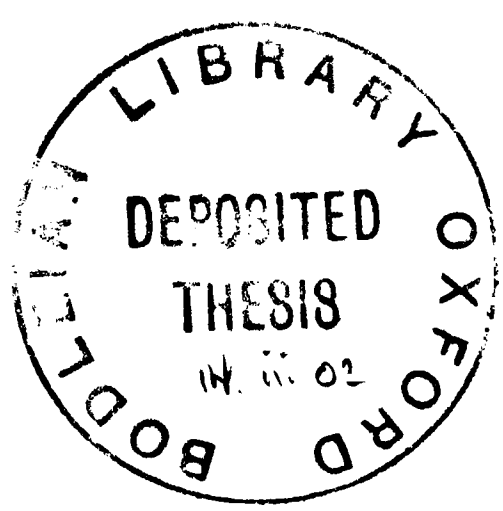
Thesis Abstract
The Children's Progress: Late-Nineteenth-Century Children's Culture, the Stephen Juvenilia, and Virginia Woolf's Argument with Her Past
Alix Bunyan
Somerville College
D. Phil. Thesis: Trinity Term 2001

This thesis situates the life and work of Virginia Woolf in a socio-literary history of writing by, and attitudes towards, children. It explores late-Victorian middle-class children's lives, and the relationships between parents and children during the period. Although Darwinian ideals had begun to influence parents earlier in the century, it was not until the 1870s that they seem to have become prevalent in middle-class families. Through an examination of the expansion of evolutionary and developmental stage theories in the late Victorian years, the thesis puts forth the theory that middle-class adults of the period saw children as containing adult potential. It makes a study of how this view affected middle-class family life, child rearing, and children's culture during the period. It particularly investigates linguistic developmental theory and its effect on reading and writing education, and late-Victorian ideas of children's sexual development and the need for sexual education. The thesis examines how such theories led to changes in writing by children during the period, exploring nineteenth-century works by children, and focusing on the home manuscript magazine genre. It questions the late-Victorian belief that children wrote spontaneously and "naturally." It situates the juvenile writings of the Stephen children (of whom Woolf was one), using these texts as typical products of the late-nineteenth-century middle-class familial and cultural context that the thesis examines. This study allows me to propose a critical definition of late-nineteenth-century children's home magazine writing. The thesis goes on to argue that Woolf, while recognizing herself as a product of the late-Victorian middle classes and retaining some of the authorial qualities evident in her family's juvenile works, rebelled against the late-Victorian evolutionist-developmentalist view of childhood, and helped to create a new language in the process.

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Introduction

> *"Is it finished? Have you written it my dear? she says in a voice beaming with geniality. The Author likes to be terse and if possible, dramatic. She pointed with her pen to her blank paper, and almost triumphantly she watched for the change in the Editor's countenance.*
>
> *-Stephen family, "Hyde Park Gate News," 8 April 1895.*

There are few remaining blank pages in the study of Virginia Woolf's life and work. But this thesis deals with a hitherto unread page, by situating the life and work of Woolf in a socio-literary history of writing by, and attitudes towards, children. It explores late-Victorian children's culture and parent-child relations. It investigates unexamined writing by children of the period, and specifically situates the juvenile writings of Virginia Stephen, "The Author," and her siblings, using these texts as typical products of the late-nineteenth-century middle-class cultural context that the thesis examines. The thesis goes on to argue that Woolf, while recognizing herself as a product of the late-Victorian middle classes and retaining some of the authorial qualities evident in her family's juvenile writing, rebelled against the late-Victorian evolutionist-developmentalist view of childhood.

The first chapter of the thesis describes how the expansion of developmental stage theory led parents of the period to see their children as containing adult potential. Although Darwinian ideals had begun to influence parents earlier in the century, it was not until the 1870s that they seem to have become prevalent in middle-class families. Many aspects of middle-class family life, child-rearing, and children's culture were affected by the spread of developmentalism and evolutionary theory. These have until now been underexamined in terms of their effect on children's lives. The second chapter discusses the rise of linguistic developmental theory, and how it affected reading and writing education. Parents of the period grew increasingly interested in children's private

languages and writings, demonstrating that late-Victorian boys and girls had achieved a private mental space in adult eyes, and that they were thought to develop themselves rather than being formed by their parents. Changes in education led to changes in writing by children, both of which I explore. The third chapter goes on to discuss late-Victorian ideas about children's sexual development, including a new exploration of early sexual education texts as they related to developmentalist theory. Increasingly, the child was seen to have power over his or her adult future, and his or her sexuality came to be seen as innate. Children's writings about adult love and sex, while parodic, frequently reflected these adult ideas. The idea of the child as "natural" writer, and the question of whether young authors were really "spontaneous," are subject to a new examination here and in the fourth chapter, which provides a new study of the popular children's manuscript magazine genre. The fifth chapter takes the Stephen family's "Hyde Park Gate News" as a case study for the theories discussed earlier in the thesis. These texts have often been studied for the biographical information they provide, but their literary qualities have not been examined in depth. Nor have they been compared with other children's writing of the same period. The Stephens were a middle-class, literary family in many ways typical of their period, and the children's writings reflect this background. This study allows me to put forth a critical definition of extant late-nineteenth-century writings by children. The conclusion looks ahead to Virginia Woolf's adult works, and her adaptation of and argument with the developmental and literary traditions of her early life, establishing a new way of reading her adult language as a language of childhood.

For my purposes, childhood will refer to the period from birth to about 16. 14 was inscribed as the limit of childhood criminality in 1908, and was the predominant school-leaving age throughout the later Victorian period.[1] But many middle-class young people, especially girls, were treated as children for far longer than this. The officially recognized

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[1]See James Walvin, Introduction to *A Child's World: A Social History of English Childhood 1800-1914*, 13-4.

period of childhood was prolonged by legislation during the late nineteenth century: the age of female sexual consent, for example, was raised from 12 to 13 in 1875, and, after a long campaign, to 16 in 1885.[2] The average age of first menstruation in Great Britain was 16.5 in the 1860s and 15.5 in the 1890s,[3] and late-nineteenth-century boys began their adolescent growth spurt at about the same age, not reaching full height until the median age of 23 at the turn of the century.[4] Psychological and literary maturity are certainly not always contiguous with physical adulthood. But by 16, most of the young writers I discuss had ceased to compose collaborative manuscript magazines. Sometimes they stopped writing altogether; sometimes they turned to more personal writing, in different styles. The time around this age frequently represents a recognizable transition point in the child writers' works. Although childhood cannot be defined easily or generally for the period, 16 will therefore be the upper age limit of middle-class childhood for the purposes of the thesis.

The thesis makes a study of writing by children, not of literature for children. While it includes examinations of certain popular texts, it focuses on the way in which these works affected or reflected children's lives and writing. Like books written for children by adults, children's own writing is part of the history of childhood, as well as part of the history of literature. The two are bound up together. Children's writing is of interest both for the historical-biographical information it imparts and as a literary genre. Late-nineteenth-century middle-class children lived in a somewhat circumscribed world, and how they lived had an immediately apparent effect on how they wrote, perhaps more than would be visible in adult writers' works. The messages, style, and implied audience in these writings clearly reflect the familial and cultural worlds in which their authors

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[2]See James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*, 68-70, on Victorian confusion over the definition of childhood.
[3]Peter Laslett, "Age at Menarche in Europe Since the Eighteenth Century," in *The Family in History: Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. Rabb and Rotberg, 29.
[4]Paul Ferris, *Sex and the British: A Twentieth Century History*, 243. See Chapter 3 below for a discussion of children and sexual development.

were living. The works are worth studying for what they tell us about these worlds, and for their own literary qualities. The home manuscript magazine genre of this period has not been studied in depth. The thesis examines the Stephen family's "Hyde Park Gate News" against the background of other home magazines, and investigates its literary qualities. It attempts to investigate the children's texts as they were written, not as they were viewed from the author's later, adult perspective. The perception of Virginia Woolf as an author from an early age is a popular and valid conception, but the thesis avoids a study of her adult works as foreshadowed by the juvenilia. Instead, it looks at the childhood works in themselves, and at how Woolf later adapted and subverted the educational traditions of her youth. It sees Woolf as part of a historical shift in thinking about childhood and the interaction between parents and children.

Defining late-Victorian children's writings as a genre necessarily raises the issue of survival. Many of the extant manuscript magazines come from literary families, who may have been more likely to keep these writings for posterity. Can the definition therefore be applied to writing by all middle-class children for the period? Even if the manuscripts themselves do not survive, many references to various children writing magazines appear in various places. The popularity of the genre extended beyond famous literary families, and home journals themselves virtually always had common traits, which I explore in the fourth and fifth chapters. The question of whether these are simply children's "public" texts, and whether they wrote more private works as well, which may not have survived, must also be confronted. The answer, in many cases, cannot be known. We can say that there are few references to private works in period memoirs, while manuscript magazines and other family writings are often discussed. We do know that many middle-class children of the time sought out an adult audience, and that parents encouraged such productions. Most writing by children seems to have been collaborative, and much was "published" within the family. The new definition, therefore, holds true for the texts we have, and we can extrapolate from it to include others.

The "terse" and "dramatic" "Author" and her blank pages from the "Hyde Park Gate News" quotation represents the self-projection of the young Virginia Stephen, somewhat uneasily imagining herself as an adult writer. In this thesis, I have attempted to look at the "Hyde Park Gate News" and other late-Victorian juvenile works from the points of view of the young authors who wrote them and the audience for whom they were originally intended. I have tried to let the texts speak for themselves, leaving spelling, punctuation, and grammar as they stand. In this way, the adult Virginia Woolf's argument with her late-Victorian past becomes more authentic, and her use of the child's language all the more meaningful.

Chapter 1:
"An ever widening life": Changes in Children's Culture in the Late Nineteenth Century



From "How I Bring Up My Parents," *The Idler*, October 1895.

In the past, the child was subordinate to the parent in point of interest: in the present, the reverse is the case. The child, with his infinite possibilities, is now all important, for to him belongs golden youth. It is the fashion in the present day to worship youth.

-L. T. Meade,
"Children Past and Present,"
The Parents' Review, *1896*

Was the late nineteenth century the age of the child, as most modern accounts maintain?[1] Among the late-Victorian English middle and upper-middle classes, it would seem that it was, for better or for worse. The last decades of the century form the period in which a culture specifically for children boomed: after a tentative eighteenth-century start, books and periodicals purely for children's entertainment now came into their own; commercially produced toys and games multiplied; advertising began to cater to young appetites. Philippe Ariès's influential theory that a concept of childhood was non-existent until the late 1700s has largely been refuted;[2] adults from the Middle Ages onwards recognized that children were different from themselves and in need of special care. Rousseau's *Emile* (1762) helped to create the study of childhood development and childcare, which gained momentum in the earlier years of the nineteenth century.[3] Yet late-Victorian middle-class parents and other adults were the first general socio-historical group widely to explore childhood as a complex period of life, worthy of scientific observation. They were also uncertain about childhood's connection to adulthood, and questioned the concept of development in various ways. In 1869, *The Spectator* could complain with many, "The truth is, that the worship of children has increased, is

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[1]"The nineteenth century might almost be called the century of the child" (Penny Kane, *Victorian Families in Fact and Fiction*, 37); "It was in [the Victorian] period that a regard for the young bit deeply into Western culture: when children figured frequently in articles and novels and . . . a swelling tide of attention rolled through every area of their lives. . ." (David Grylls, *Guardians and Angels: Parents and Children in Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 22-3).

[2]Most thoroughly by Linda A. Pollock in *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900.* See especially 1-32.

[3]See Christina Hardyment, *Perfect Parents: Baby-Care Advice Past and Present*, 1-32, on the influence of Rousseau's child-rearing philosophies, and the "Rousseaumania" that continued into the nineteenth century.

increasing, and ought to be diminished. It is the growing evil of the day."[4] In 1888, Charlotte M. Manson also spoke for many when she enthusiastically proclaimed, in nearly the same words, "It is the age of child-worship."[5] These writers' declarations reflect the state of high ambivalence about childhood--and the desire to conceptualize it--among the late-Victorian middle classes. Childhood's link to adult life provoked the most debate. The idea that children were in some sense "little adults," people whose only difference from grown-ups was one of stature, is one which historians such as Ariès and Lloyd de Mause see as having ruled from the middle ages until the mid-nineteenth century.[6] Whether or not it is historically accurate, the idea that this had been true in the past held currency during the child-centred period of the 1870s to the 1890s. Indeed, late-Victorians, with their "discovery" of adolescence, may have been the inventors of the historical child as miniature adult, promulgating the belief that earlier generations, not noting any transitional period, had treated children as adults from birth.[7] But in the late nineteenth century, miniature adulthood took on new meaning.

Working against some current assumptions about late-nineteenth-century child culture, this chapter will suggest the theory that in late-Victorian perceptions, middle- and upper-middle-class childhood was connected to adulthood. Late-Victorian children, up to the age of about 16, were still considered "little adults" in a different way; instead of being born mature, they were seen as containing their own mature future within the chrysalis of childhood. The middle classes of the period did not suddenly discover childhood, nor did they claim to have done so. What changed during the period was the middle-class perception of parent-child relationships, and that of children's connection to their adult selves. Beginning with an examination of how late-nineteenth-century middle-

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[4]R. H. Hutton, "The Worship of Children," *Spectator* 42 (6 November 1869), 1299.
[5]In *Murray's Magazine*. Cited in Grylls, 64.
[6]See, for example, de Mause, "The Evolution of Childhood," in *The History of Childhood* (1-73). Of the gendering of children's dress in the early nineteenth century, he writes, "The [parent's] mother is literally reborn in the child; children are not just dressed as 'miniature adults' but quite clearly as miniature *women*, often complete with décolleté" (18). The idea of historical miniature adulthood has almost entirely been invalidated, especially with Pollock's thesis, but it was current during the period in question. Small children later in the century wore dresses until about age five or six.
[7]See Ross Beales's theory of American Victorians' invention of the "little adult," "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England," *American Quarterly* 27 (1975), 379-98, and Pollock, 54.

class parents viewed the process of having and raising children, I will here consider the "new child" and his or her position within the home, including nurseries and private spaces. I will then examine games, toys, and entertainments, important facets of late-nineteenth-century children's culture, and how commercial offerings compared with children's own homemade or made-up variations. Next I will discuss books and periodicals and how they catered to the adult within the child. This chapter seeks to establish that the "little adult" wasn't entirely absorbed by the "big" new child, but instead metamorphosed into the idea of the child's inherent adult potential.

> *Ingeniously, he discovered a part of Victorian daily life to investigate that other scientists ignored. The natural history of babies, he decided, was essential to his proposals about evolution.*
> -*Janet Browne*, Charles Darwin: Voyaging. Volume I of a Biography, *1995*

In 1886, a toyshop opened at 54 Oxford Street in London under the auspicious name of "Le Paradis des Enfants."[8] The business title suggests that there, lucky children could find anything they desired within an Aladdin's cave of toys and games. But late-Victorian toy manufacturers and sellers were not the only set of adults to begin to ask the proto-Freudian question, "What do children want?" Beginning in mid-century, middle- and upper-middle-class parents found themselves wondering as a group, asking not what their children could do for them, but what they could do to help their children grow up. By the 1870s, theorization on the subject was widespread among adults. The parent-child relationship was seen as dyadic in the cultural consciousness, as, for example, some middle-class parents retained the earlier view of children as comforts for their old age,[9] but adults were more concerned than ever before with how they could best help their children to grow up to fit into society. Middle-class adults throughout the late-Victorian period displayed ambivalence towards children in several ways: diaries of the era reveal both a rose-tinted nostalgia surrounding childhood's "innocence" and a worry that

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[8]See Gwen White, *Toys, Dolls, Automata, Marks and Labels*, 12.
[9]See, for example, Henry Alford's (1810-71) old-age worry that "I have only my two sweet girls left to stay my declining years and those of their mother" (*Life, Journals and Letters of Henry Alford, D. D.*, 196).

children might be warped by the "sinful state" of society; parents both longed for their children to remain babies and for them to grow up; childhood was seen as a time for carefree amusement but also as the period for laying a strong moral, intellectual, and physical foundation.[10] Many also began to want to make a paradise of childhood, and, in the late nineteenth century, methodically to set out the best way to do so. David Grylls notes that in the early 1800s there were virtually no periodical articles on children, childhood, family life, and parenting, but that "after 1850 the volume swells; by 1900 there are dozens of them, surging over every creek and crevice of childhood feeling and childhood life. . .."[11] One cause of this shift in attitudes was a demographic one. As the nineteenth century progressed, people had fewer and fewer children, with a marked fertility decline beginning in Britain in 1870. Julia and Leslie Stephen were typical in their efforts to limit the size of their middle-class family, although, with birth control still rudimentary, they were not entirely successful.[12] Infant mortality remained a large problem, but was less and less so among the affluent middle classes. Moreover, overall population growth caused an increase in the number of young people in the population as a whole: "[t]he age-structure of the community shifted."[13] The 1871 census observed, "The people of England, which calls herself Old, are younger than the people of many other countries."[14] The new communal focus on youth was made manifest by the 1884 establishment of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children,[15] and the subsequent introduction of legislation such as the "Children's Charter," or Act for the

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[10]See Pollock, 107-10, for examples from diaries of the period. Parents had always shown an interest in children's moral development, but late-Victorian middle-class mothers and fathers were concerned with development of all faculties: physical, psychological, intellectual, and even artistic.

[11]Grylls, 46.

[12]Leslie Stephen had a daughter from his first marriage; Julia Stephen had three children from hers. Together, they had four others, of whom Virginia and Adrian, the two youngest, were unplanned. Woolf wrote that her parents "did what they could to prevent me, and Adrian was born a year after me (1883)--again, in spite of precautions." ("A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, 127). See also Leslie Stephen's anxiety about having more children in his letters to Julia Stephen, e. g., 28 July 1881; 19 and 20 October 1881; and 9 April 1882, Berg Collection. Chapters 2, 3 and 5 provide further discussion of the Stephens as a middle-class family characteristic in many ways of their time.

[13]Penny Kane, *Victorian Families in Fact and Fiction*, 37.

[14]Cited in James Walvin, *A Child's World*, 17.

[15]G. M. Trevelyan, *Illustrated English Social History* 4, 159. The SPCC, one might note, was founded exactly 60 years after the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Its establishment does not show that earlier generations were more cruel or uncaring than the late-Victorians; rather, it is an example of the slow increase of state and social influence on family life in the late nineteenth century.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children, in 1889, and its revision in 1894. This focus was partly related to the adult nostalgia for childhood that appeared during the nineteenth century as an extension of anxiety over increasing urbanization and technological advances; over the course of the era, the innocence of childhood replaced Noble Savagery as a utopian ideal in middle-class consciousness.[16] It also had roots in earlier nineteenth-century Romanticism; Wordsworth's theory that the child is father of the man was so popularized as to be almost a cliché in the later nineteenth century. His autobiographical *The Prelude* (completed 1805; published 1850) is subtitled "Growth of a Poet's Mind," for he was not concerned with childhood as an isolated period, but with "[g]rowth, development, evolution."[17] The later Victorian middle classes, however, were concerned not only with the growth of the mind, but with the child's physical, moral, artistic, intellectual, and psychological potential. Rousseau had written of the child's morality, "We know not what Nature allows us to be. None of us has measured the possible difference between man and man."[18] The parents and childcare experts of the late nineteenth century took up this idea, and related it to development beyond that of ethical rectitude. Many determined that the "possible difference" could indeed be observed, and attempted scientifically to gauge all aspects of the child's development.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, "adults began to think of children in terms of age rather than class or gender"[19] as they had earlier in the 1800s. They also began systematically to divide the childhood years into developmental stages, and to formalize these stages. The Evangelicalism and even the muscular Christianity of early- and mid-century, with their emphasis on self-development and the common good, were influential religious forerunners of the desire to define the stages of child development. Development, for the late-Victorian middle classes, did not imply abandoning the past, as G. K. Chesterton put it:

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[16]See Pollock, 110, on childhood as a symbol of the pastoral life, and Malcolm Andrews, *Dickens and the Grown-Up Child*, 11-23, on the Noble Savage's transformation into the Child.
[17]Andrews, 18.
[18]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, 33.
[19]Kirsten Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines, 1751-1945*, 131. Class and gender remained important distinctions, but chronological development was what provoked most interest.

> [R]eal development is not leaving things behind, as on a road, but drawing life from them, as from a root. Even when we improve we never progress. For progress, the metaphor from the road, implies a man leaving his home behind him; but improvement means a man exalting the towers or extending the gardens of his home.[20]

The concept of ideal development was not entirely linear and progressivist, but an expansion-based model. The late-Victorian child, growing up, expanded the self as if enlarging an orbit--"extending the gardens of his home"--in order to fulfill his or her pre-existing adult potential. Adults of the class and period began to create a scientific map of growing up that would demonstrate the connection between child and adult selves.

Darwin's evolutionary discoveries played an integral part in creating this desire for a "natural history of babies."[21] By mid-century, the belief that traits acquired during an individual's life could somehow be passed on to his or her offspring was a common one.[22] Darwin's theory of evolution necessarily involved an analysis of generations and of parenting, which was the beginning of the scientific interest in childhood and parent-child relations. One notable ingredient in the general augmentation of this interest was the publication of his influential "A Biographical Sketch of An Infant" in *Mind: Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy* in 1877.[23] This "scientific notebook"[24] describes his observations of his eldest son William Erasmus ("Doddy"); for instance,

> During the first fortnight he often started on hearing any sudden sound, and

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[20]G. K. Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature*, 1. See Andrews for a Dickensian discussion of this distinction, 135-71.

[21]Christina Hardyment sees parents from 1870 to 1890 as having been stymied by evolutionary theory, "punch-drunk from Darwin" (75). "[M]others became demoralized," she writes, "Whether through a crisis of faith or through love of fashionable life. In a flush of feminist enthusiasm, they considered their own roles in life rather than the immortal souls of their children" (89). While evolutionary theory was certainly a shock, it was quite quickly adapted into everyday life in many middle-class homes. In 1868 the *Saturday Review* wrote of *The Origin of Species*, "[S]o rapid has been the hold that it has taken on the public mind, that the language incident to the explanation of the 'struggle for life' and the gradual evolution of new forms consequent thereon, has passed into the phraseology of everyday conversation" ([n. a.], "Lyell's Principles of Geology," *Saturday Review* 26 (11 April 1868), 491). Letters, diaries, and memoirs of the period make clear the fact that neither mothers nor fathers stopped caring about their children with the slow decline of Christianity and the rise of feminism. Rather than considering their children's "immortal souls," middle-class parents now tended to focus on their adult futures.

[22]This (false) idea was first proposed by the early evolutionist and promoter of the "Great Chain of Being" Jean-Baptiste Lamarck in 1809, and approved by Darwin. Confusion over the extent of heredity often formed a background to the belief that the child developed himself or herself.

[23]Darwin began the diary on which the paper was based in 1840. His wife, Emma Darwin, also made notes in it.

[24]Doris B. Wallace, Margery B. Franklin, and Robert T. Keegan, "The Observing Eye: A Century of Baby Diaries," *Human Development* 37 (1994), 10.

> blinked his eyes . . . Once, when he was 66 days old, I happened to sneeze, and he started violently, frowned, looked frightened, and cried rather badly; for an hour afterwards he was in a state which would be called nervous in an older person, for every slight noise made him start.[25]

Darwin's detailed scientific observations contributed to the psychological movement known as developmental stage theory, which had its roots in Rousseau's scrutiny of the child as person in *Emile*, and was eventually formalized by Piaget in the early twentieth century.[26] Prior to the publication of Darwin's article, and that of a language acquisition essay by Hippolyte Taine in the same year, little scientific research on child development had appeared. After 1877, however, "there was a veritable flood of articles by comparison."[27] Though many parents from the mid-sixteenth century onwards had seen their children as "[o]rganisms that pass through developmental periods,"[28] it was not until the late Victorian period that psychological, artistic, and intellectual development were fully included in this concept, and that developmental stages generally were systematically formalized. An extremely detailed study of a baby's speech, made by S. S. Buckman in 1897, provides a good example of how development was broken down into stages and substages:

> In the speech of children it may be noted that one of the earliest sounds or words formed by a baby is the word *agoo*, made, as regards the *a* (the sound as in French), by inspiration, and as regards the *goo* by expiration. In later achievements expiration alone is used, and there follows the ability to pronounce what I will call the *ta-la-ma-da* series.[29]

In the 1880s and 1890s, the Darwin essay, which was appealingly middle-class and personal as well as scientific, helped to popularize the observation of childhood as a series of physical and psychological developmental stages with the middle-class parental

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[25]Charles Darwin, "A Biographical Sketch of an Infant," 205. The essay also included comparative notes on Darwin's daughter Annie (1841-51). For an examination of Darwin's relationship with Annie and the effect of her death on his later theories, see Randal Keynes, *Annie's Box: Charles Darwin, his Daughter, and Human Evolution.*

[26]See, for example, Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder, "Sensori-motor Intelligence," in *The Psychology of the Child*, 4-12.

[27]John C. Cavanaugh, "Cognitive Developmental Psychology Before Preyer: Biographical and Educational Records," in *Contributions to a History of Developmental Psychology*, ed. Eckhardt et al., 191.

[28]Such as weaning, teething, walking, etc. (Pollock, 98). See also Hardyment, especially 34-5, and 46-7, on the emergence of physiology and phrenology as related to childcare and earlier ideas of development in the first half of the nineteenth century.

