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**New York Times Bestselling Author To Speak at Gesell Institute Events This Fall**

**New Haven, CT, June 21, 2010** – Ashley Merryman, an award winning journalist and co-author of the New York Times bestseller *NurtureShock: New Thinking About Children* will be speaking on the Yale campus on October 14 and 15, 2010. Keynoting Gesell Institute’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary banquet on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Merryman will also serve as a panel member at the Institute’s Early Childhood Leadership conference the following day. Both events will take place at the Omni New Haven Hotel at Yale. A book signing is also being planned while Merryman is in New Haven, with details to be announced.

Gesell Institute of Human Development is a national non-profit organization and the host of the one-day conference, which will also feature keynote speakers T. Berry Brazelton, MD and Joshua D. Sparrow, MD, among other renowned figures in child development and leaders in education reform. The conference will reintroduce and highlight the important role of child development in education, learning, and long-term school success. “Ultimately,” says Gesell Executive Director Marcy Guddemi, “we will be discussing how to use sound theory and practice to help raise test scores the *right* way, and we are simply thrilled and honored to have Ashley Merryman joining us to add to this important national conversation.”

Co-authored by Merryman and Po Bronson, *NurtureShock* has received numerous national awards and has been on 37 "Best Of" lists. It has been heralded as among the Best in General Nonfiction (Barnes & Noble, iTunes), and Best Overall (Library Journal, AV Club, San Francisco Chronicle), without reference to genre. However, what's truly remarkable is that *NurtureShock* has also been included in the Best in Education (Scholastic.com), Best of Science Reporting (Discover magazine, Seed magazine), Best in Parenting (Nurture Mama), Best in Personal Development (Audible.com), and the Best in Coverage of Political/Social Issues (BigThink.com). Similarly, the authors won the Audie Award for Best Audiobook of the Year (Personal Development) and the Books for Better Life Award for Best Parenting/Childcare Book, while they've also received honors from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS); the Education Writers Association; the Mensa Foundation; NAPPA/Parenthood.com; and the Council on Contemporary Families.

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“NurtureShock is an essential read for current and future parents, as well as other caregivers and educators,” states Guddemi. The central premise of the book is that many of today’s strategies for nurturing children are backfiring, essentially because key research has been overlooked.

Merryman’s journalism has appeared on the covers of Newsweek and New York magazine as well as in the pages of Time, The Washington Post, the Guardian, and many others; her work has also been featured on every major television and radio news program. Merryman holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, and a Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown University's Law Center. She currently lives in Los Angeles, where she directs a volunteer tutoring program for inner-city children.

Gesell Institute of Human Development is an independent non-profit organization associated with how children grow and learn since 1950. The work of Arnold Gesell, PhD, MD, (1888-1961), founding Director of the Yale Child Study Center in 1911 and the Institute’s namesake, had a profound influence on the field child development. Based on Gesell’s pioneering work documenting infant and child growth and development during the first half of the century, Gesell programs and publications help parents and educators understand the ages and stages of childhood. Professional development and parent workshops cover a broad range of topics regarding child behavior, healthy growth and development, and positive learning outcomes. The national conference will be stand-alone event expected to attract educators, psychologists, researchers, policy makers, and other important community stakeholders from around the country. For details, to purchase banquet tickets, or to register for the conference, please visit [www.gesellinstitute.org/events](http://www.gesellinstitute.org/events). For more information about *NurtureShock*, please visit [www.nurtureshock.com](http://www.nurtureshock.com).

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