourse. Theoretically informed *The Politics of Focus* brings together a wealth of topics in photographic history: amateur and professional practitioners; different genres; men and women photographers; documentary and pictorial modes; different sitters and subjects; developing technologies. These themes cut across many of the central concerns of a conventional critical history of Victorian photography.

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