[29]S. S. Buckman, The Speech of Children," *The Nineteenth Century* 41 (May 1897), 793. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of language development as representative of human evolution.

public.[30] One alarmist writer reported that after the publication of the study, "scientific fathers in Germany took to dropping their infants out of the windows to see if, like kittens, they would alight on all fours; or hanging them onto trees by their hands to prove their descent from monkeys."[31] Perhaps more practically, many middle-class British parents began to keep domestic and / or scientific "baby diaries" that recorded their infants' every new move.[32] Some, like Thomas Cobden-Sanderson (1840-1922) wrote detailed descriptions of their young children's days. In his 1897 diary, Cobden-Sanderson exhorted his imagined middle-class audience to take up his work and "not limit your thought to your own life; make not your own death the end of life; extend your thoughts over the lives of your children, and on your children's children, an ever widening life!"[33] The author's "ever-widening life" referred not only to the continuity of generations, but to the expanding lives of developing children on the road to adulthood. He also wrote, observing his 19-month-old son, "Our anxiety for his future makes us careful in ridding him of bad habits," and added, characteristically for his class and period, "What a superb instrument, gymnast of virtue and of beautiful conduct, may not a man be made early in life!"[34] The 1890s saw the publication of books evidently intended as gifts for new parents, with spaces for recording events in their baby's life. The author of the tellingly titled *Babys* [sic] *Biography* (1899) described the work as

> designed to afford parents and more especially mothers an opportunity of keeping a continuous record of the chief incidents in a childs career[.] In the case of their first children mothers invariably jot down notes of the little landmarks in a babys

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[30]Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotion in Man and Animals* (1872) included illustrative photographs of his own children, which appealed to the middle-class reading public, as Ian McEwan has pointed out ("Literature, Science, and Human Nature," Richard Hillary Annual Lecture, St. Cross Building, Oxford, 2 May 2001).

[31]Honnor Morten, Preface to *Child Nurture: A Handbook* (1911), v.

[32]See Wallace, Franklin, and Keegan for a discussion of scientific, domestic, and educational baby diaries in Britain and America. A pioneer was Albertine Necker de Saussure, whose *Progressive Education* (1835) presented the first three years of her child's life in high relief. Mrs. Gaskell read the book in the original French while recording the events of her own daughter's life. Leslie Stephen's mother also kept a record when her son was growing up, which Virginia Stephen read after his death. Exhibiting her own late-Victorian developmentalist upbringing, she wrote of the baby diary, "Some of the child sayings are quite delightful, and extraordinarily characteristic of him as a man. . ." (Woolf to Violet Dickinson, 24 October 1904, *Letters* 1, 146). It appears that Leslie himself attempted to keep a journal of at least Adrian's earliest life, writing in 1885, "I must really start that journal again--I should like to preserve some of the impressions which vanish so quickly" (Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 8 February 1885, Berg Collection).

[33]Thomas Cobden-Sanderson, *The Journals of Thomas Cobden-Sanderson. Vol. 1: 1879-1899*, 323.

[34]Ibid., 246-7.

life, not only as interesting events but as a guide for future occasions.[35] Developmental "landmarks," then, could provide biographical references for the baby when grown, for the book announces itself as a "Biographical Record . . . From The Date Of Birth To Majority or Marriage." These books preserved childhood, but with a quasi-scientific eye on adult life. Mothers were frequently, although perhaps surprisingly not always (as in Cobden-Sanderson's case), the recorders. One mother, looking over the pictures in her dead son's baby book, remarked that she and her husband had "said to each other that, in years to come, he, as a man--perhaps his wife and children--would prize this picture-history of his life."[36]

Another commercial baby book, titled *Baby Life: A Remembrance of Baby Days; With Spaces for Recording Notable Events and Red-Letter Days* (1896) includes a poem by G. M. Moore titled "A Little Pilgrim's Progress":

> FIRST STAGE.
> A STEP or two on Mother's knee,
> With little hands of baby glee.
>
> SECOND STAGE.
> With active feet in woollen hose,
> He next along the carpet goes;
> While Nurse, the trav'ller bending o'er,
> Supports him as he 'takes the floor.'
>
> THIRD STAGE
> Of Nurse's hand for the first time free,
> He takes three steps to Mother's knee;
> Within a ring--to save alarms--
> Made by two pairs of out-stretched arms.
>
> FOURTH STAGE.
> With wav'ring gait, and elbows out,
> Before Nurse knows what he's about,
> He staggers to the nearest chair,
> Holds it, and stands triumphant there.
> Kneel two yards off, and bid him come--

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[35] "H.N.M.," *Babys Biography*, [n. p.].

[36]Described in Marion Harland, *Common Sense in the Nursery*, 51. Hardyment sees the mother's role as having been that of lowly scribe, and the father's as scientific analyst (see 104). It appears, though, that many parents took on either or both jobs, regardless of gender. Thomas Cobden-Sanderson is one example of a male recording parent, and Louise Hogan both recorded and exhaustively analyzed her child's developmental stages (see Chapter 2).

'See! Baby's entered Toddledom!'[37]

The verse titles are suggestive of Darwinian observation of development, and the way in which Moore begins with a "first stage" of two lines and moves to an ultimate sestet suggests growth, and growing up. Here, learning to walk is broken down into substages, demonstrating the level to which middle-class adults had begun to formalize development, even in sentimental rhymes. Late-Victorian parents, then, were not only concerned with recording the events of their children's lives, but with recording them as part of an overall development--"a little pilgrim's progress" on the way to physically, psychologically, and intellectually becoming an adult. J. D. Walker's privately printed book on her son's short life recorded an incident that supports this view:

> [I]t was June 22nd [1901], a beautiful hot day, and I took [Teddy] out quite early, telling him we would go to Knightsbridge to see the soldiers at the barracks.When we got there he watched the sentry walking to and fro with great delight, and then said, 'I do see a knight, but where is the bridge?' He was just fifteen months old then, and I began to wonder indeed what his future might be, since at this age he was so forward and bright![38]

Though Teddy Walker died very young, his mother made clear that she had thought of his future as an adult every time he made a clever remark. Her recording of this fact makes clear that middle-class parents in the late nineteenth century were looking more and more to their children's futures as part of a general interest in the evolution of the human race. Buckman, the speech scientist, stated, "A dictum generally accepted among biologists says that 'ontogeny repeats phylogeny;' in other words, the stages of development observable in the individual recapitulate, more or less exactly, the stages of development which have occurred in the history of the race."[39] It is clear, however, that many middle-class parents, not simply scientists following Darwin, had begun to believe in recapitulation.

All developmental roads led to maturity, for the late-Victorian observer-parent who wanted to see his or her child expand, in all senses, into a strong, healthy, and

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[37]G. M. Moore, "A Little Pilgrim's Progress," in *Baby Life*, [n. ed.], [n. p.]. The poem had appeared in the children's periodical *Nister's Holiday Annual* in 1892.
[38][Walker, J. D.], *Teddy. A Little Record of Our Darling First-Born Child. By His Mother*, 8.
[39]Buckman, 793.

intelligent adult. While they were growing up, children provided entertainment for their parents' watchful eyes, sometimes under protest. Mary Butts (1890-1937) remembered "enduring that penance of childhood, its parents' innocent desire that it should have pretty fancies, do pretty tricks. Swallow, in fact, Peter Pan."[40] Butts perceptively remarked on late-nineteenth-century middle-class adults' ambivalent desire for children always to remain children, proto-Peter-Pan-like, while developing adult potential. The Stephen children wrote of their mother's wish on Adrian's eighth birthday in 1892 that it was "only his fifth as she says one is much nicer when one is young."[41] Julia Stephen, however, also had an eye on children's futures. In one of her stories for children, an old woman tells a naughty little boy to learn to behave, saying, "You will very soon look as old as I do."[42] The fact is that these adults did not see childhood as static, but as continually expanding, and that childhood's ability to assimilate new experiences was its appeal. Parents were not just watching the tricks, but looking out for signs of development, and for the possibility of bettering the race through the individual. Julia Stephen's stories frequently have moral lessons, but they are also concerned with the physical and psychological progress of the entire human race. In her tale "Emlycaunt," she plays with evolutionary ideas; a monkey pities Tommy for being "only a boy." The child is "not really sorry that he was not a monkey," though. The progressivist message takes hold: rather than stay with the animals, Tommy returns home and discusses future marriage and life in an ideal land.[43] Theodore Powys (1875-1953), himself born a late-Victorian, summed up evolutionary theory's increasing hold on middle-class ideas about human development when he wrote, at the birth of his child in 1906, "It is a goodly boy,

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[40]Mary Butts, *The Crystal Cabinet*, 4.

[41]Stephen family, "Hyde Park Gate News," 31 October 1892, British Library MSS. See Chapter 5 for a detailed study of the "News."

[42]Julia Stephen, "The Black Cat or the Grey Parrot," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen: Stories for Children, Essays for Adults*, ed. Gillespie and Steele, 134.

[43]Ibid., "Emlycaunt," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 81-2 and 85. Julia Stephen and Leslie Stephen were confirmed agnostics who knew Darwin personally, appreciated evolutionary theory, and had some hopes, amidst misgivings, for human perfectibility. The Stephen children adopted their mother's magical land in their games and stories. The three-year-old Adrian told the absent Julia that they had "been to Emlicaunt [sic]; we've seen the frightful Riskodemba!" (dictated in letter from Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 6 April 1887, Berg Collection).

and shows in its countenance, the old animal and the child man. . .."[44] As the child's development was seen to mimic that of the race, Christina Hardyment has theorized that infants and young children were seen as wild animals or "savages."[45] A study of parental diaries and letters, however, shows that this is not entirely the case. Sentimental idealization of children's sweetness and innocence continued to abound in the later decades of the century. Wordsworthian Romanticism still held currency despite evolutionary theory's influence.[46] The young middle-class child was frequently seen as existing in the interesting state of a primitive human, but full of "civilized" potential. In a conception of natural selection somewhat diluted by Christian ideals of design, many middle-class adults believed that the child had the power to develop himself or herself, just as the seed grew into a plant along predetermined lines. Self-development was what many late-Victorian parents found miraculous, as it was a copy of the progress of all life. The analogy could even be reversed, putting the individual to the fore: "We are convinced . . . that the whole organic world arises and goes forward in an harmonious development similar to that which displays itself in the growth and action of each separate organism."[47] The child was seen as an individual, but one who necessarily followed the general developmental rules that were being systematized. Late-Victorian British imperialism, along with technological and medical improvements, made it easy for the middle classes to believe that human--or at least British--life was getting better all the time.[48] Indeed, evolution began popularly (and misguidedly) to be seen as taking place from generation to generation, rather than over Darwin's aeons. In the late

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[44]Theodore Powys, in *Welsh Ambassadors: Powys Lives and Letters*, ed. Marlow, 77.

[45]See Hardyment, 90-2. The author claims that parents of young children from 1870 to 1890 felt that "All that was left in these tedious aboriginal years was the donkey-work of civilizing the unholy young apes" (91).

[46]Indeed, Wordsworth's "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* influenced Darwin's early understanding of the development of the fundamental human emotions and social instincts. See, for example, Keynes, 31-2, 48, 283, and 316n.

[47][n. a.], "Difficulties of the Theory of Natural Selection," *The Month* 11 (July 1869), 41. The fact that this was a Catholic magazine demonstrates the general acceptance of many evolutionary tenets even amongst arguments over the theory's applications, as early as the 1860s. See Alvar Ellegård, *Darwin and the General Reader: The Reception of Darwin's Theory of Evolution in the British Periodical Press, 1859-1872*, especially 135-288, for an account of the progressivist debate between evolution and design.

[48]Darwin himself wrote, "[A]s natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection" (*The Origin of Species*, 459).

nineteenth century, middle-class parents appear to have perceived their children's adult selves and the progress of the human race from the time that the children were born.

Birth itself was a subject of increasing interest in the second half of the nineteenth century. Prior to about mid-century, the subject was discussed only in a few medical handbooks, as midwives, with their orally transmitted knowledge, were the norm until childbirth began to be medicalized at that time.[49] A home birth with one or two female attendants, and possibly a visit from a doctor to see that all was going well, continued as standard practice past the turn of the century. Although fathers became more and more involved in the upbringing of children from an earlier age over the century, men were generally absent from actual births. *The Nursery and Every Mother's Companion* of circa 1886 holds that "The father, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, leaves the matter in the hands of the women-folk."[50] This work is one of many devoted to middle-class management of mother and child in this period. Many fathers, however, were as interested in child-rearing advice as were mothers. Although, as Murray Murphey has pointed out, advice manuals are not "descriptions of actual practice, but prescriptions of what practice ought to be,"[51] many late-Victorian middle-class parents did read and make use of the advice targeted towards them. Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1694), the original parents' advice manual and one that emphasized parental responsibility for child development,[52] was still influential in the nineteenth century. Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-65) sought help from Locke in raising her small daughter, and, later in the century, Cobden-Sanderson attempted to help make his son's "will 'supple' as

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[49]See, for example, Michelle Perrot, "Home Birth," in *A History of Private Life* 4, 201, and Yvonne Knibiehler, "Bodies and Hearts," in *A History of Women* 4, ed. Fraisse and Perrot, 325-68.
[50]Introduction to "An Experienced Medical Man," *The Nursery and Every Mother's Companion*, [n. p.].
[51]Murray Murphey, "An Approach to the Historical Study of National Character," in *Context and Meaning in Cultural Anthropology*, ed. Spiro, 150. Pollock also discusses the difficulty of using advice manuals as sources about parenting behaviour (see 43-6), but I believe that many late-Victorian manuals were targeted to middle-class parents who did read them and attempt to implement some of their suggestions. Maud du Puy, who married Charles Darwin's son George, was "subject to attacks of theories" when it came to raising her children. Indeed, wrote her daughter Gwen Darwin (later Raverat, 1885-1957), "many children of my acquaintance had parents who were more addicted to them than she was" (Raverat, *Period Piece*, 47).
[52]See Pollock, 120, and Hardyment, especially 14-6 and 25, on Locke's influence on parents from the eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century.

Locke--whom we are now reading--would say."[53] Later in the century, a wealth of advice for middle-class parents of very young children arrived to complement this text. Books such as Nathaniel Edward Davies's *Nursery Hints: A Mother's Guide in Health and Disease* (1884), Marion Harland's *Common Sense in the Nursery* (1886), and James J. Marsh's *Nursery Handbook* (1891) are a few of the works that made up the "helpful hints" genre so popular with the middle classes who wanted to "do things right" in the 1880s and 1890s. As Harland wrote in her preface, "A volume devoted exclusively to the interests of the youngest is in harmony with the times."[54] Mrs. W. T. Greenup composed a poster-style work, *50 Things to be Remembered in the Nursery* (c. 1900), that was evidently designed to be hung on a nursery wall as a checklist for caregivers. Number 14 on the list advises readers to remember that "[h]elpless little Baby is the most important person in the Nursery, and needs most care and attention," while number 12 states, "Remember that the Nursery belongs to the children, and that they should feel free to enjoy themselves in it."[55] These admonitions were a far cry from how adults of the period seem to have remembered their own childhoods, those "seen and not heard" earlier Victorian days when, as William Canton (1845-1926) recalled, middle- and upper-class children called their fathers "Sir" and bowed to the empty chair of the "paterfamilias" when he was away.[56] Young late-Victorian middle-class children were often permitted different degrees of freedom than their parents or grandparents had been, and, it would seem, more individuality. Even the youngest infants had distinct personality as potential adults, to be appreciated from birth. Genevieve Tucker, in *Mother, Baby and Nursery* (1897), stated the case:

> The baby from the first moment of its birth should be treated as an individual, with due respect to its physical and mental rights . . . The assertion is frequently

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[53]Cobden-Sanderson, 246.
[54]Marion Harland, Preface to *Common Sense in the Nursery*, v.
[55]Mrs. W. T. Greenup was "Examiner to the South Kensington School of Cookery," as the poster states. The poster could also have been a way for absent parents to ensure that nannies and nursemaids remembered their duties.
[56]William Canton, "W. V. Her Book," in *The Invisible Playmate, W. V. Her Book & In Memory of W. V.*, 107-8. Evidence suggests that most early-Victorian parents were not fiercely strict, although they were more focused on their children's moral development and attempted more strongly to shape them for their own good.

> heard that 'babies all look alike.' This is a mistake. Babies, even very little babies, do not even look alike, much less are alike.[57]

By contrast, eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth-century parents appear to have felt that children began life as a more shapeless clay. Mrs. Hester Lynch Piozzi Thrale (1741-1821), a literary friend of Dr. Johnson, was so anxious to mould her children that she took Queeney, six years old in 1770, everywhere: "I have never dined out, nor ever paid a visit where I did not carry her, unless I left her in bed . . . I have never yet left her an hour."[58] Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865) felt "extreme anxiety in the formation of [her] little daughter's character" and prayed, when little Marianne was 13 months old in 1835, "Oh! may this indeed be the beginning of self-government."[59] The lingering doctrine of original sin, and the belief that urban, industrialized society could be an evil influence, lay behind this anxiety regarding the shaping of children's morality. With the slow decline of Christian predominance and the spread of evolutionary theory over the century came a progressivist belief that life was a process of expansion from a pre-existing inherited source. The theory of natural selection also emphasized diversity in the human race, underscoring the fact that individuals are not identical, and that the constant recombination of hereditary traits would lead to "fitter" generations. Darwin elaborated this theory after the 1859 publication of *The Origin of Species*, and his 1871 *The Descent of Man* helped spread his outlook beyond the scientific community. Although late-Victorian children during the period of "infancy"--birth to about age six--were considered somewhat genderless, like earlier generations of children (often referred to as "it," for example), they were still seen as individual characters with inborn individual potentials. Gender seems not to have borne any relation to development, at least in early childhood;

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[57]Genevieve Tucker, M. D. *Mother, Baby, and Nursery: A Manual for Mothers*, 174 and 179. Patrick Traherne, born in 1885, would seem to have agreed with Tucker. At the birth of his first child, he wrote, "I had always thought men rather fools who raved about their children's looks: all babies used to look alike to me. Now I know that there never was such a baby as mine" (*A Schoolmaster's Diary*, cited in Pollock, 206-7).

[58]Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale, "Mrs Thrale's Children's Book," cited in Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*, 460. The unpublished "Children's Book, or rather Family Book," as Thrale called it, in places resembled an early domestic baby diary, but came to be more of a personal journal (see James L. Clifford, *Hester Lynch Piozzi (Mrs. Thrale)*, 70-1).

[59]Elizabeth Gaskell, *"My Diary": The Early Years of My Daughter Marianne*, 16. Rousseau also influenced this way of thinking, despite his exhortations to allow the child to grow up "naturally"; John Morley said in 1873, "[*Emile*] touched the deeper things of *character*. It filled parents with a sense of the dignity and moment of their task" (*Rousseau* (Vol. 2), 248).

middle-class children of either gender were regarded as embodying their adult potential when they were born.[60] Kate Douglas Wiggin wrote of the child in 1892, "[A]s a human being, he owns himself . . . the parent is simply a divinely appointed guardian. . .."[61] Nurture was still important, but the parental role accordingly became one of guidance rather than of active formation.[62]

A symbol of middle-class children's growing individuality over the course of the period is the rise of baby name books, which, though not widely published until the twentieth century, made their initial appearance in the 1880s and 1890s. Peacock and Symper's pamphlet *What's in a Name?* (1897) suggested over 200 "suitable" baby names --that is, suitable for an individual child, approving of "Mildred ('Speaking mild') . . . Isaac ('Laughter'), &c.,"[63] and urging parents not to choose names with "unkind" meanings such as "Belinda, signifying 'Serpent'."[64] Charles and Mary Lamb in 1809 had illustrated the beginnings of the "suitable" name movement with their poem, "Chusing a Name," in which the young speaker is allowed to name her newborn sister:

> Now I wonder what would please her,
> Charlotte, Julia or Louisa.
> Anne and Mary, they're too common;
> Joan's too formal for a woman . . .
> I am in a little fever.
> Lest the name that I shall give her
> Should disgrace her or defame her,
> I will leave papa to name her.[65]

The poem was reprinted various times in the last decades of the Victorian era. By the end of the century, the desire to "please" the baby with a suitable and individual name was in full swing. Rather than automatically naming a child after themselves, as F. Gordon Roe

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[60]Gender came to matter for older children's development. See Chapter 2 on differences in writing education for older boys and girls, and Chapter 3 on those in sexual education. See the Conclusion on Woolf's adult reaction to the Victorian genderlessless of early childhood.

[61]Kate Douglas Wiggin, *Children's Rights*, 5.

[62]See Pollock, 120-4, who concludes from a study of parental and childhood diaries that most later-nineteenth-century parents were "not so concerned with the active formation of a child's character." Alfred Ainger said in 1895 that current children's literature "shows which way the wind blows in these *fin-de-siècle* days, when character is left so much to take care of itself. . ." (Ainger, "The Children's Books of a Hundred Years Ago," *Lectures and Essays* (Vol. 1), 407).

[63]Mr. Peacock and Mr. Symper, Preface, *What's in a Name?*, [n. p.].

[64]Ibid.

[65]Charles and Mary Lamb, "Chusing a Name," in *The Oxford Edition of the Works in Prose and Verse of Charles and Mary Lamb* (Vol. 2), 423-4.

(b. 1894) remarked, parents

> were seeking inspiration from history, romance and even fiction as their children came along. Egbert, Osbert, and Alban were summoned from the past . . . Names of great families, among them Neville, Percy, Dudley, Pelham, were freely bestowed . . . For girls, too, more fanciful names than Ann, Jane, Rachel, Mary, Martha and other such honourable names were available. Mabel and Blanche, both ancient forms, were revived, Doris and Gwendolen freely adopted . . . In addition there were callings after royalties, celebrated generals, or famous victories. . ..[66]

F. Gordon Roe himself may have been one of these namesakes of a celebrated general. Leslie Stephen and Julia Stephen named Thoby and Virginia after close relatives, but Vanessa's name was bestowed for its Swiftian associations, and Adrian's after "a fine old regicide from whom the Stephens claimed descent" (Leslie added, "how I don't know!").[67] Pet names, too, appear to have changed. In the nineteenth century, parents referred in diaries to their children as "lambs," "blossoms," "chicks," "gifts," and "pets," along with, in some cases, "a plague," and "trying." The loving names, at least, reflect very young and pastoral objects, unlike the more abstract or religious "comfort" and "blessing" of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[68] Mark Spilka sees this fact as evidence that the adult world felt an increasing gulf between itself and the world of childhood,[69] but the sentimental names could also demonstrate a recognition that children contain adult potential, symbolized by blossoms that will become fruit, gifts that will open to reveal a treasure. Over the course of the nineteenth century, as parents began to see their children as having inborn characters and futures of which to think, they bestowed names with meanings and associations that they hoped would befit the children's adult lives.

Late-Victorian middle-class children required names suited to their individual

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[66]F. Gordon Roe, *The Victorian Child*, 19.

[67]Leslie Stephen, *Mausoleum Book*, 59n. Vanessa was born in 1879, Thoby in 1880, Virginia in 1882, and Adrian in 1883.

[68]Pollock, 111. The grown Virginia Stephen mocked the childhood nicknames bestowed upon them by their aunt when her sister was first pregnant: "O childhood! O motherhood! O Lamb of Light! O Babe of Purity! O! O! O!" (Woolf to Violet Dickinson, [December 1907], *Letters* 1, 320). See Chapters 3 and 5 for an examination of the Stephen children as parodists, and the Conclusion for a discussion of how Woolf both accepted and argued with her late-Victorian past.

[69]Mark Spilka, "On the Enrichment of Poor Monkeys by Myth and Dream; or, How Dickens Rousseauisticized and Pre-Freudianized Victorian Views of Childhood," cited and discussed in Andrews, 23-4.

destinies, and they needed rooms of their own in which to do their growing up. The nursery went from an early-Victorian storage room for children and unfashionable furniture to "the children's realm"[70] as the century progressed. The idea of a house solely for middle-class domestic living, rather than a space that domesticity shared with work, had been growing throughout the century. By mid-century the family home began to yield up a separate space for the young people of the household.[71] From the 1870s onwards, the nursery "became a room with a character all its own--perfectly adapted to the needs of its inhabitants. . .."[72] Standardized arrangements, fittings, and furnishings intended best to suit the children's development took hold. The middle-class nursery was generally a space at the top of the house, divided into day- and night-nurseries and perhaps a separate schoolroom, where children would be free to make noise away from their parents, and where Mamma and Papa would ascend occasionally (and were encouraged to do so more and more as the century went on). In Ivy Compton-Burnett's (1884-1969) *Parents and Children* (1941), a visiting character remarks that nurseries are always high up in the house. Eleanor Sullivan, late-Victorian mother of nine, replies, "'We don't want too many nursery sounds.'"[73] Yet many middle- and upper-class parents undoubtedly saw the nursery as the children's personal space for playing and living in; the visitor, confronted by fractious children in the Sullivan schoolroom, understandingly states, "'After all, they did not invite us in here, did they?'"[74] Parents anxious for their children's health and enjoyment could by the 1880s consult a proliferation of advice books on how to arrange the young people's rooms. *The Nursery and Every Mother's Companion* provides a good example:

> Select the largest, loftiest, most airy, and best ventilated room in the house. Let it be as near the top of the house as possible . . . because, in towns, the higher the room the purer the air . . . The windows should be large, and made to open both at top and bottom. They should be opened whenever the children are out of the room, in order that there may be plenty of fresh, pure air in the room; and, indeed, when the weather is fine they may be opened a small piece at the top, even when

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[70]H. J. Jennings, *Our Homes and How to Beautify Them* (c. 1895), 240.
[71]See Catherine Hall, "Cottage and Nursery," in *A History of Private Life* 4, 71-2.
[72]Miall and Miall, 38.
[73]Ivy Compton Burnett, *Parents and Children*, 172.
[74]Ibid., 174.

