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talized: They tend to perceive the world in terms of shapes, while linguistic skills are often underdeveloped. Leonardo, according to contemporaries, was ambidextrous.

Leonardo was a poor writer, as he himself confessed. Freud seized upon one of his more garbled sentences—"On the 16th day of July Caterina [his mother?] came on the 16th day of July 1493"—as a sign of repressed emotion. But the authors say such lapses in sequence are common among ambidextrous people. They detect the same phenomenon at work in Leonardo's mirror-reversed writing, which scholars have long attributed to his fear of censorship. If Leonardo had really sought to avoid discovery, they note, he would have used a code whose solution required more than holding up a mirror. To Leonardo, mirror writing seemed as "natural" as any other kind.

Freud's interpretation of Leonardo also rests on two paintings. He saw the triangular arrangement of the Virgin Mary, St. Anne, and the infant Jesus in *Virgin and Child with St. Anne* and the "double meaning" of the *Mona Lisa* smile as illustrations of how "the two mothers of his childhood"—his real mother, who bore him out of wedlock, and his father's wife—were "melted into a single form." But triangular composition was common in Leonardo's work (for example, in *The Last Supper*), and the famous smile is probably the result of the ambidextrous artist's unusual ability to recall and reproduce in entirety what he saw—in this case, a fleeting expression on his model's face.

Leonardo's work, say Aaron and Clouse, does not betray early childhood obsessions; it reflects the organization of his brain.

Fakes Preferred

"Art Versus Collectibles" by Edward C. Banfield, in *Harper's* (August 1982), P.O. Box 2620, Boulder, Colo. 80321.

When former Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller began selling high-quality reproductions of his private art collection, the art world was shocked. Hilton Kramer, former art critic of the *New York Times*, lamented "a new era of hype and shamelessness." Banfield, a Harvard government professor, argues that Rockefeller had the right idea.

The same connoisseur who buys recorded Beethoven symphonies shrinks from the thought of high fidelity re-creations when it comes to paintings and sculpture. Yet to see art masterpieces today, the average citizen must travel to a major city and endure museum crowds for a glimpse. Why not show first-rate reproductions of masterpieces in schools and small museums nationwide? Don't university art departments teach students to appreciate art by showing slides?

As most museum heads have ruefully discovered, fakes need not be "inferior." The National Gallery long unwittingly displayed as "Vermeers" two paintings by the 20th-century master forger Hans van Meegeren. The Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibited several fifth-century B.C. Etruscan terra cotta warriors for 40 years before finding out they were modern. Much art is not created by the hand of the artist

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at all. In the 16th century, Hans Holbein drew designs on wood blocks, which were carved by his assistants and then printed by others. Sculptors today routinely make models in clay, wax, or plastic to be cast at foundries, often in sizes different from the original.

Two groups are responsible for the resistance to creating and showing high-quality reproductions, says Banfield. Art historians teach the public to value art "relics" as part of history, rather than as "something to be responded to aesthetically." And private art collectors make purchases for the same reasons they buy stocks—to see them go up in value. If museums began showing reproductions instead of originals, he suggests, "the multibillion dollar art business would fall into an acute and permanent recession."

Some museum administrators think the public would accept reproductions as a *supplement* to originals, but not as a substitute. Museumgoers want the glamor of originals. As Banfield notes, many of the people waiting in line to view Rembrandt's *Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer*, which cost the Metropolitan \$6 million, "would as willingly have stood to see the \$6 million in cash."

Borges's Fiction

"The Borges Phenomenon" by James Neilson, in *Encounter* (June-July 1982), 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS England.

"Glory is a form of incomprehension," wrote author Jorge Luis Borges in the early 1940s, "and it is perhaps the very worst." Until 1961, when he shared the Prix Formentor with Samuel Beckett, "glory" did not touch Borges personally. Now that it does, observes Neilson, editor of the *Buenos Aires Herald*, he seems to find the hubbub congenial. He should: It could well be one of his own stories.

Since 1961, Borges (born 1899) has been the focus of a still-growing cult. His followers range from academics, whom he has mocked throughout his life, to those fellow Argentines "who rarely read any books but who are infuriated" that he has not won the Nobel Prize, says Neilson. Last year, Borges, who "professes to regard the nation-state as an anachronism," was hailed by an Argentine general as a "national monument."

Borges has always believed that the writer is created by the reader and that "reading is just as creative as writing." His "The Circular Ruins," for example, is about an Indian mystic who tries to dream another man into existence only to discover that he is himself the dream of someone else. Similarly, everyone has his own Borges.

Latin American writers such as Octavio Paz and Gabriel Garcia Márquez see Borges as liberating them from traditional realism. Indeed, Borges has broken away from standard Western genres (he pens no dramas, novels, long poems). He refrains from developing his characters, and he ignores the details of everyday life. Borges's work resembles the writings of Taoist monks and Zen masters: The world is