> the children are in the room. They should be constantly cleaned, in order to let in plenty of light and sunshine, for both light and air are of the greatest importance to the well-being of children . . . No nursery should be without a good thermometer, and care should be taken to keep the temperature between 60° and 70° Fah., nearer the former than the latter.[75]

Mrs. Ramsay, the late-nineteenth-century matriarch of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, modelled on Woolf's own mother Julia Stephen, is a typical believer in such health measures for her children and servants: "[W]indows should be open, and doors shut. . .."[76] The increase in health tips in such late-Victorian manuals came about with the series of Public Health Acts that took effect over the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1872, for example, the country was divided into sanitary districts,[77] and general concern with hygiene was heightened. Many middle-class parents seem to have followed such advice as that in James J. Marsh's *Nursery Handbook*, which warns that "the air in the nursery should be kept perfectly pure; therefore bathroom and water-closet should be a little away from the nursery, well ventilated and disinfected."[78] But health was not the only concern. Hints on pleasant interior decoration of the nursery also abounded. One manual suggested,

> The upper part of the [day-nursery] wall may be coloured, and a dado of scraps may be pasted on the wall below and then sized and varnished. Some use only coloured scraps, whilst many cut out the pictures from the illustrated papers. These form an endless source of amusement and instruction to the children . . . Very good nursery papers are now sold, the pattern in which consists of small squares, and each square has an illustration of some nursery rhyme or well-known child's picture . . . As to pictures for the walls, those out of the Christmas numbers of the various illustrated papers are much the most amusing for children.[79]

The author goes on helpfully to describe five different detailed colour schemes for the

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[75] "An Experienced Medical Man," *The Nursery and Every Mother's Companion*, [n. p].

[76]Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 33. The Stephen family had a day and night nursery on the third floor of their Kensington home. Recalling her childhood, Vanessa Bell wrote of how the late-Victorian Stephen night nursery must have been "by modern standards . . . a very unhealthy atmosphere. Was the window ever open at night? I doubt it." Still, "[W]e were very snug if stuffy and of course told stories in bed" (V. Bell, *Notes on Virginia's Childhood*, [n. p.]). See Chapter 5 on the Stephen children's storytelling.

[77]See the approving description of sanitary laws in Lord Fortescue, "Health of Towns," *The Illustrated Carpenter and Builder* 7 (15-22 October, 1880), 253-4, and 269.

[78]James J. Marsh, *Nursery Handbook*, 31. The 17 or 18 members of the Stephen household at 22 Hyde Park Gate had "one bathroom and three water closets between them" (Woolf, "Old Bloomsbury," in *Moments of Being*, 183).

[79]Henry Burdett, *Helps to Health*, 3-4. "The various illustrated papers" had evidently taken firm hold in middle-class children's minds, as Chapter 4 discusses. The Stephen family's "Hyde Park Gate News" included a Christmas number, one of the few issues with illustrations, modelled on those of late-Victorian magazines (see Chapter 5).

nursery. He ends his section on design ideas with a word to loving parents: "There can be no better investment than the time we bestow on anything that conduces to the happiness or comfort of 'the children.'"[80] The ideal late-Victorian nursery was not only a hygienic, but also a happy living space. Even here, however, children were faced with their parents' ideals for their futures. The pretty decor could provide an opportunity for passive learning:

> [I]n the rooms [children] live in, there is no reason why the 'writing on the wall' should not be the earliest teaching of all; that which is beautiful in nature, art or science; and by the illustrations of fairy lore, incline the thoughts of our little ones to all that is graceful and beautiful in imaginative faculties.[81]

In the rooms intended specifically for them, then, late-Victorian children were intended to absorb some of the taste and knowledge they would be expected to show in adulthood. By the mid-1890s, in *Our Homes and How to Beautify Them*, H. J. Jennings could put this idea succinctly when he wrote of nursery wallpapers,

> which, while directly appealing to the interest of children by the pictorial narration of some nursery tale, shall at the same time surround them with an artistic influence from the benefits of which they cannot possibly escape . . . It would be almost impossible for such children to grow up without an intuitive appreciation of tasteful effects.[82]

Although Jennings's wording may seem somewhat sinister, parental intentions were for the overall good of the children. Children's correct moral development was no longer the sole goal of parents in the late nineteenth century; intellectual and artistic tastes were now seen to have their beginnings in earliest middle-class childhood as well. The nursery was intended as a pleasant place, and most late-Victorian middle-class children seem to have felt at home in theirs. Gwen Darwin (later Raverat, 1885-1957), granddaughter to Charles Darwin, recalled that when spending summers at her grandparents' Kent home, "it was adoration that I felt for the foxgloves . . . and for the beautiful white paint on the nursery

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[80]Ibid., 6-7.
[81]Robert W. Edis, *Decoration and Furniture of Town Houses* (1881), 229-30.
[82]Jennings, 241.

floor."[83] What mattered most to parents, however, was the opportunity the room afforded for development of all kinds.

Though late-nineteenth century young children shared the nurseries with siblings as children had done throughout the Victorian era, their parents nonetheless began to see each child as requiring individual space. Most middle-class children began to enjoy the luxury of a bed to themselves by the 1880s; Henry C. Burdett stated firmly that in the nursery "[t]here must be a separate cot for each child. . .."[84] This was the beginning of the idea that children need their own rooms. The nursery space was designated for "little people" on their own, with, of course, the nursery servants, and late-Victorian children found sub-spaces for themselves. Edward Benson (1867-1940) remembered his family's situation, and described his longing for a room of his own:

> My sisters were now of an age to sleep together in a large apartment somewhere at the top of the stone stairs, while I still slept in the night nursery, in a bed near the window. Beth [the nurse] occupied another bed, and in a corner was Hugh's crib with high sides, where he--being now about two years old--was stowed away before the day was over for me. Next door to this nursery was a room smaller than any room I have ever seen, and this was officially known as 'My Room.' It had a tiny window, and was quite uninhabitable . . . but the fact that it was my room, though I lived in the day nursery by day, and slept in the night nursery by night, gave me a sense of pomp and dignity and I resented the fact that presently my father . . . turned my room into part of the passage.[85]

The young Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967) and his brothers were given permission to build a small playhouse for themselves,[86] as Gwen Darwin and her siblings once began to do.[87] A late-Victorian goddess of household hints, Julia McNair Wright, advised parents in 1879 to give their children space for a museum: "Have Mark put up two or three low shelves in the back of the hall, and encourage Tom to make a museum there of his wonderful curiosities; if you talk with him about them, you may make a philosopher of

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[83]Raverat, 141. Darwin himself wished he had developed his artistic side, lamenting late in life the "loss of the higher aesthetic tastes" in himself, which he saw as "a loss of happiness, and . . . injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature" (*Autobiography*, 139).
[84]Burdett, 10.
[85]E. F. Benson, *Our Family Affairs, 1867-1896*, 30-1.
[86]Siegfried Sassoon, *The Old Century and Seven More Years*, 19-20.
[87]Raverat, 236-7.

him."[88] Museums appear to have been a popular enterprise for late-Victorian children. The nineteenth century witnessed the birth of the museum out of the prototype of a palace, the Louvre.[89] The community of museums in south London ("Albertopolis") was completed late in the century, and became a popular excursion site for families. Parents were likely to approve of such undertakings for their educational and developmental value--they had the potential to make philosopher adults of their children--but the junior philosophers themselves appear to have had other motivations. Rather than putting their collections on public display, they reverted to regal proprietorship. Mary Butts had a room above the stables called "The Rats' House," where she "collected junk gloriously" and where adults were not permitted unless invited,[90] and the Benson children had a room of their own that they labelled, "in large letters tinted with water-colour, 'Museum. Private.' This privacy was part of the joy of it. Occasionally we asked my mother to have tea with us there, and she came in her hat formally."[91] Middle-class parents were apparently recognizing a need in their children for privacy, limited as it may have been in the shared nurseries and multi-child families of the late Victorian age. The child's museum can be read as a symbol of development and evolution, in imitation of the Great Exhibition of 1851, with its focus on the future capabilities of humans and their technology, or the decorations of the new London Natural History Museum (opened 1881), which featured carvings of life forms extinct and living, from pterodactyls to monkeys.[92] Furthermore, these young people's home museums proudly reflected the individuality of their curators. The Benson children's 1870s version illustrates these two ideas:

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[88]Cited in A. Briggs, *Victorian Things*, 253.
[89]See David Thistlewood, "Museums," *The Penguin Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century History*, ed. Belchem and Price, 395.
[90]Butts, 131-2.
[91]Benson, 33.
[92]See "History of the Natural History Museum," http://www.nhm.ac.uk/info/history/index.html (March 2001). The museum was a favourite destination of the young Stephen children, who called it "the Stuffed Beasts" (see Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 9 June 1887, Berg Collection, and Virginia Stephen to Julia Stephen, [n. d.], in Woolf, *Congenial Spirits*, 3). The children, avid bug-hunters, had a family entomological museum, a discussion of which led them to remark upon the discovery of "an ape which is nearer to a man than anything else which has been found" (Virginia Stephen to Thoby Stephen, 6 March [1896], *Congenial Spirits*, 4.

> But the stamp-collection was considered dull: the hornet disintegrating in the bread-bowl, and the piece of sheep's wool were far more interesting. They had the timbre of personal acquisition, and rang with first-hand emotion. Personal and precious too were the bits of oxydised glass smouldering into rainbows which we dug up in the garden and displayed here . . . Then there was a collection of fossils, which, with the aid of geological hammers that my father gave us, we rapped out of stones in lime quarries, or from the heaps that lay by the roadside for mendings.[93]

These children used their museum to display "[p]ersonal and precious" objects, and also to display a knowledge of evolution gained through their father. The museum was expected to help them develop towards adulthood, and to instill in them the importance of recording history--an individual version of human evolution. Where parents earlier in the nineteenth century seem to have seen their children as integral limbs of a family body, "its projected image of itself,"[94] middle-class mothers and fathers from the 1870s onwards began to regard their offspring as individual characters with individual futures, with a need for what individual space was available. Late-Victorian middle-class family life was still often crowded, but children's need for privacy was beginning to be addressed. The Stephen house at 22 Hyde Park Gate, with its combined family of ten, plus an invalid grandmother and seven servants, had "innumerable small oddly shaped rooms."[95] Though the four youngest children shared the nurseries, Virginia and Vanessa had the use of a "cheerful little room" off the drawing room for their own artistic endeavours (handily, it was also a place from which they "could spy on the grown-ups").[96] These parents retreated from their children's physical environs, giving them the nursery and sometimes other rooms as a private realm. The adult within the child needed space.

> *The New Combination Building Blocks. A TOY FOR THE YOUNG / A PUZZLE FOR THE OLD.*
> *-William Richardson, toymaker.*
> *Slogan on box, 1886.*

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[93]Benson, 32-3.
[94]Perrot, "Parents and Children," in *A History of Private Life* 4, 196.
[95]Woolf, "Old Bloomsbury," 182.
[96]V. Bell, "Notes on Virginia's Childhood," [n. p.]. This was the room in which the children's London issues of the "Hyde Park Gate News" were composed, and from which the children could see their parents' reactions to the finished product each week. See Chapter 5.

Though children were not "little adults" from birth, they were still "little people," a term used increasingly frequently in late nineteenth-century writings for and about children, from Thomas Dean's *Pleasant Tales for Little People* (1850) to the American Raymond M. Alden's *A World of Little People* (1888). Isobel Gurney (1851-1932), raising her children late in the century, wrote that she "tried to treat them as if they were 'grown up' people, and not as little children, and it is certain they rose to the trust placed in them, and their opinions became of value as their powers of mind and body increased."[97] Late-Victorian middle-class boys and girls were not the "little children" of earlier works such as *Songs for Little Children* (c. 1845), which Gurney seems to have seen as a negative categorization, but were included with adults in "people," and thus were still thought of as beings who would expand into mature bodies, tastes, and intellects. Their entertainments from the 1870s onwards reflected this way of thinking. Adults began to take a more formal interest in children's games, toys, theatre, and books, and to explore their developmental possibilities.

This was the age of the commercially produced game. Snakes and Ladders, Ludo, Othello, Tiddlywinks, and Word-Making all made their appearances as family games in the 1880s and 1890s. Emily Lytton (later Lutyens, 1874-1964) wrote in 1892 of Tiddlywinks as "the most exciting game that ever was invented."[98] Darwin's grandchildren played "National Gallery," or "Nat. Gal.," a version of the "Happy Families" card game and an early example of museum-produced consumer goods.[99] More and more books on parlour games were published towards the end of Queen Victoria's reign, suggesting that publishers were capitalizing on the new trend in commercializing and formalizing playtime. One such book from 1871, *Nursery Fun for Every One; or, Games for Little Children*, may have reverted to the archaic "little children" in its title, but its "fun" was essentially simplified adult games as listed in the *Cassell's Book of In-Door Amusements*. The games of *Nursery Fun* also frequently involve adults ("[A]sk

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[97]Isobel Gurney, *Isobel, Mrs. Gurney*, cited in Pollock, 108.
[98]Emily Lutyens, *A Blessed Girl*, 97.
[99]Raverat, 245.

nurse or mamma to stretch tight against the wall a large white cloth or sheet"[100]), or playing at being adults, as in "Maggie, Maggie, Green Grows the Grass," in which a mother figure ("the tallest girl in the nursery") marries off her various daughters.[101] Though some of the games included in the book were very old at the time, they are significant in that they are generally adult-role-playing games, such as the repetition game of "Genteel Lady."[102] Children were encouraged to act grown-up not just through the games themselves, but by the fact that adults had begun to standardize and publish the rules of play. This process allowed middle-class adults to understand and control their children's playtime if they so wished. Furthermore, different games and roles began to be assigned to different age levels in accordance with the outlining of childhood's developmental stages. The author of the game of Forfeits reminds children, "In real life if we make mistakes we are certain to suffer for them . . . And in our Nursery Games we must do just the same; we must pay Forfeits for our mistakes."[103] The message is not only moral but also developmental; what the child learns early will serve her in "real"--adult--life. The responsible role--that of the forfeit-decider--is deemed suitable for "an elder sister, governess, or mamma, if possible."[104] This role, however, was a symbolic one, a representation of the younger players' adult selves, who could "punish" the child self for paying inadequate heed to his or her future. The middle-class parent no longer saw himself or herself as the shaper of character; formation was now up to the child. The adult self, thought to be contained within the child, could act as a kind of developmental conscience. *Nursery Fun* accordingly reminds its young readers that they are expanding towards their adult lives, and should act out adult roles as part of their development. Its introduction promises "Frolic and fun / For every one,-- / While the stream of childhood floweth free."[105] The "stream of childhood" flowed noticeably towards adult life in these games.

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[100]"Shadow Buff," in [n. a.], *Nursery Fun for Everyone*, 7.
[101]Ibid., 30-2.
[102]Ibid., 8-11.
[103]Ibid., 26.
[104]Ibid.
[105]Ibid., Preface, vi.

New toys of the late nineteenth century, too, were meant to provide practice for skills needed in adulthood. Children's toys had always served this purpose, but it was the late-Victorian middle classes who formalized their didactic and developmental possibilities.[106] Dolls' carriages appeared in 1874, giving little girls the opportunity to promenade their "babies." The baby doll also had its debut late in Victorian times, giving girls even more incentive to behave as mammas. Realistic baby dolls became enormously popular, "leading to such splendid examples of the trend as the Eugenic Baby Doll in the United States, described as 'the first doll perfect in mind and body'."[107] This style of doll demonstrates a general progressivist tendency among the middle-classes, which would remind children that humanity was on a general course towards eventual perfection. That children too were developing beings was made clear with the introduction of dolls crudely mimicking the developmental stages that late-Victorian scientists and parents sought to formalize. Talking dolls appeared, alongside walking dolls and three-faced dolls which could be made to sleep, smile or cry at the turn of the head. Dolls had been a feature at the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition, at which the pioneering British toymaker Augusta Montanari won a prize for a display of her expensive hand-made wax figures, which "consisted of a series of dolls representing all ages, from infancy to womanhood. . .."[108] A daughter of a wealthy family, such as Frances Hodgson Burnett's Sara Crewe, might have "a doll almost as large as herself, dressed quite as grandly as herself, too,"[109] but such dolls had little play value for children, and their "stages of life" arrangement at the exhibition was evidently composed so as to interest adult viewers as a model of human development. Many children (mainly girls) did, however, enjoy playing with dolls, although these toys seem to have created more opportunities for moral or developmental lessons than others due to their anthropomorphism. The eponymous late-

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[106]Maria Edgeworth and Richard Edgeworth in *Essays on Practical Education* (1789) helped start the trend with their novel idea of a "rational toyshop" whose playthings would "lead to experiment" (see Hardyment, 26-7). This movement expanded with Johann Froebel's kindergartens, the first of which was established in Blanhenburgh in 1826. In these years, toys began to become a serious business.
[107]Antonia Fraser, *A History of Toys*, 160.
[108][n. a.], *The Great Exhibition of the World's Industry, Held in London in 1851*, 231-2.
[109]Frances Hodgson Burnett, *Sara Crewe*, 15. The short novel *Sara Crewe* (1887) eventually developed into *A Little Princess* (1905).

Victorian protagonist of May Sinclair's *Life and Death of Harriett Frean* (1922) tells her mother as a child, after a game with her dolls, "'Some day I shall have a little baby.'" She thinks to herself that "She would be like Mamma, and her little girl would be like herself. She couldn't think of it any other way."[110] Harriett's thoughts demonstrate the good child of the era pondering her future life and motherhood, but also show Sinclair's (1863-1946) ambivalence towards her own upbringing, when middle-class children were encouraged to internalize their parents as images of their own adult selves. Girls like Harriett were encouraged to think of the expansion of their lives into motherhood, for a middle-class girl's life to come wasn't generally thought of in any other way.[111] Although boys and girls were both encouraged to see themselves as individual developing beings with adult "consciences," girls' future outlook was more and more circumscribed as they grew older, and they, more than boys, may have been directed to see their same-sex parent as a symbol of their adult self. This is likely due to the fact that the possibilities for middle-class adult women's lives did not change vastly until the First World War, while late-Victorian boys of this class were no longer expected automatically to go into their father's profession.[112] Girls of the period were still meant to look to their futures, however, and play with dolls of varying "development" helped to condition them to growing up and to their future roles.

Other skills were meant to be developed with the use of building bricks, the late-Victorian variety often being stamped with letters as an aid to reading or made to construct models of actual buildings. One 1870 set was dubbed "The Importance of

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[110]May Sinclair, *Life and Death of Harriett Frean*, 11. Some late-Victorian girls had fun with the idea of their prescribed future development. Angela Ashford (1884-1968) and Vera Ashford (1882-1957) played endless games with their "babies," styling themselves as duchesses and worrying about which regiment into which to send their doll-children. Their sister Daisy (1881-1972) would fracture the nobility's idylls with her working-class doll family, the Hams (see R. M. Malcomson, *Daisy Ashford: Her Life*, 63-4). See Chapters 3 and 4 on the young Ashfords as writers.

[111]The grown Harriett ends up unmarried, childless, and obsessed with her youth, in a reversal of what her careful late-Victorian parents would have prescribed. Like Woolf, Sinclair recognized that she had been shaped by her late-nineteenth-century past, but rebelled against it. See the Conclusion.

[112]For instance, the father of the Thomas children, who grew up in the 1870s, was a stockbroker, but two of his sons became teachers, one an artist, and another a sailor. His daughter Molly (later Hughes, b. 1866), despite her haphazard home education and her parents' wishes, became a teacher as well before she married. See M. V. Hughes, *A London Family 1870-1900*.

Punctuality."[113] Toy soldiers, popular from the eighteenth century onwards, gained new realism in 1893 with William Britain's invention of hollow casting. These newly rounded soldiers "were correct in arms and uniform, hand-finished and coloured, in fact everything to appeal to a boy or to a grown-up."[114] H. G. Wells (1866-1946) was an adult devotee of these small metal men, enthusiastically pronouncing in a 1911 book, *Floor Games,* that "they have the movable arms and alert intelligence of scientifically exercised men."[115] The English-made soldiers, painted in the uniforms of various countries, also provided nationalistic lessons for British middle-class children, emphasizing the "alert intelligence," strength, and other advantages of the British race. Late-nineteenth-century adults' interest in their children's toys led to an interest in their children's potential. In *My Early Life*, Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) described how playing with such soldiers directed his future. His father once found him playing "a really impressive game of soldiers" and asked him if he would like to join the army. Young Churchill "thought it would be splendid to command an army, so I said 'Yes' at once; and immediately was taken at my word . . . the toy soldiers turned the current of my life."[116] Boys of the period were expected to show their adult potential early, as they had more choice than their female counterparts. In fiction, a story titled *The Children at Play* (1878) describes how four-year-old Jamie desires to imitate the wood-chopping servants with his own toy axe. He tells his mamma, "'Me almost a man.'"[117] Later, after a game in which Jamie and his sister dress up in men's clothing, Mamma says, "'You are growing very fast, my dear. Before we know it, I shall be walking out with you, and taking your arm. I hope you will

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[113]White, *Antique Toys and Their Background*, 142.

[114]Ibid., 183. The realistic toy soldiers also appealed to some girls, although they were not marketed towards them. These toys remained popular well into the twentieth century. Vanessa Bell's children played endlessly with them in the 1910s and 1920s. Woolf argued against the traditional militaristic upbringing of boys in *Three Guineas* (1938), but also bought a toy gun--as well as a writing book--for her sister's son in 1918 (see Woolf to Vanessa Bell, [17?] August 1918, *Letters* 2, 269). For Woolf's mixed feelings about the traditions of her late-Victorian childhood, see the Conclusion.

[115]H. G. Wells, *Floor Games*, 19. Wells also remarked that playing such games has the advantage to children of "building up a framework of spacious and inspiring ideas in them for after life" (10). At age 12 or 13, he had written a farcical story of soldiery and romance, "The Desert Daisy." See Chapter 4 for a study of writing by children during the period.

[116]Sir Winston Churchill, *My Early Life*, 33-4.

[117][n. a.], *The Children at Play*, 9. This story was evidently written by an American, but was published in Glasgow in 1878.

be a good man.'"[118] Mammas and papas, fictional and otherwise, evidently began to see their children's toys and games as providing the skills needed for adulthood, or even helping to internalize the adult self as conscience and reminder that the child should think of his or her future. Although middle-class parents did not want their children to grow up too soon, a problem which was seen to be the scourge of the poor,[119] many believed their boys and girls should grow through the developmental stages that were scientifically being identified as the proper route to adulthood and an ever-improving human race. One toymaker, Thomas Blenkarn of Peckham, succinctly stated the late-nineteenth-century middle-class belief in childhood's connection to adulthood with his 1886 slogan, "HAPPY CHILDHOOD, HEALTHY MANHOOD."[120]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, new toys became more complicated than ever before. New technological developments such as the telephone switchboard and cinematic film led to a middle-class interest in the grand possibilities for the future, and this belief was symbolized on a smaller scale for children in their toys. By far the most costly and complex late-Victorian playthings were the automata, moving dioramas, and optical "toys." Vast amounts of tin clockwork toys were imported from Germany in the 1880s, but "[b]oys and girls were rarely as enthusiastic about them as were their parents,"[121] suggesting that toymakers more interested in technicality or a toy's potential for education than in children's own enjoyment. Most middle-class parents meant well, but sometimes bought toys too complicated for their children's abilities and tastes. Animated magic lantern slides developed between 1850 and 1890, and Ernest H. Shepard (1879-1976) remembered how complex the machines could be to run:

> The lantern, a Christmas present [in 1887], was [a young friend's], and she didn't let anyone forget it. Her father, behind the scenes, was in charge, as far as he was able, and we had to sit and listen to her telling him how the apparatus should be worked. A faint circle of light appeared to one side of the sheet . . .Then the light reappeared showing a small picture which looked like animals, but it was upside-down . . . Muriel insisted on having it brighter. A muffled voice said, 'There,

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[118]Ibid., 32.
[119]See Andrews on Dickens's exploration of the lower-class child growing up too quickly and the middle-class horror of this, 80-4.
[120]White, *Antique Toys and Their Background*, 226.
[121]Culff, *The World of Toys*, 99.

> that's as high as it will go.' By this time there was a smell of hot metal and signs of agitation behind the sheet. A moment later a bright and unmistakable glow showed itself, accompanied by exclamations of dismay. The sheet was dragged aside to disclose the apparatus in flames. . ..[122]

If adults had trouble working such temperamental machines, one imagines that children would certainly have had even more so. The intention that toys should develop skills for adulthood did not always come to fruition. A simpler toy, the Zoetrope, was patented in 1832, but achieved widespread popularity in the late nineteenth century, and its cousin the Praxinoscope was invented in 1878. Both contained strips of slightly differing pictures which seemed to "come to life" when spun in an internal drum. The author of *Children's Toys, and Some Elementary Lessons in General Knowledge Which They Teach* (1877) suggested a novel use for the Zoetrope:

> Take a very young child; but anybody who is not very old will do . . . photograph him or her at regular intervals . . . Having obtained a series of such likenesses, arrange them in their proper order, according to their respective dates, along a strip of paper of a shape and size proper for use in the zoetrope. Put this into its place, and spin the apparatus in the usual way. The result must be that as each picture, still bearing traces . . . of its more immediate predecessors, dissolves into its nearer successors along the line of portraits, you will have, as in a moving panorama, the progress in the life of the individual who is depicted.[123]

This idea was a developmentalist one, for children viewing the Zoetrope pictures would be reminded that they would soon be adults, and would think on their futures. The author goes on to remark, "[A]s there are, as we know, 'sermons in stones,' so, also, there are teachings in toys which are worth eliciting."[124] This concept is not simply morally didactic, but also provides a symbol of middle-class adult ideas about childhood. The panorama of pictures suggests "progress in life" towards adulthood, and provides a record of childhood's developmental stages. Like the baby diaries marketed during the period, this strip of photographs would furnish a forward-looking biographical record for the subject. The toy's technological nature would also have appealed to certain late-Victorian middle-class parents' progressivist-evolutionist ideals, in that it demonstrated humankind's ability to improve itself with ever more complicated and useful new

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[122]Ernest H. Shepard, *Drawn from Memory*, 148.
[123][n. a.], *Children's Toys*, 41.
[124]Ibid., 291.

inventions, as was the point of the Great Exhibition and subsequent displays of culture and technology. From bricks to complicated optical machines, late-Victorian toys and games were designed to nurture the adult within the child. Although they did not always successfully fulfill these goals, they were intended to aid development and focus the child on his or her future, and to underscore humanity's evolutionary perfectibility.

> *A Drury Lane pantomime is an English institution. We can no more do without it than roast beef, plum-pudding, and mince pies.*
> -The Theatre, *January 1883*

Many upper-middle- and middle-class parents and relatives began to take their "little people" to the theatre and pantomime in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Though some families retained the Puritanical idea that theatres were "'wicked' places best avoided," as did Sir Stanley Unwin's (1884-1968),[125] others decided that their children would benefit from such entertainment. Whereas Regency and early-Victorian pantomimes had not been thought of as entertainment specifically for children, late-nineteenth-century pantomime "became more and more an exclusively Christmas and family entertainment catering for children, who formed an ever-increasing part of the audience."[126] The young Sitwells were "mad, drunk, drugged with excitement" when their grandparents announced that they were to see the Drury Lane Pantomime on Boxing Day in 1897. As soon as the family arrived at the theatre, Sir Osbert Sitwell (1892-1969) noted, the "grandparents were watching us, with the strained and anxious attention which elderly people reserve for children, to see if they are enjoying themselves."[127] Children being entertained were provoking a quasi-scientific interest in the adults around them. Middle- and upper-middle-class parents (or in this case, grandparents) wished to observe their children's development, and to promote developmental thinking through the entertainment provided. Accordingly, nursery stories such as *Babes in the Wood*, *Cinderella*, and *Dick Whittington* were continually produced at Drury Lane and other

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[125]Stanley Unwin, *The Truth About a Publisher*, 21.
[126]Michael Booth, *Prefaces to English Nineteenth-Century Theatre*, 190.
[127]Osbert Sitwell, *Left Hand, Right Hand!*, 188-9.

theatres. These traditional stories, while idealizing childhood, were all adapted to emphasize development towards adulthood. In late-Victorian pantomime performances, the orphaned Babes must find their own way through a forest representing growing up. Instead of dying there, as in the older ballad versions of the tale, they are found, often by Robin Hood and his men, and received after a "transformation scene" into adulthood as a happy ending.[128] One 1897 script had the play open in a nursery with a chorus of nurses, and ended with a "Coronation and Coming of Age."[129] Yet late-Victorian children's theatre had not abandoned its adult audience. Although pantomime had become "simpler, less satiric, less cruel, more obvious comically and scenically, more ostentatiously moral and even instructional"[130] over the course of the century, it was still designed to appeal to the adults taking children to see the show. The Drury Lane pantomimes in particular continued to hold fascination for adults who came to see music-hall celebrities acting in the plays, and "the shapely transvestitism of the principal boy."[131] One 1880s pantomime included "a gorgeous parade of 'remarkable women of all ages' from Semiramis, Queen of Babylon, to Napoleon's Josephine."[132] Such a glittering display was clearly intended to woo the adult audience, while many children like the young Alfred Wilson (1885-1949) suffered "agonies of boredom when there was too much pageantry on the stage."[133] The pageantry, however, was intended to be spectacular and representative of human development. The line of "remarkable women" symbolized the beauty of progress through the ages, pointing out natural selection's inevitable perfection of humanity. Formalized fairy-tale developmental plots and pageants, much like the "educational" wallpaper of the new late-Victorian nursery, were meant to influence middle-class children's outlook on life while entertaining them. The entertainment factor was often overriden by the educational, however. Reviewing an 1899 production of *The Snow Man*,

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[128]See "The Children in the Wood" and "Pantomime," in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*, ed. Carpenter and Prichard, 111 and 394.
[129]This script was by Arthur Sturgess and Arthur Collins.
[130]Booth, 191.
[131]Ibid., 203. The eight-year-old Ernest H. Shepard fell desperately in love with the "feminine charms"--especially the feminine thighs--of the Principal Boy in a production of *Babes in the Wood*. See Shepard, 172.
[132]A. E. Wilson, *The Story of Pantomime*, 94.
[133]Ibid., 95.

a sympathetic Max Beerbohm wrote, "Stories about children, enacted by children, and illustrated by ballets of children, drive grown-up persons into paroxysms of delight, but they induce gloom into anyone under the age of (say) fifteen."[134] Children's theatre of the late nineteenth century was not produced just for children's pleasure, although this was seen to be important, but for the "refinement" of the aesthetic taste and progressivist thought they would be expected to show in adulthood. Some middle-class parents expected other theatrical entertainments to help develop their children's inner adult. Lamarckian theory led to a belief that children could inherit traits acquired during their parents' lifetimes, including artistic qualities. Culture could thus be seen as evolving continually towards a state of perfection. Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965), daughter of a novelist and playwright, saw her first play, a comedy entitled *The Japs*, at the age of four, and *The Winter's Tale* and *The Taming of the Shrew* at age seven.[135] She wrote,

> Afterwards Papa asked me which of the two Shakespeare plays I liked best, and I said [*The Taming of the Shrew*]; and he looked disappointed and said, *A Winter's Tale* was a *much* better play, and told me why; and I went away feeling miserable because I had chosen the wrong Shakespeare play to like best. . ..[136]

Farjeon's father was disappointed because part of his purpose in taking young Eleanor to the plays was to help develop to his own level the critical skills that she would need in adulthood. When a preference for excitement won out, Ben Farjeon redoubled his efforts and escorted Eleanor to even more grown-up plays, in an apparent effort to develop adult taste.[137] Adults observing children onstage and in the audience were fascinated with childhood as a dual state: the child co-existing as his or her present self and in a state of potentiality. Middle-class adult nostalgia surrounding the state of childhood was therefore tempered with the need to instill developmental and artistic ideals, frequently sugar-

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[134]Max Beerbohm, "Punitive Pantomime," in *The Saturday Review* 88 (30 December 1899), 828. On the nineteenth-century vogue for child actors, see R. S. MacLean, "How 'the Infant Phenomenon' Began the World: the Managing of Jean Margaret Davenport (182?-1903)," *The Dickensian* 88 (Autumn 1992), 133-53.

[135]Eleanor Farjeon, *A Nursery in the Nineties*, 352-4.

[136]Ibid., 354.

[137]Virginia Stephen recalled her literary father being similarly disappointed when he read Scott's novels aloud to his children and required them "to say which of the characters we liked best and why. I can remember his indignation when one of us preferred the hero to the far more life-like villain" (in F. W. Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, 474).

coated with spectacle and amusement.

The best-laid developmentalist plans of middle-class adults sometimes went awry in the field of children's entertainment. The Stephen children and their mother attended a Lyceum production in 1894, in which Santa Claus "made several moral remarks in a burly tone . . . then a bit of the Babes in the Wood was introduced, and the Babes after dying in the orthodox way, are brought to life again by Santa Claus at the end of the pantomime." Although the children "heartily enjoyed" the show, the young Stephen critic noted, "What the pantomime was about it was rather difficult to say."[138] The Stephens were among many late-Victorian boys and girls who frequently preferred their own games and dramas to those prescribed by adults. Osbert Sitwell, for example, recalled that his greatest delight in 1890s London was repeatedly to ride the escalator in Harrods, ignoring the toys temptingly displayed there.[139] The developmentalist message, however, seems to have been absorbed by a large number of middle-class children. Many siblings and cousins wrote and produced plays of their own, a phenomenon well documented by Eleanor Farjeon[140] and William Canton (writing about his daughter Winifred Vita, (1890-1901)),[141] among others. Although these plays were composed by children, they were performed for grown-up audiences, and obviously written with adults and adulthood in mind. The Farjeon children's dramas included such titles as Eleanor's "Damon and Pythias," a tragicomic revenge play written at around age eight, which would have demonstrated to her father her grown-up taste. The play involves love, murder, and intrigue, but also follows a traditional developmentalist plot. A brother and sister rescue their father from evildoers and then, in a happy conclusion, the father pronounces that "Richard can marry Mirida, and Anthony Violet,"[142] as if announcing that their good deeds have brought them to the goal of maturity and marriage. The young Eleanor

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[138]Stephen family, "HPGN," 14 January 1894.
[139]O. Sitwell, 230.
[140]Farjeon, "Farjeoniana," in *A Nursery in the Nineties*, 441-77.
[141]Canton, 153-6. "W. V." wrote plays titled "Alfred the Great" and "The Garden of Roses" based on her reading. Her choices of subject reflect general trends in late-nineteenth-century writing by children. See Chapter 4.
[142]Farjeon, 457. One should also note that young children themselves tend to prefer predictable plot development. See Nicholas Tucker, *The Child and the Book: A Psychological and Literary Exploration*, 97.

Farjeon was one of many child authors to focus on adulthood. Virtually none of the characters involved in such plays were young children themselves (except, perhaps, when a baby brother or sister was acting). Imaginary games also involved adult characters; Emily Lutyens, a precocious reader, remembers being "Robin Hood, Ivanhoe, or Richard Coeur de Lion," or "whatever was my favourite character at the moment,"[143] and the young Siegfried Sassoon created a whole world of (adult) personages, the "Mezenthrums," around a dilapidated stuffed toy cow.[144] Late-Victorian children, it seems, fully enjoyed, and sometimes even preferred, their own imaginary dramas and games to new commercial offerings, and their play could centre on otherwise nondescript objects, like Sassoon's "Moocow." Nonetheless, many of their own games also involved fantasies of adulthood, in which they were encouraged--not of an eternal Neverland childhood. Children throughout history have played at being adults, imitating their occupations and styles of writing, but it seems that late-nineteenth-century middle-class children were encouraged in this perhaps natural practice by developmentalist parents who wished to analyze the reasons for the entertainment, and to formalize its future benefits. Children's entertainment during the period was meant to provide enjoyment, but also to focus the child on his or her adult self.

You could even have predicted the future from these stories.
-Matthew Hodgart on Andrew Lang's
fairy tales, "The Witches' Secrets,"
New York Review of Books, *1967*

While middle- and upper-middle-class parents were beginning to recognize a need for a separate children's physical space in the home, then, they continued to watch over their offspring's intellectual activity in a generally benevolent manner. In the area of entertainment, young people enjoying themselves were inside a virtual panopticon, watched by interested adults wanting to survey and frame developmental stages. Literature for children's consumption became an arena for great debate in the late

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[143]Lutyens, 9-10.
[144]Sassoon, 29-31.

nineteenth century, as parents and experts wrung their hands over what children should read in order to help develop healthy minds and bodies for adulthood.[145] Edward Salmon wrote in the 1880s of a caring middle-class parent's foremost Yuletide worry:

> Of the many anxieties which every Christmas brings to the parental mind, none is greater than that involved in the question, What shall the children read? Sons and daughters equally have grown to look upon the gift of a book as an indispensable accessory to their holiday.[146]

Such parents seem to have wanted to give their children some choice in the matter, but preferred that their young people read books that were in some way "improving," as had been the overt purpose of children's literature earlier in the century. When the book-shaped parcels under the tree turned out to contain old-fashioned didactic tales of the early nineteenth century, this was most likely a reflection of the parents' taste rather than the child's. "[I]t was only to be expected that the Victorian paterfamilias should select for his young those books which had been chosen for him in the past. If *The Fairchild Family* [Vol. 1: 1818; 2: 1842; 3: 1847] had been good enough for him, it must be good enough for his own children."[147] Late-Victorian parents expected literature like Mrs. Mary Martha Sherwood's (1775-1851) Fairchild saga, which depicted children growing up (as well as dying various deaths for bad behaviour), to help produce solid middle-class adult citizens like themselves. By 1848, the first volume of what Sherwood herself had originally termed "The Child's Manual" had reached a seventeenth edition; late-nineteenth-century children were not to escape the Fairchild parents' moral exhortations to their offspring, though later printings tended to soften the most extreme religious passages. The overt moral lesson was dying out in new children's literature late in the century, and most middle-class parents were not averse to nonsense and silliness, but lessons remained, couched in a more entertaining guise. Looking over "A Century of Children's Books" in 1906, Eveline C. Godley noted, "The actual suppression of the

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[145]See Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader 1837-1914*, on the long-running debate regarding adolescent girls' reading, especially 155-63.
[146]Edward Salmon, *Juvenile Literature As It Is*, 11.
[147]Lance Salway, Introduction to "A Century of Children's Books," in *A Peculiar Gift: Nineteenth Century Writings on Books for Children*, 18. See also Kimberley Reynolds, *Children's Literature in the 1890s and the 1990s*, for a discussion of why children may have enjoyed the books, 10.

moral as a leading feature has only taken place within the last ten or fifteen years. It was largely brought about by the habit . . . of turning the average commonplace child into an elaborate psychological study. . .."[148] The lesson was now in the psychology; these books functioned as developmental maps of childhood, which young readers were expected to absorb and perhaps follow. Mrs. Mary Louisa Molesworth's (1839-1921) exceedingly popular *The Cuckoo Clock* (1877), about a lonely girl who is befriended (and moralized at) by a magical wooden bird, provides a good example:

> 'You've a great deal to learn, Griselda,' repeated the cuckoo '. . . But we could talk more comfortably if you would come up here and sit beside me.' . . .
>
> 'Sit beside you up there!' [Griselda] exclaimed. 'Cuckoo, how *could* I? I'm far, far too big.'
>
> 'Big!' returned the cuckoo. 'What do you mean by big? It's all a matter of fancy. Don't you know that if the world and everything in it, counting yourself of course, was all made little enough to go into a walnut, you'd never find out the difference?'[149]

The cuckoo implies that Griselda contains enormous potential, of which she must be made aware. The world-holding walnut is symbolic of the child filled with adult possibilities. The cuckoo represents the adult "conscience" in the manner of the adult roles in games of the period. Molesworth's Carrollian reversal of "adult" and child sizes only serves to emphasize that the child has the capacity to enlarge with developmental experience. Through the book, Griselda and the cuckoo visit various worlds, each of which provides a developmental lesson for the girl. By the story's end, Griselda has acquired maternal and other skills that will serve her well in adulthood. The "naughty child" genre that gained so much popularity in the last decades of the century, with titles such as L. T. Meade's *The Autocrat of the Nursery* (1884), also accentuated psychological growth, under a guise of moral-free entertainment. Nina Auerbach has observed of Victorian literature for adults that "novels in which a boy is the central focus are usually novels of development, in which the boy evolves out of his inherent violence,

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[148]Eveline C. Godley, "A Century of Children's Books," *National Review* 47 (May 1906), 447.
[149]Mary Louisa Molesworth, *The Cuckoo Clock*, 59-60. One of Julia Stephen's Carroll-influenced stories for children involves a girl who has a parrot as a Cuckoo-like mentor figure (see "The Black Cat or the Grey Parrot," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*). See Chapter 5.

'working out the brute' in an ascent to a higher spiritual plane."[150] The same holds true of books about appealingly naughty boys--and girls--written for children. In these stories, the badly behaved child eventually "evolves" into a stage of self-control and taste which benefits the society surrounding him or her. This was the late-Victorian middle-class parent's goal for his or her children, and it usefully mirrored the Darwinian theory of evolution from animal to ever-improving adult human.

The favoured school story, modelled on Thomas Hughes's (1822-1896) *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), attracted many young readers of both sexes in the late nineteenth century, and Jules Verne's futuristic tales had begun to make their mark, but the fairy tale enjoyed perhaps even more popularity after a renewal in the second half of the century. Works such as Andrew Lang's (1844-1912) Coloured Fairy Books, which began in 1889 with *The Blue Fairy Book*, were immensely popular sellers. These anthologies, however, were compendia of ancient folk and fairy tales from around the world--nothing new. Ruskin (1819-1900), a proponent of traditional fairy stories for the young, stated that "every fairy tale worth recording at all is the remnant of a tradition possessing true historical value,"[151] and Lang himself admitted, "Nobody can write a new fairy tale; you can only mix up and dress the old stories and put characters into new dresses.[152] The stories included in the Coloured Fairy Books, therefore, were domesticated versions of traditional tales, in new, richly illustrated dress. The author focused the familiar stories on adulthood and how to get there. Lang's version of "The History of Whittington" (1889)[153] teaches children in a Smilesian manner that if they develop themselves properly, they might grow up to be wealthy and celebrated. The ragged but honest boy Dick Whittington, after all, "turned out a genteel young fellow" in the end;[154] it is the evolvement of his inherent qualities, together with his age, that makes

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[150]Nina Auerbach, "Alice and Wonderland: A Curious Child," *Victorian Studies* 17 (1973), 44-5. Auerbach discusses the female heroines of Victorian literature as unable to develop, but I believe that girl protagonists were encouraged to grow up, if along tightly prescribed lines. See Chapter 3.
[151]John Ruskin, "Fairy Stories," in *On the Old Road* (Vol. 2), 171. On Ruskin's own childhood writings, see Chapter 4.
[152]Cited in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*, ed. Carpenter and Prichard, 302.
[153]In Andrew Lang, *The Blue Fairy Book*, 230-9.
[154]Ibid., 238. Lang tried his hand at a few "new" fairy tales, such as *Prince Prigio* (1889), but these were hardly as successful as his Coloured Fairy Books. Samuel Smiles's *Self-help* (1859) was his most famous

him a success.[155] The possibilities for self-development and the general improvement of the human race formed the underlying message for middle-class children reading these stories.

Other writers did attempt to make up "new" fairy tales. George MacDonald's (1824-1905) well-liked *The Princess and the Goblin*, serialized in *Good Words for the Young* from 1870-1 and published in book form in 1872, incorporates standard fairy-tale elements into a new style of telling, and relates the tale of Princess Irene who, when the story begins, is about eight, "but she got older very fast."[156] With the help of a miner's son named Curdie, Irene saves her father's kingdom from a gang of subterranean goblins. The sequel[157] depicts the later life of Irene and Curdie, who eventually marry and rule the city of Gwyntystorm, which self-destructs due to its inhabitants' "old wickedness"[158] after the king's and queen's deaths. MacDonald is one of many authors who displayed ambivalence towards childhood. The children's growing up is treated with some regret, as if the author idealizes childhood as a utopia and is saddened that people should ever have to leave it. It is the adults who are "wicked" and lead to the destruction of the utopia. These texts together function as a kind of misanthropic warning to children about the difficulties of adult life. At the same time, however, development is entirely necessary to the characters and to the story. Irene and Curdie have to grow up in order to help form "a new and upright court."[159] MacDonald self-consciously follows a traditional fairy-tale plot structure, moving in the first book from a chapter entitled "Why the Princess has a

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text, but Smiles was also a doctor and one of the first childcare experts to attempt to expound to parents the physiological "laws of infant development, which would enable them to bring up their children properly" (Hardyment, 40).

[155]Other late-Victorian writers adapted Whittington's tale to developmentalist ends; one Sunday-school storybook found in it the message, "Seek and Use our one talent" (*A New Year's Address to Sunday School Girls and Boys*, (1881), cited in Carpenter and Prichard, 150). See Chapters 4 and 5 on parents' focus on the development of children's literary and intellectual talents, rather than simply on moral growth, during this period.

[156]George MacDonald, *The Princess and the Goblin*, in *At the Back of the North Wind, The Princess and the Goblin, and The Princess and Curdie*, 301.

[157]*The Princess and Curdie*, serialized in *Good Things* from January to June 1877 and published in book form in 1883.

[158]Ibid., in *At the Back of the North Wind, The Princess and the Goblin, and The Princess and Curdie,* 621.

[159]Ibid., 620. MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind* (serialized 1868-9, issued as a book 1871) also has its child hero realize that in adulthood, he will have social and moral duties that are difficult to understand but necessary. The boy also develops the ability to compose spontaneous verse. See Chapter 4 on the interest in "natural" writing by children.

Story about Her" to the final section, simply called "The Last Chapter." The sequel's last chapter is entitled "The End." One could also read the apocalyptic ending as a type of rebirth, as Roderick McGillis has done,[160] in which case the late-nineteenth-century reader would still have been reminded that life expands from childhood to adulthood in a continual cycle. Many late-Victorian authors were quick to "indignantly deny any pretensions to instruct at all,"[161] yet guidance was still very much a part of children's literature during the period. The child-character was "complete in itself,"[162] and contained the germ of its adult self, to be developed throughout the story. Nor does the author let the reader forget that he or she will not always be a child. Alfred Ainger complained in a lecture of 1895 that "The fault of some of the most famous [children's] books of our time is that their clever authors have written with one eye on the child and the other on the *grown-up person*--in fact, on you and me!"[163] Ainger was advocating the necessity of literature solely for young people, and demonstrating that late-Victorian middle-class parents often read books to or with their children, but his phrasing suggests that late-nineteenth-century authors were writing with an eye to the child reader's own future as an adult. Though these authors were indeed writing to a child's level rather than a miniature adult's, the moral remained that children always grow up, and that they should be conscious of this fact so as best to absorb the skills they would need as they developed towards adulthood.

Parents and critics of the 1880s and 1890s were very interested in what appealed to children as readers. In 1888, Edward Salmon published the results of a survey that involved 790 boys and over 1000 girls between the ages of 11 and 19. The boys' favourite books were Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Johann David Wyss's *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1814), and Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers* (1837), and the girls liked Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* (1855), "Elizabeth Wetherell's" *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), and the *Bible*.[164] Of these top three works for each gender, four had not been written as

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[160]Roderick McGillis, Introduction to *The Princess and the Goblin and The Princess and Curdie*, xviii.
[161]Godley, 438.
[162]Ibid., 439.
[163]Ainger, 402-3.
[164]Salmon, 14 and 22. See Chapter 4 on *Pickwick* and children's magazine writing.

children's books, and all were at least 20 years old. As Salmon admitted, one must take into account the possibility that the young readers were not entirely truthful about their favourites, for the sake of appearing "good" or intellectual. One should also note that literature was not clearly divided down gender lines; though older girls tended to read their mothers' books, younger ones felt free to read their brothers'.[165] Generally, children seem to have enjoyed reading about adults. Works by Scott and Dickens were resounding favourites with both sexes not only here, but also in many authors' accounts of their own childhood readings. Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842) comes up again and again as youthful reading material, though it was not a book written specifically for children. The young Mary Butts marched round and round the garden shouting aloud her beloved *Lays*,[166] and the Knox brothers were obsessed by the book as children, teaching second-youngest Wilfred (1886-1950) to recite for company at the age of three:

> And wounded horses kicking
> And snorting purple foam:
> Right well did such a couch befit
> A consular of Rome.[167]

Though children may have delighted in the sound and fury of Macaulay, the fact that it came into so many small hands was undoubtedly because adults considered it developmentally improving reading for children, a secure step on the road to adult knowledge and potential personal heroism. Gertrude Slater summarized this middle-class attitude in *The Journal of Education* in 1897:

> The line of argument most effective to take with [children] is to tell them that, if they do not practise the heroic virtues as children, they will be unequal to them as men and women . . . Above all, children should be encouraged to read what grown-up books they will that are not obviously unsuitable for them. Even if they

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[165]See Peter Hunt, *An Introduction to Children's Literature*, 64. The reverse was also true; the young Thoby and Adrian Stephen borrowed not only Tennyson but also R. M. Ballantyne's adventure tale *Charlie to the Rescue* (1890) from their sister Virginia (see Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf*, 113). See Chapter 5 on Ballantyne as an influence for some of the Stephen children's writings.

[166]Butts, 39-40.

[167]Penelope Fitzgerald, *The Knox Brothers*, 29-30. The Stephen children also enjoyed Macaulay from a young age: Leslie Stephen wrote of his seven-year-old son Thoby, "I must say that the notion of his reading the Lays rather startled me. However he is an intelligent little cuss . . ." (Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 4 February 1887, Berg Collection). The children made the M in their home newspaper alphabet stand for Macaulay, "Who wrote the Lays of Rome" ("HPGN," 30 November and 7 December 1891). See Chapter 5 for a study of the "News."

> do not seem particularly improving, they are more wholesome than the constant reading about other children.[168]

Reading about adults was one way to focus children on their futures, and on the heroic potential of the human race.

Despite such advice, and enjoyment of books about adult characters, many children--and grown-ups--did read books about "little people." Parents, teachers, and theorists also began to set specific books for different age levels in an attempt to formalize developmental stages in reading, and to help children move on to the next level. From a mass of old and new material, a *Pall Mall Gazette* poll of July 1898 attempted to summarize the 20 best books for a ten-year-old reader.[169] Both adults and children responded, and were perhaps a more forthright group than those who answered Salmon's literary queries earlier in the century. Here, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1866) was a high first, a position "so natural that it will surprise no normal person." It was followed by Grimms' and Andersen's fairy tales in "dead-heat,"[170] *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (serialized in the American *St. Nicholas* in 1885, and published in book form in England in 1886), Kingsley's *The Water-Babies* (1863), the same author's *The Heroes, or, Greek Fairy Tales for My Children* (1856), Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894), Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), and *The Arabian Nights* "(expurgated, as many people carefully insist)."[171] All of this list's works were purportedly written for children (as the subtitle of Kingsley's *Heroes* attests), or available in juvenile versions. Nearly all involve a progression towards maturity of some kind. Though fresh youth overcomes crotchety age in Hodgson Burnett's story, young Cedric Erroll becomes Lord Fauntleroy and thus takes the high road to adulthood. *The Jungle Book* is something of a *Bildungsroman*,[172] and even *Alice* is a story of development. When the heroine first drinks from an enticing bottle and

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[168]Gertrude Slater, "Concerning Children's Books," *The Journal of Education* 29 (January 1897), 21.
[169][n. a.], "What Children Like to Read. The Verdict," *Pall Mall Gazette* 67 (1 July 1898), 1-2.
[170]Ibid. The Grimms' fairy tales were first translated into English in 1823, and selections of Andersen's tales in 1846.
[171]Ibid., 2. *Dalziels' Illustrated Arabian Nights' Entertainments* appeared from 1863-5, and Andrew Lang edited another children's edition in 1898.
[172]See Hunt, 99-100, for a discussion of the book. The Disney film version perhaps unwittingly picks up on this concept when it has the object of Mowgli's affection sing, at the end of the story, a song called "Till I'm Grown."

grows to an enormous size, she thinks, "When I used to read fairy tales, I fancied that kind of thing never happened, and now here I am in the middle of one! There ought to be a book written about me, that there ought! And when I grow up, I'll write one--but I'm grown up now. . .."[173] Carroll ends the book with Alice picturing "how this same little sister of hers would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman; and how she would keep, through all her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood. . .."[174] The "little sister" is in fact Alice's self, her child-self, and the fact that she perceives this self as a separate person waiting to develop is suggestive of adults' perceptions of children containing adult potential. Alice's ability to "grow up" with a few drops of magical liquid also demonstrates this idea. Her statement that she is "grown up now" also suggests that she has internalized the adult-self as a conscience. Carroll hints that the adult self also contains a child's heart, a remnant of earlier days. He becomes an essentialist in both directions; the child contains the adult self, and vice-versa. The highly popular *Alice* is a demonstration of the late-Victorian children's book that idealizes childhood but points out the way to maturity, however obliquely, and observes the developmental steps along the road. Graham Greene (b. 1904) wrote, "[I]n childhood all books are books of divination, telling us about the future, and like the fortune-teller who sees a long journey in the cards or death by water they influence the future."[175] Late-Victorian middle-class children were encouraged to foresee and follow the potential paths of their own adult futures in books old and new. Adult nostalgia about childhood, as seen through books popular with children, was related to the child's capacity to take things in, and to see life in new ways. The idealization of early life centred on its expandable quality rather than its end.

Juvenile periodicals, like books, multiplied rapidly in number in the second half of the nineteenth century. 26 girls' magazines and 149 for boys appeared between 1879 and 1918,[176] whereas hardly any had existed before. Salmon's survey demonstrates the

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[173]Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 32-3.
[174]Ibid., 110.
[175]Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood," in *Collected Essays*, 13.
[176]Drotner, 123.

overwhelming popularity of the two "big" juvenile magazines, *The Boy's Own Paper*, begun in 1879 by the Religious Tract Society, and *The Girl's Own Paper*, which started its run in 1880.[177] The feminine version of the weekly pair was always self-admittedly didactic, aiming to prepare girls and teenagers for domestic adult life. Many of its pieces may have been directed to lower-middle-class or working-class girls, but the paper was popular among the higher echelons of the middle classes as well. Serial stories, poems, and answers to correspondents broke up the more forthright "useful hints" on dressmaking and recipes. The hints given often relate to growing up, as the paper was meant to appeal to "readers standing midway between girlhood and adulthood."[178] Many younger girls enjoyed the paper as well, however, as the ages of correspondents testify.[179] Self-development was the order of the journal. One article from May 1891, "Girls Who Wear Well," exhorts readers to improve themselves for the sake of their futures:

> In this country we associate middle-age with the prime of life, because it is then that the capacity for work is at its best . . . avoid selfishness by thinking of others; be temperate, cheerful, and careful of the time, which can now be improved, but which will never return. . ..[180]

A more thrilling fictional piece, "founded on fact," from the same year tells of Miss Gertrude Amcotts's bravery in saving five drowning people from a shipwreck.[181] Gertrude, with her feminine heroism, is the image of the "new girl" of the late nineteenth century, with her athleticism, grace, and maturity. In a final paragraph, she ends up marrying one of the men she saved, a reward for "having done what was simply her duty" as a girl.[182] The story follows a familiar plot development that mirrors Gertrude's expansion into adult life. Though the magazine retained its Christian roots, stories such as these pointed readers towards an evolutionary sense of the perfectibility of humanity.

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[177]Salmon's survey shows boys placing the *BOP* first among magazines with 404 votes to *Tit Bits*'s poor second place with 27, while girls had the *GOP* first with 315 and the *BOP* second with 88 (15 and 23). Again, reading material was not clearly divided down gender lines.
[178]Drotner, 116.
[179]The Stephen children, all under age 13, enjoyed both the girls' and boys' papers, suggesting in their own newspaper, "If the child is a girl 'A World of Girls' [by L. T. Meade, 1886] or the 'Girls' own Paper' would be suitable gifts. If a boy certainly the 'Boys' own Annual'" ("HPGN," 7 December 1891).
[180] "Girls Who Wear Well," *GOP* 12 (9 May 1891), 510-1.
[181]Evelyn Upton, "Good at Need!", *GOP* 12 (31 January 1891), 276-8.
[182]Ibid., 278.

Gertrude is clearly a species of the new, improved generation, who would "wear well" in adulthood, and whom readers were expected to emulate to some degree. *The Girl's Own Paper* reflected other girls' magazine fare from titles such as its only real rival, *Atalanta* (1887-98), and the portentously titled *Young Ladies of Great Britain* (1869-71), all of which presented essentially formulaic stories and articles on how a middle-class girl should behave so as to develop into a proper woman. Nationalism was not just for boys; British girls too were made aware that their self-development was for the good of future generations of the race.

The Boy's Own Paper claimed to instruct while "entering with genuine youthful *abandon* into life's honest duties."[183] With its "ripping" school stories and adventure tales, however, *The Boy's Own Paper* served to create a sense of national and imperial pride in its readers--again, preparing them for befitting adult points of view.[184] Articles on preparation for manliness abounded; the paper's resident doctor had a piece entitled "Some Good Advice to Growing Lads" in the January 3, 1891 issue,[185] and a poem by Eben E. Rexford of the next year admonishes boys,

> Be steadfast, my boy, when you're tempted,
> And do what you know to be right;
> Stand firm by the colours of manhood,
> And you will o'ercome in the fight.
> 'The Right' be your battle-cry ever
> In waging the warfare of life. . ..[186]

The editors continually address their boy readers as men in the making, offering advice on prospective careers and manly hobbies, as well as occasional references to the physicalities of adolescence.[187] The fact that the tone of the boys' paper is generally more exciting than the girls' reflects the more varied adult possibilities open to male children

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[183]*BOP* editors, cited in Salmon, 186.
[184]Many boys (and girls) absorbed nationalist principles, as is evinced by their own writings. The ten-year-old Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957) (perhaps unsurprisingly) was just one late-Victorian child who was inspired to write such fare as, "The natives fled to the other side of the Island where their canoes were. We went on the beach and saw a cloud of smoke on the sea and the British ensign. We cheered, and, we cheered and cheered" ("Good Times," in *Seeds in the Wind*, ed. Braybrooke, 77). See Chapters 4 and 5 on the periodical's influence on children's writing during these years.
[185]Gordon Stables, "Some Good Advice to Growing Lads," *BOP* 13 (3 January 1891), 218-9.
[186]Eben E. Rexford, "Our Heroes," *BOP* 14 (2 July 1892), 639.
[187]See Chapter 3 on late-Victorian sexual education.

during this period; nearly all of the girls' serial stories culminate, and end, in marriage. Discussing the *Boy's Own Paper's* fiction, Kirsten Drotner remarks that "the structure of the stories . . . obeyed a certain chronological development with marriage and material riches to crown male daredevilry."[188] Marriage, however, is not the only point here; the endless possibilities for male self-development are what drive the stories. The development is not only chronological, but also psychological and physiological; boy heroes become mature men over the course of the tale. The first issue of *The Boy's Own Paper* sets the tone of the entire journal run with the first installment of W. H. G. Kingston's "From Powder Monkey to Admiral; Or, the Stirring Days of the British Navy."[189] The hierarchical structure of the navy provides a further analogy with the late-nineteenth-century attempt to formalize the stages of childhood development. Indeed, the story's title suggests development through stages, leading to a pinnacle--admiralship--assuring readers once again that middle-class humanity was on the evolutionary road to perfection. This view to adult heroism and the insistence that childhood self-development would bring future rewards ensured the paper's popularity with young readers and approving middle-class parents.

The Boy's Own Paper was not without rivals, however, and had to fight off the expansion of an earlier and more sensationalistic genre, the "penny dreadful," in the later nineteenth century. These papers' stirring and often bloody tales attracted some middle-class readers to their primarily working-class audience.[190] Edward Salmon decried this variety of boys' magazines, describing how one story had inspired two boys to rob an office and violently beat its housekeeper: "Great was the public astonishment to find the perpetrators were two schoolboys in their teens."[191] Late-nineteenth-century periodicals, it seems, were particularly effective--sometimes dangerously so--at creating the idea of

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[188]Drotner, 127.
[189]W. H. G. Kingston, "From Powder Monkey to Admiral: Or, the Stirring Days of the British Navy. Chapter 1. Preparing to Start," *BOP* 1 (18 January 1879), 9-10. The story was published in book form in 1883.
[190]In Angela Ashford's "The Jealous Governes," written when she was eight in 1892, the wicked title character is given to reading "penny horribles" and "shilling shockers." See Daisy Ashford and Angela Ashford, *Daisy Ashford: Her Book*, 281-2.
[191]Salmon, 192.

adult potential in young readers. An increasing part of children's reading in the 1880s and 1890s, the genre treated development and adult potential even more frequently and consistently than did children's books. The periodical's very nature suggested development, with its serialization of articles and novels, and its continual assurance that the story would go on. Its explosion of popularity with middle-class children (and parents) in the late-Victorian era suggests its role as a cultural signifier of development towards adulthood.

> *Children are fervent in their looking forward to things; whereas adults can lose a sense of what there is for the taking.*
> *-Adam Phillips,*
> The Beast in the Nursery, *1998*

Adam Phillips's statement takes on multiple meanings when applied to theories about children and children's culture of the late nineteenth century. Middle- and upper-middle class children of the period did indeed look forward to things such as treats and pleasures as much as any modern child, but they were also expected to take an interest in looking forward to their future as adults. Writing of life in the nursery with her siblings, Virginia Woolf remembered, "[O]ur duties were very plain and our pleasures absolutely appropriate."[192] Many parents began to see children as pre-formed selves expanding towards adulthood. While numerous adults of the period indulged in a sentimental nostalgia regarding childhood, this idealization can be related to children's ability to see in new ways and grow from new experiences; in short, it can be tied to children's ability to develop. With the popularization of evolutionary theory and the idea of human perfectibility, parents and theorists became interested in formalizing human psychological and physiological development, which led to a dual vision of the child as complete in himself or herself, yet filled with adult potentiality. Artistic and intellectual development joined the list of concerns. These concepts manifested themselves popularly with new nursery spaces for the children, more individual names, and more privacy. Toys and games of the 1880s and 1890s were marketed as aids to development, and popular

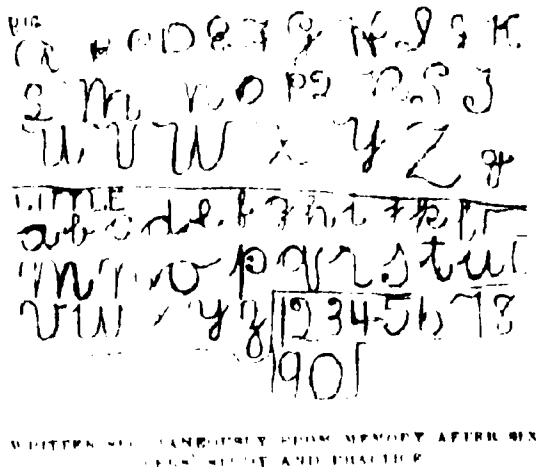
[192]Woolf, "Reminiscences," in *Moments of Being*, 28.

theatre, books, and periodicals trained children to think of themselves as moving along lifelines stretching towards maturity. The conception of life as a narrative made its appearance, as the increasing popularity of autobiographies and biographies, "Life of . . ." historical novels, and serial stories attests. Of his boyhood reading, Sartre wrote that the greatest comfort was the knowledge that "au chapitre suivant, tout serait rétabli."[193] In a similar fashion, "to be continued" becomes a catchphrase for the middle-class late-Victorian view of childhood, and of parental belief in the potential for the adult sequel to the childhood story.

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[193]Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les Mots*, 59.

Chapter 2:
Speak and Spell: Learning Language, Learning Privacy



A sample of Louise Hogan's son's writing, as analyzed in "A Study of a Child," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, June 1898

The child . . . [is] an animated interrogation point.
-Dr. Mary Wood-Allen,
Child Confidence Rewarded, 1896

Dr. Wood-Allen might as easily have said that the late-Victorian middle-class child was surrounded by interrogation points. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the subject of "child study" became serious science.[1] Darwin had ended his *Origin of Species* (1859) with expectancy of the future study of humankind: "In the distant future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be based on a new foundation, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation."[2] That scientific future was not so distant, however. As the field of developmental psychology bloomed in the late nineteenth century, experts encouraged adults to observe their children as psychological subjects, to peruse their interiority and potential. Many middle-class parents took this advice. As discussed in the previous chapter, the proliferation of baby diaries was one aspect of this drive to question and record. Yet from the 1870s onward, many such diaries began to focus on one aspect of development: language acquisition and usage. Psychologists and parents intended to unlock the child psyche, and saw the key in language. Language itself, in turn, became the key to children's private mental lives.

This chapter will attempt to establish the connection between children's language and their privacy, perceived and actual, among the late-nineteenth-century middle

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[1]The Child Study movement had burgeoned by the early decades of the twentieth century. "The British Child Study Association was founded in 1894, with its journal, the *Paidologist*. The Childhood Society, and the Parents' National Educational Union soon followed . . . What was wanted, the experts said, was as much observation of real children by real parents as possible, so that an accurate Science of Childhood could be set up" (Christina Hardyment, *Perfect Parents: Baby-Care Advice Past and Present*, 105).
[2]Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection*, 458.

classes. Parental and expert interest in language acquisition, from learning to talk to learning to write, proliferated during this time. Much work has already been done on the late-Victorian school;[3] here, I will discuss the so far under-examined language-related educational methods used by parents and governesses of middle-class boys and girls at home. Learning to talk, read, and write each opens up new avenues to private spaces for children, and the late nineteenth century represents the acceptance of this idea. I will look at the way in which late-Victorian theories of learning inherently addressed a child's private mental space, and how children themselves used reading and writing to express their inner lives. Parental surveillance of children also took on new importance at this time as it began to use language as a gateway to a child's private self. What was new about the "new child" of the period was adults' recognition of his or her interiority and ability to self-develop, and adults' interrogation of it. At the same time, children's language development functioned as a representation of ontogenetic and phylogenetic evolution. The child's early, idiosyncratic, and private use of language became symbolic of the linguistic beginnings of the human race, as well as the repository for his or her potential for adult self-expression.

> *[T]he child, before he can articulate, employs inarticulate utterance with intention and striking expressiveness.*
> *-A. Stevenson, "The Speech of Children,"*
> Science *21, 1893*

In the 1860s, phrenologists and physicians concentrated on mapping the human brain. Psychology, a relatively new science, was concerned with classifying the functions and potential of the mind. Speech became an area of intense scientific interest, not least because articulate language was popularly seen to be the primary ability setting humans

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[3]See, for example, Anne Digby and Peter Searby, eds., *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England*; J. A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: the Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology*; and P.F. Speed's book for young readers, *Learning and Teaching in Victorian Times: an Elementary School in 1888*. It should be noted that the focus on language education spread through various social classes in the late nineteenth century; the Elementary Education Acts of the 1870s led to more systematic Board School training in writing and introduced English composition into older students' curriculum.

above animals in the evolutionary chain.[4] Paul Broca (1824-80) investigated language deficits in brain-damaged patients, and found a seat of speech in the frontal left hemisphere. His cases, later known as Broca's aphasics, suffered from an inability to produce fluid, grammatical sentences. One man had said only "Tan tan tan, tan tan, tan tan tan . . ." for years.[5] In the next decade, Carl Wernicke (1848-1905), another physician, worked with stroke victims who had no trouble speaking fluently but uttered nonsensical syllables, words, and phrases. Wernicke found that damage to the posterior left hemisphere of the brain induced difficulties in comprehending speech. Lesions in this area caused a loss of "word-related memories."[6] By the early 1880s, the neurological processes involved in language production and comprehension were coming to the forefront of psychology. The brain's speech centres had been outlined as three distinct areas: one for language production, one for comprehension, and a third for conceptual thinking. At the same time, the field of developmental psychology was gaining momentum. The work by Broca, Wernicke, and their colleagues clearly impacted that of child psychologists. It can be no coincidence that the new understandings of the human brain's linguistic interconnections were followed in the 1880s and 1890s by a deluge of articles and books on how the human child learns to talk in the first instance. As psychologist James Mark Baldwin wrote in 1895, "The study of children is often the only means of testing the truth of our mental analyses."[7] Language acquisition almost immediately became a science, and experts precisely systematized young children's talk. A. Stevenson, the Canadian scientist quoted above, neatly ordered infantile speech in an 1893 study:

> The inarticulate cries and calls of children soon come to be interspersed with articulate sounds. The easier vowels come early. The child M. uttered clearly and freely ab and oo early in the third month . . . Of the consonantal sounds, the first

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[4]As put forth in 1863 by Thomas Huxley in *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature*. Darwin tended to disagree with the concept of human superiority (see Randal Keynes, *Annie's Box: Charles Darwin, his Daughter and Human Evolution*, especially 236-7), but this belief remained widely held well into the twentieth century.
[5]Michael S. Gazzaniga et al., *Cognitive Neuroscience: The Biology of the Mind*, 304.
[6]Ibid., 305.
[7]James M. Baldwin, *Mental Development in the Child and the Race*, in *A Source Book in the History of Psychology*, ed. Herrnstein and Boring, 497.

> to appear in the cases of [children] O. and M. were b, f, p, d, t, m, n, ng, h, k, and g guttural as an initial. O. could make these sounds in the tenth month, but for several months afterwards he could pronounce them only singly or in easy combinations . . . At two years O. could pronounce the vowel and diphthong sounds except oi and ew, and all the consonants except th, v, and the trilled l and r.[8]

The author is one of many who sought to classify young children's speech to the very letter. Charles Johnston made clear the reasons behind this impulse in his article, "The World's Baby Talk," in 1896:

> [B]aby-talk is strictly a survival, a repetition, by each individual of the long past life of the whole race . . . the speech of Polynesians, Chinese and Negroes--of the red, brown, yellow and black races--corresponds to definite stages of baby-talk . . . We are justified in adhering to a vast period of vowel-language preceded by a long interval of all consonant speech. . ..[9]

As Alvar Ellegård notes, late-Victorian evolutionary theorists were intrigued by the question, "If linguistic species could arise by the accumulation of imperceptible changes, why could not the same be acknowledged as possible for biological species as well?"[10] Language had become a representation of the process of evolution as a whole (good English, of course, was the current pinnacle of linguistic development in the late nineteenth century). With physiological proof to back them up, and with the key to the world's language at stake, such philologists and developmental psychologists went in search of raw material. On the hunt for data, experts encouraged parents to listen to and record their children's "primitive" utterances from birth onwards. Interested middle-class parents became amateur psychologists themselves. Some simply kept a list of baby's first words and charming sayings in the baby diaries discussed above, and some recorded virtually every syllable their child produced.

Many of the late-Victorian recorders were middle-class mothers, who still spent more time with their children than fathers, despite a new male interest in early childhood. One interested student of child language, the poet and mother Alice Meynell (1847-1922), wrote, "Nothing would be more pleasant than such a study. The mere gathering of

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[8]A. Stevenson, "The Speech of Children," *Science* 21 (3 March 1893), 119.
[9]Charles Johnston, "The World's Baby Talk," *Review of Reviews* 14 (October 1896), 335-6.
[10]Alvar Ellegård, *Darwin and the General Reader: The Reception of Darwin's Theory of Evolution in the British Periodical Press, 1859-1872*, 191.

children's language is much like collecting flowers that should all be unique."[11] Some recorders, however, were far more interested in the scientific implications of their studies for general human evolution. Louise E. Hogan (1855-1929) was one scrupulous monitor of her baby's language. She remarked,

> [T]here is no substitute for the careful, methodical study of the individual child, and . . . the *co-operation of the mother is indispensable*, as the knowledge of others never equals that of the mother. [Dr. James Sully] predicts that women will become valuable laborers in this new field of investigation if they will only acquire a genuine scientific interest in babyhood and a fair amount of scientific training.[12]

We may speculate as to whether the explosion of maternal interest in baby talk had as much to do with giving women an important occupation in this scientific frontier as with interest in their own infants.[13] In an 1895 interview, author Frances Hodgson Burnett (1849-1924) declaimed, "With me, the study of childhood has become a science in later years."[14] Hogan herself enthusiastically (and scientifically) observed her son for his first seven years of life, in the tradition of Darwin's *A Biographical Sketch of an Infant*:[15]

> *April* 16, 1891.-- . . . The words [Harold] has tried to say since November, when he was nine months old, are as follows, given in their order of acquirement: 'oh;' 'mammam;' 'hab'em;' 'gib'em;' 'ups-a-da-da;' 'wow-wow;' 'bow-wow;' 'ba' and 'ba-ba' for papa; 'by-by;' 'ssss' (which he says to dogs, cats, etc., pointing his finger at them as he says it); 'cock' for clock; 'ga' for cat; 'rub-a-dub-dub.' . . .
> *August* 17, 1891.--When he awoke this morning he said 'door,' pointing to it. Then he pointed to the bell, and said to a servant, 'Bridyet, door-bell ringing.'
>
> This was his first attempt at connecting words in a sentence of any length. He is now eighteen months old.[16]

Over the course of the 1880s and 1890s, recording mothers such as Hogan became more and more common. Experts used their data as a basis for speculation about the roots of

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[11]Alice Meynell, "The Talk of Children," *Merry England* 24 (November 1894), 78.
[12]Louise E. Hogan, "A Study of a Child," *Harper's Monthly Magazine* 97 (June 1898), 120. Hogan was American, but her work was read in England. Her study was published as a book in 1898. James Sully was one of the foremost advocates of the Child Study movement.
[13]Christina Hardyment maintains that "The scientific approach at the end of the nineteenth century was dominated by men, who pushed women into a subservient place, describing them as fitted to do no more than record incidents in their child's life which the father, the 'scientific educator,' could analyse" (Preface, xii). This is somewhat broad, however. Late-Victorian middle-class parents of both sexes recorded and analyzed their children's development, and mothers especially seem to have enjoyed their work (see Chapter 1).
[14]Florence Balgarnie, "Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett," *Great Thoughts* 5 (6 July 1895), 217.
[15]See Chapter 1.
[16]Hogan, 122.

human language as a whole. Having observed several children's linguistic development, S. S. Buckman confidently echoed that favourite developmentalist phrase,

> '[O]ntogeny repeats phylogeny'. . . The object of the present study is to learn what are the first stammerings of children and how they are developed; then from these ontogenetic details to see what deductions may be drawn in regard to the phylogenetic origin of language.[17]

Out of the mouths of babes, then, came syllables of enormous import for nineteenth-century science and evolutionary study. More quietly, however, came a source for recognition of a child's--even a newborn's-- inborn individuality of mind. As Alice Meynell remarked, the children she observed had a remarkable capacity for uniqueness of vocabulary and expression. "'I've got a lotter than you,'" she wrote in 1894, "is the speech of a very young egoist."[18] The imaginative use of language despite the limits of vocabulary, as well as being symbolic of phylogenetic development, was a sign of the private space in a child's mind. Meynell was not alone in this belief. The Mistress of Method in the Datchelor Training College, C. E. Carpenter, had earlier written, "We must remember that the only means of communication between our mind and the child's mind is the medium of language . . . We want children to understand our language: we must begin by understanding theirs and teaching them ours."[19] Late-Victorian experts and middle-class parents, then, took seriously young children's language as a sign of individual psychology and development. In 1895, the famous Dr. Sully (1842-1923) described his daughter at age two and a half, who, "after running over a pretty long series of sounds devoid of all meaning, said, 'It's because you don't understand me, papa.' Here the love of mystery and secrecy, aided by the dramatic impulse, *made* the nonsense real talk."[20] Sully seems to have made little effort to understand the talk, or unearth any meaning it may have had. His scientific implication was that the importance of the exchange lay with the privacy of the child's language, an expression of an inherent desire

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[17]S. S. Buckman, "The Speech of Children," *The Nineteenth Century* 41 (May 1897), 793. See also my references to Buckman in Chapter 1.
[18]Meynell, 79.
[19]Miss C. E. Carpenter, "The Imagination of Children," *The Journal of Education* 13 (1 February 1891), 120.
[20]James Sully, "Studies of Childhood. XI--Material of Morality. b. Untruth and Truth," *The Popular Science Monthly* 47 (October 1895), 809.

and need for a secret side. The study of individual children's linguistic development uncovered a key to a locked door; adults recognized a need among children for a mental "room of one's own." This private room was the realm where adult potential was to develop, mainly undisturbed. Parents saw themselves as guides towards, not as formers of, their children's futures. Although it often made parents anxious, self-development, mirroring the seemingly self-propelled nature of human evolution, was the natural route to human perfection.

> *For the desire to read, like all the other desires which distract our unhappy souls, is capable of analysis.*
>
> *-Virginia Woolf,*
> *"Sir Thomas Browne," 1923*

As late-Victorian middle- and upper-middle class parents ceded space in the home to their children's nurseries and bedrooms, they appear to have opened up physical and intellectual space for their education. Pedagogical journals similarly gave unprecedented space to the theory and practice of home education; that is, to the "pre-school" years (pre-school for middle-class boys, at least) from infancy until about age nine or ten, when parents and servants were the primary educators. Leslie Stephen and Julia Stephen were typical middle-class parents in that they taught their children themselves for some time, with foreign governesses to help with languages. Latin, history, French, and mathematics made up their children's home lessons, along with reading and writing.[21] It appears that children of these years were expected to learn first their letters, then reading, then spelling, and lastly, penmanship and writing, while still under the auspices of home-schooling. Early education had come a long distance from the eighteenth century's tentative steps toward pleasure in learning, when the first "alphabet and reading books, by their simplicity . . . strengthened the confidence of parents in their ability to teach their

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[21]See Quentin Bell, *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* (Vol. 1), 26-7. The Stephen parents were not entirely successful as teachers. Woolf wrote that her mother as an educator "established a close and rather trying relationship, for she was of a quick temper, and least of all inclined to spare her children" ("Reminiscences," in *Moments of Being*, 38-9). As was fairly standard among the upper-middle classes, the children also had music, dancing, and "graceful deportment" lessons (see, for example, Stephen family, "Hyde Park Gate News," 5 December 1892).

children to read in the home."[22] Even the relatively enlightened days of the early Victorians had not seen a complete decline in a parental desire for conformity in the nursery or home-schoolroom, which may reflect an anxiety about the parent's self-perceived role as former of the child's character. Recalling her own mid-nineteenth-century childhood, the popular children's author L. T. Meade wrote in 1895, "Between the child of the past and the child of to-day stretches a gulf deep and wide."[23] Though Meade was reasonably happy being educated at home, she remembered, she had to take "considerable pains with her hand writing," and that she early on "learnt to write a letter which was really worth reading. . .."[24] This statement suggests that earlier in the century, handwriting and letters were subject to adult templates from which deviation was unacceptable. Meade's letters would have to be "really worth reading" by adults. The act of learning to read, too, followed a strict pattern. As Richard D. Altick remarks,

> All we know of the fanatical use of the 'principle of interrogation' in [mid]-nineteenth century schools forces us to believe that its use in the teaching of reading must have bred a deep distaste for the printed word in countless pupils . . . No provision was made for silent reading.[25]

This theory was not limited to schools. Kipling was born in 1865, and suffered the worst of this home-school system of reading education. In his semi-autobiographical story, "Baa Baa Black Sheep," the five-year-old Punch, sent by his Anglo-Indian parents to live with an English "Aunty" and "Uncle," learns to read from "a dirty brown book filled with unintelligible dots and marks":

> [T]he reading was, just then, a much more serious matter than any creed. Aunty Rosa sat him upon a table and told him that A B meant ab.
>
> 'Why?' said Punch. 'A is a and B is bee. *Why* does A B mean ab?'
>
> 'Because I tell you it does,' said Aunty Rosa, 'and you've got to say it.'[26]

Once he does master the dots and marks, he understandably decides that he "will never

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[22]J. H. Plumb, "The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 67 (May 1975), 81-2.
[23]L. T. Meade, "Children Past and Present," *The Parents' Review* 6 (February 1896), 881.
[24]Meade, "Children Past and Present [Continued]," *The Parents' Review* 7 (March 1896), 25. Handwriting frequently remained an area for conformity later in the century. See below.
[25]Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader*, 151.
[26]Rudyard Kipling, "Baa Baa Black Sheep," in *Twenty-One Tales Selected from the Works of Rudyard Kipling*, 88-9.

read anything in the world." That is, until he discovers the excitement of *Sharpe's Magazine* and *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.[27] Absorbed in a storybook, he is admonished by Aunty Rosa for failing to entertain his younger sister:

> 'I was reading,' he explained, 'reading a book I *want* to read.'
> 'You're only doing that to show off,' said Aunty Rosa. 'But we'll see. Play with Judy now, and don't open a book for a week.'[28]

Reading for early- and mid-Victorian middle-class children, then, was frequently a matter of conformity and of pleasing adults, not one for privacy and silence. Janet E. Courtney (b. 1865), an exact contemporary of Kipling, also particularly enjoyed reading from an early age, but like Punch, "was often in deep disgrace with my nurse because I was 'deep in a book' instead of running about. Reading, even in my mother's eyes, was a recreation, not an occupation."[29] Having children chant aloud memorized, monosyllabic sentences from a primer perhaps made the teaching of reading easier for adults, but surely more monotonous for the learners. Learning to read was less an affair for enjoyment than a manifestation of adherence to that singularly middle-class Victorian virtue, Duty. Dutiful early- and mid-Victorian parents and governesses supervised their children's dutiful grasping of the printed word. Young readers were frequently not granted a private place to read, and little recognition of the need for any private mental space. The desire for privacy was evidently regarded with more suspicion or impatience than understanding, and led to increased authoritative surveillance, however well intentioned the motivation behind it. The influence of Christian doctrine on parenting in the early and middle years of the century ensured that if children were seen as having private thoughts, these were potentially sinful and in need of parental direction.

Reading education in the earlier nineteenth century must have involved frequent storms of crying, to judge from the title of Mrs. Favell Lee Mortimer's *Reading Without Tears: Or, a Pleasant Mode of Learning to Read*, which was first published in 1857, but became virtually omnipresent after about 1875. The work outlived both Mrs. Mortimer

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[27]Punch's reading taste foreshadows the explosion in popularity of these kinds of magazines and fairy tales, which suggest developmental theory, later in the century (see Chapter 1).
[28]Kipling, 90-1.
[29]Janet E. Courtney, *Recollected in Tranquillity*, 8.

(1802-1878) and her popular children's Bible history *The Peep of Day* (1833), remaining in print until 1919. The book is mentioned so often in autobiographies of those born in the late nineteenth century as to be something of an inside joke. Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965) wrote of learning from the book with her brother and a governess, although she preferred a story that could capture her imagination "(. . . I was only too glad to weep with it)."[30] Osbert Sitwell (1892-1969) was among the many other late-Victorian children who were subjected to Mortimer's theories; at age five, he once "hurled my copy of *Reading Without Tears* down upon the floor and ran out of the room, a screaming Swiss governess in pursuit after me."[31] However detested by some, the book was beloved by others. One of Cynthia Wyndham's (later Asquith, 1887-1960) first memories is of this very work:

> It was sitting on Nannie's rather knobbly knee that, at a very early age, I learned to read from a chubby brown book called Reading Without Tears. I remember the fascination of the alphabet pictures, the incantation-like charm of sentences such as 'I met ten pigs in a gig. I met ten figs in a gig. I met ten wigs in a gig.'[32]

What had changed?

First, the marketing. The title-page of the 1879 edition of *Reading Without Tears* proclaims, "Pretty pictures or stories embellish each page, / That the rosy, the blue-eyed, and flaxen hair'd age, / May learn their FIRST book without shedding a tear."[33] The page was prettily printed, and directly appealed to children's sensibilities with the advertisement of the book's visual charms. The capitalization of "FIRST" was perhaps a subtle marker to young readers; though the introduction was designed for the parent or teacher, a child would quickly be able to make out the monosyllabic word after a few lessons from the book, and would presumably feel proudly adult. Mortimer herself wrote, "Great pains have been taken to render this book pleasing to children."[34] Appealing

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[30]Eleanor Farjeon, *A Nursery in the Nineties*, 263.
[31]Osbert Sitwell, *Left Hand! Right Hand! An Autobiography*, 178.
[32]Cynthia Asquith, *Haply I May Remember*, 119. The Stephen children may also have been taught using this or a similarly rhyme-based work: Leslie Stephen wrote to Julia Stephen in 1884 that the five-year-old Vanessa "read another page of the fat cat, which she can now do with very little help--To [Thoby, age four] coming in with occasional suggestions" (23 October 1884, Berg Collection).
[33]Mrs. Favell Lee Mortimer, *Reading Without Tears*, title page [n. p.].
[34]Ibid., Preface, vii.

further to children's visuality, she advised the reading instructor that

> *These remarks on the forms of the Letter will help to impress them on the child's memory . . .*
> A is like a hut with a window upstairs
> B is like a house with two windows
> C is like an open mouth . . .[.]

She went on to suggest, "*COLOURING the letters would render them more attractive, and distinguish them better from the* pictures. *They might be coloured by degrees, as a reward to the little pupil for remembering their names.*"[35] Learning to read had thus become an artistic endeavour. It was also musicalized, helping to develop all kinds of taste that would be necessary in middle-class adulthood.[36] Mortimer's earlier phrases invariably rhyme, as in Wyndham's remembered sequence of pigs, figs, and wigs. The author based her theory on syllables, dividing longer words into their syllabic parts. Mortimer was not the first primer author to add pictures, rhymes, and word breakdowns; one progressive 1806 work, *Instructive Hints in Easy Lessons for Children*, assured its young readers that "It is a plea-*f*ant thing to learn to read . . . E-ve-ry mark you *f*ee be-tween the words is a pau*f*e or *f*top, where you may take breath."[37] (Above the text, a mother wags an elegant finger at two rather adult-looking children sharing a book, while a nearby cat looks away as if in disgust.) Some early-nineteenth-century alphabet books, notably the variations on "A Apple Pie," are illustrated with people representing each letter (in one version, with "twenty-six young ladies and gentlemen," each with his or her respective letter worn as a necklace).[38] Yet Mortimer's illustrations, though stilted in their own way, do appear to have more juvenile appeal. Here, the pictures of letters

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[35]Ibid., "Notice to Teachers," 14.
[36]The late-Victorian child's development was expected to include that of artistic, theatrical, and musical taste (see Chapter 1). The later publication of Darwin's "A Biographical Sketch of an Infant" (1877) helped to spread this idea with his belief that love of music was instinctive. One of the notebook's experiments involved observing the reactions of his four-month-old son to music. Darwin also felt sure that his small daughter Annie's appreciation of song meant that "She is more than a Mozart, considering her Darwin blood" (letter, 1848, cited in Keynes, 142). See Chapters 4 and 5 on late-Victorian parents' interest in the inheritance and development of artistic and intellectual qualities as evinced by children's writing.
[37][n. a.], *Instructive Hints in Easy Lessons for Children. Part I*, in *Pages and Pictures from Forgotten Children's Books*, ed. Tuer, 129.
[38][n. a.], *The Life and History of A, Apple-Pie, who was cut to pieces and eaten by twenty-six young ladies and gentlemen with whom little folks ought to be acquainted* [c. 1820-30]. In *Pages and Pictures from Forgotten Children's Books*, 465.

anthropomorphize the alphabet, or at least bring it to a kind of life in a new way, with the shape of each letter seen as part of its "personality." No longer were children subject to the alphabet; the alphabet was now subject to the wiles of the visual imagination. Mortimer's method involved building sentences with progressively multisyllabic words, designed to appeal to a child's sense of rhythm. From "I had a cat / I had a mat," the child reader moved, after approximately 80 pages, to "A rob-in pecks at the window. / Let him in. See him hop. / If the ra-ven see him, he will kill him."[39] Mortimer recognized not only the appeal of rhythm, but also that of hinted or outright violence, as in the following lesson:

> Jack will cl am-ber up high| trees.
> Jack got to the top of the fir-tree.
> But he was diz-zy, and he fell
> and snapped his neck.
> So he was killed on the sp ot.[40]

Where earlier primers used danger and death as part of the awful warning about the ills that befall immoral or undutiful children, *Reading Without Tears*, though it included some mild Christian statements, often simply made violence part of the story-lesson, as if in collusion with the child reader's taste for disaster and gore. Mortimer combined and revised several older methods in order that her book might proclaim itself as education through enjoyment, but it was not without a moral. That moral was a reminder to children that they were continually developing, like the length of the words and lessons, and were capable of developing their own linguistic skills for adulthood.

Narrative played a large part in Mortimer's developmentalism and her hope of avoiding tears. Most of the short paragraphs or lessons had some overall narrative shape, enhanced by the illustrations. She began her later section of longer stories with a tale of Bertie, who is turning five, and who "was not a-ble to read yet, but he li-ked pic-tures."[41] Mortimer, sympathetic to the child reader and to an early vision of the ontogeny-

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[39]Mortimer, 86 and 162. Earlier reading and spelling books sometimes used a syllable-building method, but it was much more rigid. These works were generally an excuse for Christian moralizing in monosyllables. Mrs. Rice's 1807 *The Maid of the White Cot; Also, Charles Grey and Black George: Two Easy and Familiar Stories, consisting entirely of Words of One Syllable* is one example.
[40]Mortimer, 209.
[41]Ibid., 118.

phylogeny correlation, seemed perhaps to remember that literature began as poetry and epic. Her young readers were offered images, poetic rhythm, and linear storylines to help them along the "path of knowledge."[42] Learning to read was still centred in orality, as it had been earlier in the century, but reading aloud seems now to have been meant to evoke a kind of joy in language, with less memorization, and more encouragement to "sound it out" through rhyme and the separation of syllables within words. Where the early-nineteenth century *Instructive Hints in Easy Lessons for Children* advised its young readers, "If you do not know [a word] try to *f*pell it and a*f*k the per-*f*on who is teaching you to tell you how to di-vide it,"[43] Mortimer instead told parents that "It is not advisable to keep to one page till it is known perfectly, but soon to pass on to another, thus enticing the Child by novelty."[44] Young middle-class readers were now given far more freedom to wade through the pages as they liked, without memorizing spellings and pronunciations. They were encouraged to think of life as a series of exciting and "novel" stages through which they would develop, ostensibly at their own pace. Moreover, Mortimer's "path of knowledge" was not end-stopped. Some earlier middle-class readers such as Kipling's Punch were apparently taught with a goal in mind--the goal of literacy--and once having reached that goal, were not encouraged further to explore literature, while Mortimer told parents and teachers to give learning readers "*any little books, such as* 'Tiny Stories.' *Variety will hasten their progress.*"[45] Giving young people a choice of reading matter was another late-Victorian concession to their mental independence, but also a recognition that young readers would grow into adult readers with varied tastes. *Reading Without Tears*, then, was evidently intended to promote reading without end, and to impress upon children the direction of development towards adulthood, which made it useful for late-Victorian middle-class parents' pedagogical ends. The verse on the title page concludes, "May the learners of *this*--love the Heavenly page, / That in wither'd, dim-sighted, and

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[42]Ibid., Preface, vii.
[43][n. a.], *Instructive Hints*, 129.
[44]Mortimer, 39.
[45]Ibid., 83. Mortimer probably refers to Mrs. E. Burrows's *Tiny Stories for Tiny Readers in Tiny Words* (1864).

hoary-haired age, / They may clasp their LAST book, as they drop their last TEAR."[46]

What strikes the modern reader as one of Mrs. Mortimer's more avant-garde theories of reading education is her belief that children should achieve literacy at a later age than was previously thought. One of her first pieces of advice to parents and teachers is, "[L]et [children] not begin too soon (never before four, sometimes not till five)."[47] A somewhat developmentally prescriptive long-vowel reading lesson tells children (and parents) that "Ned is six. He can read. / Al-fred is sev-en. He can wr ite. / Ro-ly is nine. He can do sums."[48] We may also recall the five-year-old Bertie, who, Mortimer takes pains to mention, cannot read yet. Earlier nineteenth-century parents and governesses seem to have pushed their young readers to master the task as early as possible. Beatrix Potter (1866-1943), admittedly an unusually adult child, learned to read at a very young age from the Waverley novels.[49] Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) was sickly in childhood, and was considered an unusually late beginning reader at age seven.[50] By the late 1870s, however, developmental psychologists had begun to chime in with Mortimer. Middle- and upper-middle-class parents and nurses seem to have relaxed somewhat. No longer eager for mastery of reading to occur as early as possible, they were content to allow older children simply to continue to listen to reading aloud. An article in *The Parents' Review* of 1891 suggested, "Boys of four and five will listen with breathless attention to H. M. Stanley's 'In Darkest Africa,' if carefully read to them, substituting simple words for the hard ones, *translating* as one goes along. . .."[51] This represented a move towards a kind of learning by osmosis. If left to absorb books read aloud, the theory seems to have run, children would then, at age six or seven, begin to read on their own.

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[46]Ibid., title page, [n. p.].
[47]Ibid., Preface, viii. The still-influential Locke, for example, had told parents that children should begin to learn to read as soon as they could talk.
[48]Ibid., 224.
[49]Margaret Lane, *The Tale of Beatrix Potter*, 15.
[50]See Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *The Rise and Fall of the British Nanny*, on Stevenson's nurse's role in his reading education, 129-30.
[51][n. a.], "Child Culture," *The Parents' Review* 2 (November 1891), 687. Stanley's true-life adventure tale was published in 1890. We should also note that reading aloud was a Victorian accomplishment--often a feminine one. Virginia Woolf wrote admiringly in a memorial tribute that Lady Jane Maria Strachey (1840-1928), mother of Lytton Strachey, had a "natural gift" for reading aloud ("Lady Strachey," *The Nation and the Athenæum* 44 (22 December 1928), 442). See Chapter 4 for a discussion of Lady Strachey's involvement in her children's writing.

To develop oneself through a progression of stages was seen to be "natural," following general human evolution. Picking up on reading skills in this way was also seen as a "natural" route to adulthood. These ideas probably grew out of the works not only of Rousseau, but of Henry Pestalozzi (1746-1827), a Swiss educational reformer who wrote in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and was evidently seen as something of a quack in his own time. Jacob "Jacobli" Pestalozzi, the educationalist's son, underwent a sort of radical advance tour of the changes in nineteenth-century reading tutelage as a child in the 1770s. The elder Pestalozzi's diary records that when Jacobli was three-and-a-half years old, "He was soon tired of learning to read, but as I had decided that he should work at it regularly every day, whether he liked it or not, I determined to make him feel the necessity of doing so, from the very first. . .."[52] A change of heart evidently took place, for Pestalozzi later wrote in a periodical, "My son is more than eleven years old and cannot yet read or write; but this does not at all trouble me."[53] The father had slowly come to the decision that education should be based in what he called "sense-impressions." By 1800, he propounded the theory that he had demonstrated on his own child: "[T]he true starting-point is in personal impressions, whether physical or moral. Words, rules, and regulations should not come till afterwards. Hence, practice in talking before reading."[54] Late-Victorian physiologists, developmental psychologists, and linguistic experts seized upon this idea that the young child should be left to bloom undisturbed, soaking up verbal language before attempting to read and write it. The mother-recorder Louise Hogan described how she left her son, then close to age six, to

> [take] up printed letters in the same way that he worked out numbers, learning to read and spell, eventually, by the aid of memory and by comparison of the words he knew from memory with the printed books before him. His illustrated books of pigs, cats, dogs, etc. furnished him with sufficient material for this sort of work, and his interest was kept up by the illustrations. . ..[55]

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[52]Cited in Roger DeGuimps, *Pestalozzi: His Life and Work*, 41.
[53]Ibid., 50.
[54]Ibid., 95. More unusually for the earlier nineteenth century, Charles Darwin was brought up by his elder sisters along Pestalozzian lines. See Keynes, 101.
[55]Hogan, 129. Pestalozzi was also convinced that the mother was the best educator of the very young, as he made clear in *How Gertrude Teaches her Children: An Attempt to Help Mothers to Teach their Own Children* (1801).

Tellingly, Pestalozzi's 1801 *Guide for Teaching Spelling and Reading* came with a set of large movable letters for practical applications of sense-impressions. Pestalozzi's late-Victorian counterparts merged his principles with new physiological and psychological studies as a basis for advocating children's free play with letters, spoken words, and language as a whole before they came to read for themselves. As Professor G. T. W. Patrick summarized in 1899, "Our increasing knowledge of the child's mind, his muscular and nervous system, and his special senses, points indubitably to the conclusion that reading and writing are subjects which do not belong to the early years . . . but to a later period. . .."[56] Very few late-Victorian middle-class children were left illiterate as long as "Jacobli," but methods of language education certainly became more gradual with the scientific recognition of the mind's developmental stages. The "natural" acquisition of verbal and written language came to symbolize a model of general human evolution.

What were the implications for the middle-class children brought up amidst such theories? They were on the whole given more time and freedom to explore language than were their predecessors under more Gradgrindian systems. Reading should no longer have been a cause for tears. The "path to knowledge" had been lengthened and systematized by the likes of Mrs. Mortimer and Pestalozzian disciples. This path, moreover, seems to have been turned inward. The admonitions to allow children time to learn on their own seem to have had a subtext; gradual self-development was the right way for the child to make the most of his or her adult potential, and the key to eventually perfecting the race. For late-Victorian middle-class children, learning to read--and waiting to do so--were seen to be periods for the creative and individual use of language. Parents and educators of the time began to recognize young people's need to explore and express the self as a natural developmental stage. One disapproving developmentalist physician wrote in 1895 that traditional "infant education, our school life, domestic life, social life, all tend to trim away whatever of originality--good or otherwise--the individual may possess."[57] This expert clearly recognized distinctiveness in the child--

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[56]G. T. W. Patrick, "Should Children Under Ten Learn to Read and Write?", *The Popular Science Monthly* 54 (January 1899), 385.
[57]Nathan Oppenheim, "Why Children Lie," *The Popular Science Monthly* 47 (July 1895), 385.

"the individual"--and condemned the way in which earlier educational methods had perhaps unwittingly destroyed it. Late-nineteenth-century discourses on reading, the first major subject a child would be taught, thus provide a key to experts' ideas about children's secret selves. Just as language and reading skills developed throughout infancy and childhood in a mysterious but "natural" sequence towards regularity, so adult potential was seen to expand outwards from the child-self. In the progressivist middle-class mind, children's language acquisition was symptomatic of the general, and natural, perfectibility of humanity.

These ideas also had an effect on literature. Children's books abounded in the late nineteenth century, as we have seen. Writing to 1876 children, the celebrated Mrs. Mary Louisa Molesworth said,

> You may have heard it, but I scarcely fancy you have ever thought about the great difference between yourselves and long-ago children . . . Now-a-days, when you have galloped through all the brilliant blue and green and scarlet little volumes that have been given to you on birthdays and Christmas-days, you come with a melancholy face to your mother, and tell her you have 'nothing to read' . . . Not so was it long ago. Not only had no children many books, but everywhere children had the same![58]

Not only was the sheer volume of available children's literature astonishing, a large variety was available to delight new readers as well. From the "penny dreadful" magazine to the instantly classic Coloured Fairy Book, works for the young now covered virtually as much ground as did those intended for their adult counterparts.[59] Developmental stage theory was reflected in the prescription and writing of different books for different ages. Giving children reading material that was "natural" for their level was considered the best aid to ontogenetic and phylogenetic development. As one psychologist cautioned parents,

> It is only since the invention of printing and the wide dissemination of books, magazines, and newspapers that reading has become a real determining factor in the life of the people . . . We can understand, therefore, that it will demand a considerable maturity in the child before he is ready for that which has developed so late in the history of the race.[60]

The middle-class child as reader had begun to make his or her presence more apparent

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[58]Mrs. Molesworth, *"Carrots:" Just a Little Boy*, 112-3.
[59]See Chapter 1.
[60]Patrick, 390.

than ever before. The might of the young reading audience also made itself felt on the market. Low-priced illustrated children's magazines abounded. Alfred Harmsworth, entrepreneurial publisher, brought out *Comic Cuts* and *Chips* in 1890, both miscellanies of comic drawings, "'one liners' and snippets of information."[61] Thomas Burke (1887-1945) recalled his joy in being able to choose among these two publications and the *Funny Wonder* for his halfpenny (he selected the *Wonder*, and had twopence in pocket money left over to spend on candy and chestnuts).[62] The death of the costly triple-decker novel in favour of the six-shilling single volume may have had something to do with the fact that most middle-class children had spending money or indulgent parents and, for the first time, frequently enjoyed the power and prestige of choosing their own books. We cannot forget the appeal of portability to children; a single volume is more appealing to smaller hands, and much easier to carry, push into a pocket, or even conceal from adult eyes than are three. The ten-year-old Mary Butts was so enchanted at hearing an excerpt from *The Heroes of Asgard* (1857)[63] that she convinced her father that she must own it by the very next day, and took it with her everywhere.[64] Adults still had a marked effect on middle-class children's reading choices, however. Although the selection of book was Butts's own, it reflects the fact that she had internalized her upper-middle-class parents' developmentalist ideals. Its title delineates the heroism of the Norse deities, which, marketed to children, would suggest the perfectibility of the developing child, and, with its stories of gods in human form, that of the human race.

The popular *The Heroes of Asgard* is a good example of a re-telling of an "adult" story--the Icelandic myths of the Eddas--in a child-friendly form. Many abridged or simplified versions of grown-up classics became available to young people in the later nineteenth century. Indeed, while the developmental stages of reading education were

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[61]Peter Hunt, *An Introduction to Children's Literature*, 65.
[62]Thomas Burke, *Son of London*, 25-7.
[63]This book, the first English re-telling of the Norse myths for children, was by sisters Annie and Eliza Keary. It is also worth noting that the Edda on which this book was based was originally written as a model for developing writers, "novice poets who wished to become skalds, creators of the sophisticated poetry recited in court" (see "Edda," *Encyclopedia Mythica*, http://www.pantheon.org/mythica/areas/norse/ (April 2001)). See Chapters 4 and 5 on the apprenticeship model as applied to late-Victorian children's writing.
[64]Mary Butts, *The Crystal Cabinet*, 73.

being laid out at this time, differentiation between reading material for adults and reading material for children was becoming less distinct. Many middle-class adults began to read children's works, in an effort to understand both children and their books, and to make a connection between childhood and adulthood. Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) was prefaced by the authorial comment, "Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls, I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account, for part of my plan has been to try pleasantly to remind adults of what they once were themselves. . .."[65] Although it can be argued that statements like Twain's are part of the late-Victorian adult nostalgia for childhood and the resulting repudiation of the moral in children's fiction,[66] they can also be read in reverse; the present child-reader could use these books to develop adult literary taste, and accordingly re-read them when they grew up. Twain's appeal is to the child's adult potential as well as to his grown-up reader. Samuel Rutherford Crockett's popular *The Surprising Adventures of Sir Toady Lion* (1897),[67] a typical instance of the "naughty child" genre, calls itself "an improving history for old boys, young boys, good boys, bad boys, big boys, little boys, cow boys and Tom-boys."[68] The "improving history" note is not entirely satirical; *Sir Toady Lion* is a story of development towards adulthood. It represents an evolution out of beastliness (however adorable) towards heroism like that of the boy protagonist's idol, Richard the Lionheart. The old and young, big and little boys of the dedication can be seen as referring to the dual state of the child in late-Victorian middle-class eyes, existing both as himself or herself and as his or her adult potential. The blurring of lines between books for adults and those for children demonstrates a growing evolutionism-inspired belief in a pre-existing connection, through developmental potential, between the child-self and the adult-self.

The genre that best demonstrates the late-Victorian merging of child and adult

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[65]Mark Twain, Preface to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, in *Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn*, [n. p.].
[66]See Juliet Dusinberre, *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art*, 76-80.
[67]An infantile attempt at "Coeur-de-Lion," in the late-Victorian tradition of literary children with charming speech impediments. See my discussion below.
[68]S. R. Crockett, title page of *The Surprising Adventures of Sir Toady Lion*, [n. p.]. See Dusinberre's ideas on this statement in conjunction with Twain, 77-8.

readers is the newspaper. 1881 saw the inception of George Newnes's best-selling *Tit-Bits*, a penny-paper compendium of fiction and news excerpts from other papers and magazines. It printed readers' contributions, and answered their diverse and apparently endless questions. The upstart Alfred Harmsworth retorted within several years with *Answers to Correspondents*, capitalizing on *Tit-Bits'* most popular column.[69] Both adults and children, of various social classes, bought these cheap journals, read the answer pages, tried to work out the riddles, and enjoyed the jokes. (The nine-year-old Daisy Ashford (1881-1972) had the hero of one of her stories, "an elderly man of 42," read *Tit-Bits* on the train.)[70] The Stephen children were also avid readers of the paper. Virginia Woolf remembered them buying the magazine once a week, and reading it while eating Fry's chocolate, lying on the grass in Kensington Gardens ("I liked the Correspondence best").[71] Richard D. Altick observes that more and more throughout the late nineteenth century, "people would be buying reading matter whose chief function was to keep their eyes busy while their brains took a rest."[72] Perhaps this was true of the adult reader, but the publishers of these newspapers were canny enough to realize how many children bought their weeklies as well. Their short-attention-span style seems almost designed for beginning or new readers, as do their puzzles and humour. Even older, more established magazines and newspapers found themselves taking the young audience into account. Women's magazines, especially, often began to include a children's page in the late nineteenth century,[73] and H. M. Alden, editor of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, in 1894 told Hardy that he could publish "nothing which could not be read aloud in any family circle."[74] Alden's warning is not just one of traditional censorship, but a recognition that journals of the period had readers of various ages, often within the same

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[69]"By the later 1890s these magazines each claimed circulations of between 400,000 and 600,000 weekly; Newnes became a baronet in 1895, Harmsworth a peer as Lord Northcliffe in 1905" (Norman McCord, *British History 1815-1906*, 461-2).
[70]Daisy Ashford, *The Young Visiters; Or, Mr Salteena's Plan*, 19, 39.
[71]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, 77. The young Virginia Stephen even sent in a story to the magazine, "which, needless to say, was not published" (Q. Bell (Vol. 1), 31). Later in life, she approvingly called George Eliot "as easy to read as Tit Bits" (Woolf to Nelly Cecil, [late November 1919], *Letters* 2, 401).
[72]Altick, 64.
[73]See Chapter 4 on the rise of child writers during these years.
[74]Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy: A Biography*, 349.

family--or the same person. The immense popularity of the periodical and serial story demonstrates late-nineteenth-century middle-class parents' belief in the child containing his or her adult potential. These works' self-marketing to both child and adult audiences is symptomatic of the idea that the child reader would develop naturally towards adulthood and adult tastes with the help of suitable material.

> *Long years after they were written, a bundle of letters lay in the drawer of a cabinet in Lady Jane's morning-room . . . They were in Leonard's handwriting. A childish hand, though good for his age, but round and clear as his own speech.*
>
> *-Juliana Horatia Ewing,*
> The Story of a Short Life, *1885*

Middle-class parents and experts during the late-Victorian years were deeply interested in the ways in which children, having learned to read, began to write on their own. Children's written language had become as much a source for recognition of their individuality as had reading. It was even more symbolic of their development, for children's own writings could be seen to provide a record of the stages of childhood on the way to adult life. Mrs. Ewing (1841-85) was as popular a writer for children as her mother, Mrs. Margaret Gatty (1808-73), had been. Ewing had begun telling stories to her family as a child, and in her children's books, she was understood to retain a "child's-eye view" of domestic life. Although admiring critics have seen her "jolly good" stories as being free from heavy-handed moralizing,[75] her stories, read by both adults and children, did have a developmentalist moral--that middle-class children of the period would grow up, and that they should think about their future lives. Her *The Story of a Short Life* narrates the experiences of a boy who does not reach adulthood, but dies young after an injury. Part of the tale is in the form of letters from Leonard (he of the short life) to his mother, while he is staying at an army camp with relatives. The letters are often self-referentially so, in the multifaceted sense of *litterae*; they are epistles referring to their own state of "writtenness." At the end of his first missive, Leonard writes, "All these

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[75]Percy Muir, *English Children's Books, 1600-1900*, 117.

crosses mean kisses, Jemima told me."[76] Later, explaining military life to his ignorantly feminine mamma, he announces,

> When I say *our quarters*, remember I mean our hut; and when I say *rations* it means bread and meat . . . But I think I'll make you a Dictionary if I can get a ruled book from the Canteen. It would make this letter too much to go for a penny if I put all the words in I know.[77]

Leonard's would-be dictionary is symptomatic of the theories of the period. He, the middle-class child, is the holder of knowledge, the one who understands and explains words to unenlightened adults. He evidently enjoys the private symbolic nature of the written word, as evinced by his gloss of the crosses at the end of his page. It is the act of writing that shares his personal knowledge, and therefore his individuality, with them. Ewing does not let the reader miss this theme; Leonard's hand is as "round and clear as his own speech." The late-Victorian child's written language is an emblem of his private self. Yet he is writing as if he were an adult, even as if he were an adult writing to his child-self. "[R]emember I mean our hut," he writes, as if prompting himself to record his own linguistic development for future reference. Leonard, with his short life, functions as a reminder to middle-class adults to note their children's developmental stages for future reference, and a hint to children that they would do well to do the same for themselves.

Writing education reflected these developmentalist theories in the late-nineteenth-century middle-class home. We may recall that Mrs. Mortimer's Ned could read at age six, and Alfred had learned to write at seven. Alfred seems to have been of average age for a late-nineteenth-century child in this respect. Generally still at home with a governess and / or parental teachers by this age, middle-class children would begin to write only after having grasped the rudiments of reading. Spelling, oral or on paper, seems to have come before actual handwriting. Indeed, it appears to have been regarded as a separate subject altogether from writing. Near the end of her primer, Mrs. Mortimer noted, "When perfected in reading, it will soon be enough to learn to spell without a book."[78] The importance of spelling had dropped since the early-Victorian days of drills

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[76]Juliana Horatia Ewing, *The Story of a Short Life*, 216.
[77]Ibid., 217.
[78]Mortimer, 292.

and repetition; the ear had taken precedence with the advance of the "sounding out" theory, which Mortimer advocated, and parents and teachers worried less about perfection than they once had. Professor Patrick advanced a physical basis for this theory, writing in 1899, "The child is a talking and hearing animal. He is ear-minded."[79] However insistent upon the need for the loosening of strict educational norms such writers may have been, late-Victorian children still had to undergo tutelage to learn to make their developmental marks. Patrick cautioned,

> Thought, and the expression of thought, even fancy in its description, are the outcome of age and experience. We do not mean to say that the older the author, the greater his power; but we do say that before a certain age such power is impossible. The chief essential for literature is acquired from outside; it does not exist already in the writer.[80]

"The chief essential for literature" was the ability to express oneself in a way understandable to others. Communication necessarily involved reaching outside the mind, now more and more seen as self-contained and individual in the child. While the *potential* to do so *was* seen to "exist already in the writer," parents were required for preparation and guidance. Some middle-class parents tried neo-Pestalozzian sense-impression theory in this field as well as in reading:

> A vertical writing-chart was placed above his little table, and we saw that paper and pencils were always ready for him, should he want to try it . . . Before six weeks had passed he knew the whole chart from memory, yet he never received direct teaching from it, nor did I tell him how to join the letters together when making the words. He did this from the beginning, for the chart he used was carefully prepared to meet this need.[81]

Most middle-class children, however, were somewhat less free. Eleanor Farjeon's account of her childhood days in the nursery describes endless "pothooks and hangers," the characters children learned to make in pencil or on slates prior to attempting actual letters.[82] After these symbols came actual letters to practice copying until well known. At

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[79]Patrick, 390. Backed by such theories, the phonetics movement also had some success in the later nineteenth century. One advocate assured parents in 1894 that "all who have taught English on a phonetic method, either in England or abroad, testify that the result is trouble lessened and confusion cleared up . . . children not only read better, but spell better than others" (Laura Soames, *The Child's Key to Reading, with Illustrations*, 54-5).
[80]Patrick, 390.
[81]Hogan, 133-4.
[82]Farjeon, 263. "Pothooks and hangers," she noted, "did not interest me."

last, children were given phrases to write out in ink in their often-hated, lined copy-books. Farjeon wrote of a day when she had

> a proverb in beautiful copper-plate at the top of the page, to be copied six times on the lines underneath . . . My Proverb this morning was a funny one: 'How Far That Little Candle Throws Its Beams.' What little Candle, I wondered, and what were its beams like, and how far *did* it throw them, and where to? Oh, bother! A blind 'e'. . ..[83]

Irritable, Farjeon went on to blind each lower-case "e," much to the chagrin of the long-suffering red-haired governess. Clearly, as the writer notes, the look of the copperplate hand was extremely important, but the quotations seem to have been carefully chosen as well. Wondering how far the Shakespearian Little Candle would have thrown its beams was suggestive of the child's experiences reaching into adulthood. Farjeon demonstrated the fact that in this area of education, middle-class children's thoughts were directed towards adult life by the linguistic tasks they were set. A failure to learn to write could signal inherent problems for adulthood. Leslie Stephen's daughter from his marriage to Minny Thackeray, Laura Stephen (1870-1945), suffered from a mental disorder that was probably some form of autism.[84] She was slow to learn to read, could not write, and spoke in "inarticulate" chattering.[85] She baffled her father, and her linguistic failings disturbed him most. Julia Stephen for some time "believed in her ultimate development,"[86] and she and Leslie continually pushed the girl forward in the standard

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[83]Ibid., 383.

[84]See Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf*, 103. Louise DeSalvo argues, with apparently little foundation, that Laura was not mentally deficient, but was driven mad by Leslie's harsh discipline and by sexual abuse at the hands of her Duckworth stepbrothers (DeSalvo, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*, 19-39). It is possible that Laura was abused (see Chapter 3 on the abuse of Virginia and Vanessa Stephen), but the lack of evidence prevents any definite conclusion on the subject. It seems more likely that she inherited mental illness from either side of her family (as Lee puts forth), about which Leslie Stephen worried. Laura's story was an extremely sad one, as Adrian, Vanessa, and Virginia Stephen felt at times in later life, but when they were young, she evidently intrigued her younger half-sisters and half-brothers with her child's mind. For their references to her, see "HPGN," 6 April 1891, and 8 and 15 August 1892. See also Honnor Morten, *Child-Nurture: A Handbook*, 163-72, for an early twentieth-century view on "mentally defective" children that is similarly focused on language problems.

[85]See Leslie Stephen, *Mausoleum Book*, 91-2, and his letters to Julia Stephen on the subject (e.g., 26 April 1886, 19 and 21 October 1884, Berg Collection).

[86]Ibid., 91. Julia Stephen was also convinced that refusal to learn reading and writing could entirely warp a child's development: in one of her stories for children, naughty Jack, who "could not read, he did not like learning," is shown a vision of his future in which "[e]verything is bad . . . This is the place for you" ("The Black Cat or the Grey Parrot," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen: Stories for Children, Essays for Adults*, ed. Gillespie and Steele, 128-31).

late-Victorian educational fashion, trying to make her read and write on her own. He had hopes that she would evolve through language use, writing at one point to Julia, "Your account of Laura is curious & so far encouraging that she should have been capable of noticing Thoby's remarks & applying them in her own fashion. It is more like the behaviour of a reasoning animal."[87] But Laura regressed, and what was seen as her obstinate refusal to self-develop eventually made Leslie Stephen decide to institutionalize her. Laura's lack of language learning seems to have been a large factor in her father's giving up on her. Her complete inability to write symbolized the fact that she would never evolve into "normal" adult life (he wrote uneasily to his wife, after the governess had tried unsuccessfully to make Laura compose a letter, "I saw today some letters of Addison's only daughter, one when she came of age, in a kind of schoolgirl hand. She seems to have had something wrong. . ").[88] Governesses and parents were there to guide, but middle-class children had to move on "naturally" to the next stage on their own in order to fulfill their inborn developmental potential, which was sometimes, sadly, believed to be non-existent.

The Stephen parents' teaching methods also provide an illustration of the way in which writing education was differently tailored towards the development of each gender in the late nineteenth century. In researching the teaching of handwriting, one has the sense that girls rather than boys may have been the ones who felt oppressed in this area. A fine hand seems to have been a specifically feminine accomplishment. In the earlier issues of the Stephen children's 1890-5 newspaper manuscripts, for example, schoolboy Thoby's writing is an utter scrawl, while his two sisters' hands are self-consciously neat and almost indistinguishable from one another.[89] Julia Stephen's mother was pleased with

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[87]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 3 September 1884, Berg Collection.
[88]Ibid., 25 January 1883, Berg Collection.
[89]Leslie Stephen occasionally grumbled at Thoby's letters home from school: "Your writing has improved a bit; but it ought to be larger still & do not cramp it all up into one corner." (Leslie Stephen to Thoby Stephen, 15 May 1897, *Selected Letters of Sir Leslie Stephen* (Vol. 2), 478), but these comments were minor and ineffective--Thoby's hand remained semi-illegible. In many ways, Julia Stephen was a more traditional parent and educator than was her husband. She was averse to women's further education and suffrage, and like her *To the Lighthouse* (1927) incarnation Mrs. Ramsay, saw marriage as the purpose of a woman's life. George Meredith, a family friend, cautioned her that the four-year-old Thoby must not be taught to "act the superior, and you have schooled the little maids to accept the fact supposed:--for it is largely (I expect you to dissent) a matter of training" (George Meredith to Julia Stephen, *The Letters of*

the look of a letter from the five-year-old Virginia Stephen, "so beautifully written it ought to be framed" (she never mentioned the content).[90] Thoby Stephen and Adrian Stephen, like most middle-class boys, of course, eventually went off to preparatory school, where other subjects such as Latin and Greek were of more importance to their adult lives than handwriting. The majority of wealthy middle-class girls were still educated at home until the end of the century,[91] and beautiful writing remained part of their curriculum long past the age at which boys ceased copy-work (the young Molly Thomas had to copy out her older brothers' testimonials for job applications in the 1880s "in [her] neatest handwriting," as they "had no reproducing device"[92]--at least, not a mechanical one). At approximately age eight, children of both sexes were set the task of producing original compositions for their parents and governesses. Girls' works as well as their hands frequently reveal more consciousness of gender roles than do boys'. Annie Jones, 12 in 1890, wrote a tale of brothers and sisters switching chores for the day when their mother is away. Though her work was written for school, it is emblematic of late-Victorian girls' home life and writing. The switch produces disastrous consequences:

> 'And somehow or other I've upset a pail of water, and it has gone all through the drawing-room ceiling,' said Jack. 'I think I shall take a day's holiday, to give mother time to get over the shock.'
>
> 'Well you're very clever, I thought you boys were going to do such wonders, but hush! here comes mamma.'
>
> I will not attempt to describe the scene that followed. I only know that we never tried to do one another's work again.[93]

Both the boys and girls prove unable to "do one another's work" when they try to act grown-up, but the story directly describes the boys' mishaps, while only mentioning the girls' problems periphrastically. Moreover, one of the boy characters is named--Jack--while the girls are just that--the girls. Annie Jones's work clearly demarcates the gender roles inherent in the late-nineteenth-century home, but her style also evinces the sex

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George Meredith (Vol. 2), 743. Meredith's remark reflects the uncertainty over gender essentiality during the period. See Chapter 3 on the perceived fluidity of gender in early childhood.

[90]Maria Jackson to Julia Stephen, 5 June 1887, Sussex.

[91]Carol Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*, 41-2.

[92]M. V. Hughes, *A London Family 1870-1900*, 156.

[93]Annie Jones, "How We Kept House," in *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England*, ed. Digby and Searby, 231-2.

differences fundamental to learning to write. The girls are a nameless group; we can only guess that the "I" of the last paragraph may be female because Jones was. The boys are continually the authors of action throughout the short piece, while the girls vanish until the last quarter. The narrator, like the girls of the story, is essentially faceless; she "will not attempt to describe the scene that followed," in part because writing exciting original stories was seen as something preferred by boys.[94] Girls, rather, were often set more practical writing lessons. Charlotte M. Yonge advised late-Victorian girls that at home, "The writing of essays, biographical and historical, was much to be commended."[95] A good middle-class girl's writing was not meant to be individual like that of Mrs. Ewing's Leonard, "round and clear as was his own speech." Many middle-class girls learning to write acquired a talent for self-effacement by conforming to a standard hand and a quiet voice. Although more and more women were becoming authors (especially for children) late in the century, girls' writing to a template illustrates the fact that middle-class girls' futures were still more likely to conform to a pattern than were boys'. Leslie Stephen was only half-joking when he told his wife that writing articles would be his young daughter "Ginia's line unless she marries somebody at 17."[96] It may also have to do with the fact that as future mothers, they would frequently be the recorders and systematizers of children's developmental stages in years to come. Mrs. Molesworth's heroine in *The Cuckoo Clock* (1877) is one such case. Griselda, who appears to be about eight or nine, finds all her home lessons very trying, but "worst of all was the writing and arithmetic master . . . He screwed Griselda up into such an unnatural attitude to write her copies, that she really felt as if she would never come straight and loose again. . .."[97] Griselda goes on to befriend a little boy, and finds happiness in teaching him to read and write after she has completed her own daily lessons.[98] In the 1890s, however, Farjeon was

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[94]This was evidently not true, as many young female writers of the period would attest. Thoby Stephen, for instance, wrote Crusoe-based adventures (see Lee, 108), but his sister Virginia Stephen produced similar fare with efforts such as "A Midnight Ride" ("HPGN," 25 January-1 February 1892). See Chapters 4 and 5 for a study of writing by children (including the Stephens) during the period.

[95]Marion Lockhead, *Young Victorians*, 182.

[96]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 2 August 1893, Berg Collection.

[97]Mrs. Molesworth, *The Cuckoo Clock*, 22.

[98]One might say that the character has merely taken on a stereotypical feminine role--that of a Patient Griselda, perhaps--but she does learn to enjoy her writing skill.

quickly writing original poems once she had mastered her letters, and grew up to be a popular children's writer as well as an autobiographer. Perhaps the monotony of years of copy-work gave girls such as Farjeon the chance to let their imaginations drift; it certainly must have given some of them the discipline necessary to become an author as well as the awareness of their own development.

To children, writing, like reading, is something of an adult secret. Alberto Manguel notes that "learning to read is something of an initiation, a ritualized passage out of a state of dependency and rudimentary communication."[99] We might say that learning to write takes the child even farther from dependency. The child who has learned to write can create his or her own universe on paper, to share (or not to share) with others. In the late nineteenth century as now, learning to write meant a child had joined the adult community, but was also capable of creating his or her own. This naturally created anxiety in middle-class adults. In the 1880s and 1890s, parents and experts began to take notice of children's secret lives. The child was the emblem for the mysterious origin of all life, full of potential to evolve. The omnipresent Dr. James Sully recognized a psychological need for secrecy in young children in 1895:

> [F]rank and transparent as is the first instinctive utterance of feeling, it is apt to get checked at an early date, giving place to a certain reserve. So that, as we know from published reminiscences of childhood, a child of six will have learned to hide some of his deepest feelings from unsympathetic eyes.[100]

Contrary to many ideas about the late-Victorian family, it appears that middle-class parents and experts sympathized with children's requirement for privacy. Frances Hodgson Burnett, in the same year as Dr. Sully's above analysis, exclaimed, "Oh! how I often wish that it were possible to impress the world with the need of more regard for the sacred inner life of children."[101] This statement would likely have been unheard-of 50 years previously, during the period in which parents felt more directly responsible for the formation of their children's character. Even more radical was adult interest in, and encouragement of, children's personal writing, which had come to be seen as a semi-

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[99]Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading*, 71.
[100]Sully, "Studies of Childhood. VIII-Fear." *The Popular Science Monthly* 47 (May 1895), 2.
[101]Cited in Balgarnie, 217.

mysterious act of self-creation.

As noted above, late-nineteenth-century adults wanted to comprehend children's language. The educator C. E. Carpenter reminded parents, "We want children to understand our language: we must begin by understanding theirs and teaching them ours."[102] The interest in the personal dictionary, like that composed by Ewing's Leonard, was one aspect of this desire. Another teacher, Mary Louch, wrote in 1899 of

> a dictionary made and kept by a boy under eleven years of age; it is an attempt to arrange words alphabetically, and to define them; he generally helps himself out by a sketch of the word defined . . . The explanations are largely particular, not general. "'Little' is if a baby is little--this little baby," and a picture of a helpless-looking creature follows. This dictionary is most interesting, and amusing as well as instructive.[103]

This boy's lexicon was evidently an attempt to help himself understand adult language; his adult reader, in turn, was amused by his misspellings and instructed by his thought processes. It is significant that Louch chose the boy's definition of a baby as an example. "Little," it seems, was automatically connected to human infancy in the boy's mind, as if he had absorbed the developmentalist theories of the adults around him. Middle-class adults appreciated such children's individualistic self-expression, but also wanted to understand it thoroughly. For late Victorians, the dictionary was a symbol that children's language was now seen as a somewhat separate tongue from that of adults, but the two were also seen as connected. The child lexicographer was not only writing for the benefit of his or her parents, but also seen to be recording his linguistic development in order to connect with his or her adult self (many commercial baby diaries included a space for a sample of "Baby's Writing at Various Ages").[104] Moreover, the young child's language was representative of human language's mysterious phylogenetic origins, and was worth studying as a means to understand where language had come from and where it was going.

As a case in point, children's secret languages and writings prompted wide interest and many expert debates during the late nineteenth century. Oscar Chrisman, an

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[102]See above, 55.
[103]Mary Louch, "Children's Interests," *The Journal of Education* 21 (June 1899), 402.
[104]See, for example, [n. a.], *Baby Life: A Remembrance of Baby Days* (1896), [n. p.].

American linguist, made an extensive study of nearly five hundred private verbal and written languages. Describing the young people who used them, he explained,

> This secret-language period is a thing of child-nature . . . the vast majority of cases are covered by the period between the eighth and the fifteenth year, while the greatest use is between the tenth and the thirteenth year . . . At this very period nature is secreting material preparatory to the changing of the boy into a man and the girl into a woman. Nature, acting thus on the physical part of the child, reacts on the mental part, and so makes his whole being secretive. . ..[105]

Following the lead of developmental psychologists who gave physical bases to mental actions, Chrisman came up with a bodily explanation for children's private languages, giving adults a satisfying and healthy evolutionary reason behind young people's secrecy. He went on to classify types of secret language. Of the written variety, he observed, "Cipher alphabets are common," and noted mirror-writing as one of this class. He systematically provided several examples of private writing, including the phrase "Ifustfusjig ifussfusjig rfusafusifusnfusifusnfusgjig hfusafusrfusdfusjig" ("It is raining hard.")[106] Chrisman's analysis furnished his readers with a key to children's secret languages, and thus a door to children's private selves. He provided a literal translation for adult readers of young people's secret written communications, and made language an offshoot of private thought. Parents could thus read their children's secret words as clues to their secret selves, and thus explore the origins of adult communication. Philologists and evolutionary theorists also made use of such schematization of children's language development as support for ideas about the eventual "perfection"--that is, standardization--of language in the human race.[107] Chrisman, however, also provided a clue to the anxiety inherent in the late-Victorian parental psyche when he wrote, "We are just beginning to learn that we do not know our children."[108] The hidden self of the child, like the primordial soup from which human life was formed, was such uncharted and deeply intriguing territory as to be somewhat frightening.

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[105]Oscar Chrisman, "Secret-Language of Childhood," *The Century Magazine* 56 (May 1898), 54-8.
[106]Ibid., 54-6.
[107]Interest in an international language was high in the late nineteenth century. The "Universal Dictionary" was published in 1891, giving Esperanto translations for various languages. The first English Esperanto society was formed in 1902.
[108]Chrisman, 55.

The connection of children's language with secrecy and the mysterious origins of adult character necessarily involved the idea of surveillance. Despite the recognition of children's need for some privacy, late-Victorian middle-class parents, educators, and experts had a collective and continual eye on children. Peter Gay has noted that "within the fortified precincts of [Victorian] family life, privacy was far from complete, as parents did some prying of their own. They would open their children's letters, oversee their reading, chaperon their visitors, inspect their underwear."[109] The reasons behind this monitoring were developmental; these adults both wished to schematize "natural" development and to guide their children along its path. One of the most apparent aspects of this fixation was a middle-class concern with children's lies. Untruth had been the vilest of children's sins from the early days of the nineteenth century. A storybook from circa 1821, *Early Seeds to Produce Spring Flowers*, told its young readers of "Falsehood Punished": "We cannot put any trust in the word of a liar; no, we disbelieve and shun him; he is despised by all."[110] Late in the century, lying took on new proportions. Psychologists and physicians began to analyze its causes interminably. Nathan Oppenheim in 1895 discussed children "who willfully and often for no reason make exaggerated or false statements, who seem really to deceive themselves as well as others, who make their relatives miserable by threatened lack of responsibility. . .."[111] Once more, the scientist found a physiological basis for falsehood:

> The children [who lie] usually are suffering from disorders of mind or body, or both, which radically interfere with the transmission of conceptions and perceptions from the internal to the external processes of expression, so that they are really unable to be more exact than they seem. . ..[112]

Oppenheim's theory gave young liars far more of an excuse than did those of his early-Victorian counterparts. Children lied, his developmentalist account ran, because they had not yet reached a stage at which they could conceptualize truth. Yet lying remained the worst of faults for late-nineteenth-century middle-class children. When Mrs.

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[109]Peter Gay, *Education of the Senses*, Vol. 1 of *The Bourgeois Century*, 446.
[110]Mary Elliott, *Early Seeds to Produce Spring Flowers*, in *Pages and Pictures from Forgotten Children's Books*, ed. Tuer, 376.
[111]Oppenheim, 383.
[112]Ibid., 387.

Molesworth's "Carrots" mistakenly takes his nurse's money and denies he has stolen anything, his father sternly judges that the child is "trying to equivocate," at which point he decides "'Carrots . . . I must whip you for this. Do you know that I am ashamed to think you are my son?'"[113] The father is ashamed because of the boy's connection to him, but also because he believes Carrots is failing to develop himself into a truthful adult. Lying retained its title as a child's most grievous failing not only because it was thought to make a child deviate from the course of development towards adulthood and perfection, but perhaps also because it was a linguistic sin. As we have seen, the analysis of language became a major route to exploring the child's private self in the late nineteenth century. Equivocation, then, could cloak a young person's interiority, making it impossible for parents and teachers to read a child through his or her words. Anxiety arose at the inability to survey a child inside and out; if the key were false, the door would not open. A lie reminded middle-class parents that they could never understand their children completely, and that "natural" self-development remained subject to negative outside influences. When Molly Thomas, whose standard entry in her parent-sanctioned 1876 diary was "Nothing peculia happened to-day," invented a false story about the cook, her mother told her, "'Write in your diary, "I told a lie to-day."'" Thomas noted, "There was no escaping it, my beautiful diary had to be thus disfigured, staring at me."[114] The child's diary, a popular personal outgrowth of parental baby diaries, functioned as a record of her childhood development (she still had it in adulthood), and her linguistic transgression marred the even progress of the story.[115] The untruth--the telling of something that did not happen--was seen to throw the sequence of events out of joint, not only as regards to narrative continuity, but in terms of individual and general human development.

Adults apparently developed a coping mechanism to deal with the impossibility of comprehending children's language at all times. The late-Victorian child in literature was

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[113]Molesworth, *"Carrots,"* 74.
[114]Hughes, 31-2. See A. O. J. Cockshut on the standard lack of privacy of children's diaries prior to the twentieth century ("Children's Diaries," in *Children and Their Books: A Celebration of the Work of Iona and Peter Opie*, ed. Avery and Briggs, 381-98.
[115]See Chapter 1 on the late-Victorian popularization of the baby diary.

decidedly childish, even regressive, especially in terms of language: "[W]e find children of six and seven still having difficulty in talking."[116] The popularity of "baby talk" can be attributed to its "cuteness" value with nostalgic middle-class adult readers. Gerald Duckworth (1870-1937), Julia Stephen's son from her first marriage, appealed to his adoring mother in such language past early childhood ("Picked up a great lot of Acorns. Nothing else me did. Me little son Gerald de l'Etang Duckworth").[117] Another meaning, however, can be derived. Writers such as Molesworth, who evidently believed in the appeal of six-year-olds spouting baby talk, were creating a children's language that adults could easily decipher. Infant speech, as we have seen, was being decoded by developmental psychologists at the time, and the "secret language" stage was seen to arrive a few years prior to puberty. Prolonging infantile talk, at least in literature, allowed adults to understand and continue to systematize children's language, and through it, to read their private selves, the source of adult potential. Carrots's "lie" transpires to have turned on a misunderstanding of the word "sovereign," which is unravelled by his older sister. His parents are chagrined at having failed to comprehend his language. Molesworth makes clear her point by having Carrots lapse into some of his most childish prattle yet: "I am never, never to take nucken that I'm not sure is mine," he tells his mother.[118] The adults of the story are at last able to see through his alleged falsehood when they can understand his language. Ironically, it is only when Carrots speaks in the falsified language of an overgrown infant that his mother can truly comprehend him. The anxiety surrounding children's speech is given further weight in Molesworth's book, when, in a nursery tale told by Carrots's nanny, a little girl's tale-telling tongue is literally checked by a good fairy. This is to the parent's profit as well as the child's, for her linguistic development would no longer be obscured by falsehood, and she would be put back on the right path. *Carrots*'s literary baby talk, alongside the fairy tale, provided parents with reassurance that they could indeed comprehend children's language and

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[116]Gillian Avery with Angela Bull, *Nineteenth Century Children: Heroes and Heroines in English Children's Stories 1780-1900*, 177-8.
[117]Gerald Duckworth to Julia Stephen [n. d.], Sussex.
[118]Molesworth, 83.

therefore their adult potential. Although literary critics did not think much of Molesworth's young characters' mode of speech, Carrots was the forerunner of many more small lispers in the late nineteenth century whose comprehensible baby-language appealed to the middle-class adult.

> *You must believe this beginning part more than what comes after,*
> *else you won't understand how what comes after came to be written.*
> *You must believe it all, but you must believe this most, please.*
> *-Charles Dickens,*
> *"Holiday Romance," 1868*

In the late nineteenth century, then, middle-class children's linguistic self-expression came to be highly consequential for the adults around them. Studies in neurolinguistics opened the child's mind to outside examination, and made it the model of phylogenetic language development. Theories in reading and writing education changed in an attempt to give the child more pleasure in language while emphasizing "natural" development towards adulthood and adult tastes. The acquisition of verbal and written language gave young people new freedom, but also subjected them to further surveillance by adults interested in and made anxious by language as a signifier of personal and general human evolution. Close scrutiny and systematization was one adult method of dealing with these new conceptions of the young mind and its secrets; indulging in a sentimental enjoyment of usefully understandable baby talk was another. Late-Victorian middle-class boys and girls had acquired the powers of private thought and self-development in the eyes of their parents and educators. These were what made the "new child" truly new. Responding to A. Stevenson's 1893 article on children's speech, Dr. Howard Lilienthal wrote, "It seems to me inconceivable that a conscious being should regard himself other than as subject."[119] But what did these subjects think of the ideas applied to them? Developmentalist ideals were evidently absorbed in many cases, but children did not automatically follow their parents' lead. The Bowen children's joint diary (April-December 1876) was evidently a daily schoolroom task, and describes

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[119]Howard Lilienthal, letter re. "The Speech of Children," *Science* 21 (10 March 1893), 136.

very little other than the family's activities and the weather. Its most personalized entry states, "After dinner we had great fun playing consequences and with some crackers Aunt Mary sent us."[120] The impersonality of the diary, however, suggests a secrecy of its own. The brief entries may represent the Bowen children's statement that far more went on during their days than they were prepared to record for adult eyes. The Stephen children too played at Consequences, at parties and in their joint writing of the family newspaper.[121] The game suggests development by its very nature, but the "great fun" is not precisely detailed. Perhaps Sarah Bowen, then taking her turn as diarist, was tired of writing, or perhaps she wanted to keep the fun a secret from her adult readers. Perhaps the anonymity and collaboration of the Stephens' newspaper stories were in part a means of banding against their adult readers, of keeping childhood private. Children speaking, reading, and writing in the late nineteenth century found some ways to rebel against adult prescription, to collude with each other, and to hide beneath the surface of adult language.

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[120]Sarah Bowen, "The Bowen Diaries," in Elizabeth Bowen, *Bowen's Court*, 341.
[121]See "HPGN," 25 January 1892. Chapter 5 discusses the magazine's joint authorship.



Original Charles Robinson illustration for Burnett (1911).

Chapter 3:
Love's Coming-of-Age: Children, Sex, and Language

'This is a house of mystery, and those two children are the greatest mysteries in it.'
-Mrs. Loomis, in Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden, *1911*

Sigmund Freud was not the first analyst to target the mysteries of children's romantic and sexual lives. Nor was he the first to name children's sexuality and thus make it real. We cannot forget that Freud himself, born into a bourgeois home in 1856, was a middle-class Victorian through and through. Like many scientists and parents, he debated the existence of children's sexuality in the 1890s, but his later certainty on the subject did not spring fully formed from his mind. Michel Foucault has argued that over the course of the nineteenth century, "[t]hrough . . . various discourses . . . from childhood to old age, a norm of sexual development was defined."[1] Discourses and development are key words in a study of late-Victorian middle-class childhood. We have seen that parents and researchers, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, had come to endow the child (at least, the middle- or upper-middle-class child) with subjectivity. The child's private thought and will were seen to be made manifest through his or her use of language, an area that experts scrutinized with great vigour. Fast on the heels of studies of linguistic development came studies of sexual development from infancy onward. Gillian Beer has written of modern culture, "Evolutionary assumptions of irreversible change have reinforced our observation of individual growth."[2] In the individual, "irreversible change" refers to the transition from childhood to adulthood. These assumptions also influenced late-Victorian middle-class parents and educators trying to understand the developmental process in their children and the general evolution

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[1]Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, An Introduction*, 36.
[2]Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 111.

of human life. Discourse was the key to the young person's adult potential, and, not coincidentally, the gate to the secret garden where youthful sexuality had its roots.

A secret garden is perhaps the ideal image with which to begin this chapter. Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1911 novel of this name is not, strictly speaking, a Victorian story, but its narrative voice can be read as that of a late-nineteenth-century adult curiously inspecting aspects of children's private mental lives. (Burnett had begun thinking about the story as early as 1898.)[3] The book is full of secrets--a shut-up garden, strange noises in a strange house, psychosomatic illness--and is populated with children. Over the course of the tale, the protagonist, Mary, goes from sullenly incomprehensible little girl to content young woman; her friend Colin throws off the shackles of his self-imposed disability and learns to walk; their companion Dickon is elevated to the level of a nature god. The garden blossoms and becomes fruitful. Burnett's happy ending opens the developmentalist garden to all as the child characters attain maturity and good sense. Their bodies grow and change as the garden comes alive, and their symbolic sexuality blooms with the plants in an accepted, "natural" manner. It is as if the narrator breathes a sigh of relief at somehow having shown the young people the right exit to the hidden, intensely investigated path of childhood erotic development. The characters are set on the road to maturity under adults' watchful eyes and through adults' words.

In this chapter, I will attempt to determine how adults and children looked at each other's sexuality. The discourse of child development was formalized during this period, as we have seen; child sexuality became a field of growing, if uneasy, interest, and some formal sexual education was introduced to pre-pubescent children in the middle-class home during the 1880s and 1890s. I will explore why educators felt it was necessary to introduce sex to children at this point, and how adults expected children to perceive their growing bodies and to think about their own future roles as parents. The chapter will also investigate late-Victorian children's interest in the special language that couched adult love, and how they imagined and parodied grown-up erotic life in their own writings. In

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[3]See "Secret Garden," in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*, ed. Carpenter and Prichard, 473-4.

children's language, sex and nonsense frequently became an inextricable pair; I will look at how and why this was so.

> *Got up at ¼ to 9--well, and having slept well; and breakfasted at ½ p. 9. Mamma came before and brought me a Nosegay of orange flowers . . . Had my hair dressed and the wreath of orange flowers put on. Saw Albert for the last time alone, as my Bridegroom.*
>
> -*Queen Victoria*, Journal,
> *10 February 1840*

The garden of monogamous heterosexual love was a place most Victorians were taught from an early age to think of as paradise. Although the number of marriages in fact declined over the first half of the century, they rose sharply again in later Victorian days.[4] The era famously produced close to one million "odd"--that is, unmarried--women, which may have been the force behind late-Victorian suffragists' drive for the vote, and was certainly one of the causes of single middle-class women's search for employment opportunities beyond governess posts.[5] But marriage retained its crown as most young women's ultimate life goal, and remained an eventual aim for most young men. Despite the protestations of the "new" and "odd" women and their critics who wrote fearfully of a female takeover of the man's world, the late-Victorian middle-class air was heady with visions of matrimonial joy; many people of this social stratum desired to make love, not war. Interest in marriage had never been so general or so prevalent: advice columns provided balm to the unwed and lovelorn; booklets and articles on how to compose love letters and proposals abounded; stories set in an unspecified but romantic past wove tales of true love denied and rewarded. Many such stories were deemed suitable for young people. Prescribing reading material for children and adolescents, Edward Salmon wrote in 1888, "Of stories of real life, it may at once be said that they should inculcate one grand absorbing principle--the principle of love--love of beauty and goodness, as well as

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[4]See Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality*, 49-50.
[5]For a discussion, see, for example, Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy; Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle*, 19-58.

of parent and friend. Their character should be ideal rather than real."[6] Love was not a taboo subject for young late-Victorian readers, then, but was seen as a force necessary to development. As long as it remained "ideal"--that is, romanticized and standardized--it was indeed the goal of life.

Sex, however, could not be ignored. With marriage and, subsequently, parenthood as the object of growing up, the sexual side of love could not be disregarded entirely. Semi-pornographic tales, some with illustrations, and notorious French postcards were available at most corner newsstands in the nineteenth century, and were certainly not invisible to children. Erotica were "popular entertainment,"[7] part of the Victorian sexual discourse that Foucault elucidates. Sexual love also had a firm hold on "higher" literature. B. A. Crackanthorpe wrote with aplomb in 1895 that "the mystery of sex, no matter how much or how often it is ignored or misinterpreted, remains, and will continue to remain, the most beautiful motif for all creative work in every department of Art."[8] This may seem somewhat strange, accustomed as we have perhaps been to think of the Victorian bourgeoisie as sexually inhibited. What may seem even more unlikely is the fact that late-Victorian adults did not entirely close their children's eyes and ears to passion, physical and emotional. Sarah Grand (1854?-1943), herself a "new" woman, wrote in 1898,

> Young people [now] are allowed to read pretty much what they like. They wander without a guide through mazes of modern fiction, crude stuff for the most part, written by people whose own ideas are often only the degenerate echo of other writers whose work they have not half digested.[9]

Grand's worry demonstrates middle-class parents' anxiety over how much guidance to give their children, as well as the fact that sex and love were seen to be dangerous to development if not properly introduced. Indeed, though purported self-development was believed to be best for the child in most ways, sexuality became the area in which late-

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[6]Edward Salmon, *Juvenile Literature As it Is*, 228-9.
[7]Patricia Anderson, Preface to *When Passion Reigned: Sex and the Victorians*, ix.
[8]B. A. Crackanthorpe, "Sex in Modern Literature," *The Nineteenth Century* 37 (April 1895), 615.
[9]Sarah Grand, review of "Marriage Questions in Fiction," *The Fortnightly Review* 69 (March 1898), 381. Grand wanted adolescent girls, at least, to be provided with honest, "pure" sexual information, especially in order that they might avoid the horrors of venereal disease in marriage (see Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914*, 304-5).

Victorian parents felt direction to be most necessary. The author was not alone in her disapproval of modern children being allowed to read novels intended for an adult audience. Thackeray had reminded his *Cornhill* authors earlier in the century that they should "suppose the ladies and children always present,"[10] a view that still held sway in the later decades of the Victorian era. Yet authors' self-censorship (and the moral power of the circulating library proprietor) was slipping away, as was the distinction between literature for adults and for children.[11] George Moore's 1885 pamphlet *Literature at Nurse, or Circulating Morals* was the vanguard of an anti-suppression movement that gained momentum over the last quarter of the century. Moore's venom-tinged title implies that adult authors and moralists were uselessly pandering to the nursery. The very existence of this debate, however, demonstrates that the question of children's sexual knowledge was very much on the public mind. The nature of what young people should read was extensively debated in the 1880s and 1890s, as Salmon's study reveals. "Crude stuff"--that is, works of a dramatic, violent, or sexual nature--written specifically for children was also available in the late nineteenth century, most obviously in the "penny dreadful" comic magazines that caused some consternation among middle-class parents.[12] Educators such as H. A. Guerber warned, "Girls and boys who read only about pirates, fights, murders, thefts, and adventures of an exciting kind, store away in their brain all the mean, ugly, and horrible things they read."[13] The phrase "adventures of an exciting kind" is vague, but as Guerber's book was almost entirely about sexual development, a child reader would very likely have guessed at his hinted meaning, and middle-class adults would have known which topic he was circling.

However some late-Victorian adults attempted to veil its presence, sex could not be ignored, inside or outside books. Children were curious about the erotica around them, and asked questions. On the street or in dark places--"out there"--sex was omnipresent and unpredictable, especially after the hysteria surrounding the Jack the Ripper murders

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[10]W. M. Thackeray, "Letter from the Editor to a Friend and Contributor" (1 November 1859), *Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray* (Vol. 4), 161.
[11]See Chapter 2.
[12]See Chapter 1.
[13]H. A. Guerber, *Yourself*, 262-3. See also Chapter 1 on the "penny dreadful."

of 1888.[14] Flashers and opportunistic child molesters were recognized as part of the "outside world" in the late Victorian period, mainly due to W. T. Stead's instrumental and shocking articles on child prostitution and abuse in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1885.[15] As Quentin Bell says of the period, "[M]adness walked the streets. I write advisedly. . .." His aunt, Virginia Woolf, based the scene in *The Years* (1937) in which a man exposes himself to the terrified child Rose Pargiter on her own experience: "There was such a man who hung around Hyde Park Gate and was seen by both Vanessa and Virginia."[16] How, then, were middle-class parents to deal with the subject of sex, with all its dangers? Mary Butts, in her autobiography of her early life, wrote eloquently of her childhood conception of sex:

> [W]hat was almost instilled into me, by prohibitions and by hints that I did not understand, was a fear of the woods . . . Worst of all was that over these grown-up alarms . . . hung a faint flavour of sex. I did not know what I knew, except that about it all there was something I must not have explained to me. It was silly. It was grown-ups saying: 'You mustn't' and talking among themselves. About something dreadful, or rather there was supposed to be something dreadful--of whose nature you were utterly and entirely innocent. Yet to know that there is a something about which you are not to know, which if you were to meet would be awfulness itself, is to have the very strings of fear pulled in your heart.[17]

Sex, then, was often explained in terms of darkness and fear. It was a lack of knowledge for many late-Victorian middle-class children. Yet despite adults' dire warnings, children were intrigued by the state of not knowing. May Sinclair (1863-1946) made this clear in her semi-autobiographical novel of late-Victorian family relationships, *Life and Death of Harriett Frean* (first serialized 1920-1). One of the first scenes involves the young Harriett walking down Black's Lane, a wooded alley forbidden to her. As she walks, she

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[14]M. V. Hughes (b. 1866) wrote, "No one can now believe how terrified and unbalanced we all were by his murders. A thriller in a book is quite different from a thriller around the corner. It seemed to be round the corner. . ." (Hughes, *A London Family 1870-1900*, 362). See also Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*, 1-7, and 191-228, for a discussion of the Ripper murders' effect on the late-nineteenth-century sexual psyche.

[15]Stead's "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" articles caused an enormous uproar, and were part of the reason behind the raising of the age of (female) sexual consent to 16 that year. See Walkowitz, 81-134. Parents worried more about the potential abuse of girls than of boys, which went almost unmentioned (see below). This likely led to many late-Victorian girls' greater fear of sexual danger and the larger number of later memoirs by women that discuss this fear.

[16]Quentin Bell, *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* (Vol. 1), 35. The Stephen girls also faced some sexual danger from their half-brothers within the home. See below.

[17]Mary Butts, *The Crystal Cabinet*, 60-1.

thinks of herself:

> She was a big girl, wearing black silk aprons and learning French. Walking by herself. When she arched her back and stuck her stomach out she felt like a tall lady in a crinoline and shawl. She swung her hips and made her skirts fly out. That was her grown-up crinoline, swing-swinging as she went.[18]

The child's sexuality is instinctive and physical; she sees herself as a woman with swinging hips. Her "natural" developmentalist thinking of herself as an adult is not criticized. Her initiation continues with her walk down the lane. She soon comes to a strange little hut and faces her childish incomprehension head on:

> The man came out and went to the gate and stood there. *He* was the frightening thing. When he saw her he stepped back and crouched behind the palings, ready to jump out. She turned slowly, as if she had thought of something. She mustn't run. She must *not* run. If she ran he would come after her.[19]

Immediately upon arriving home, Harriett confesses to her mother, who is clearly confused and frightened. Her father lectures her on disobedience in the "little, hiding voice he told [her] secrets in. . .." When he asks her why she went down the prohibited lane, she replies, "'Because--I wanted to see what it would feel like.'"[20] Harriett does not know what sex is, but she understands that it is "frightening." Nonetheless, she is curious about the mysterious man's actions, as well as her own. Her statement to her father could well be that of someone who has just lost her virginity.

Sinclair depicts not only how a late-Victorian middle-class girl thought about sex, but also how adults at the time perceived children's sexuality. In both Butts and Frean, sex is conceptualized as a location, suggesting that middle-class people were coming to see it as a concrete part of childhood, with developmental stages worth of study. Parents, who seem to have realized that they could not simply deny its existence, still wanted to keep it a family secret and therefore control their children's knowledge and development. Educator Mary Wood-Allen suggested to parents of daughters that

> if any child ventures to give her information concerning herself that seems to her such as she would not tell her mother, the wisest thing for her to do would be to say: 'I would rather you would not tell me about it. I will ask my mother and she

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[18]May Sinclair, *Life and Death of Harriett Frean*, 17.
[19]Ibid., 19.
[20]Ibid., 21.

> will tell me. Mother tells me everything that I ought to know and she tells it to me in such a way that makes it very sweet to me, and so I have my little secrets with mother, and not with other girls.'[21]

The recognition of children's sexual potential was part of the growing middle-class consciousness of children's private minds and "little secrets," such as their private languages.[22] Because sex was such a potent developmental force in their imaginations, late-Victorian adults seem to have recognized the need to discuss it with children of both genders, but, like Harriett's father, were uncertain of exactly how to go about it. The yoking of sex with love was the answer. For most middle-class adults of the period, love was not distinct from physical passion. As Edward Carpenter put it, "Sex is the allegory of love in the physical world."[23] The popular literary figure of the virginal maiden, in the mould of Dora Copperfield, had been ousted in the public imagination by the wifely and maternal Angel in the House as the century progressed: "Though sexual purity received a great deal of exposure in the didactic press, the romance of sexual love had quietly crept into the popular media, especially books and journals addressed to women."[24] The semi-legitimization of women's sexuality set the stage for the idea of children's eroticism. After all, if middle-class women, described in earlier Victorian days by Dr. William Acton as "not very much troubled with sexual feeling of any kind,"[25] were now accepted as capable of physical passion (at least "in love"--that is, marriage), then could not the asexuality of middle-class childhood come under question? Acton had also declaimed that "Previously to the attainment of puberty the normal condition of a healthy child is one of entire freedom from sexual impressions,"[26] but, as Stephen Marcus notes, Acton then devoted over 20 pages to an explication of childhood "sexual disorders."[27] Sexuality could not appear out of nowhere in the evolutionary world, and later Victorians could not deny this fact. In the late nineteenth century, young people were seen as having the

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[21]Mary Wood-Allen, *What a Young Girl Ought to Know*, 110-1.
[22]See Chapter 2.
[23]Edward Carpenter, *Love's Coming-of-Age. A Series of Papers on the Relations of the Sexes*, 20. Carpenter became the first president of the British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology in 1914.
[24]Susan Ostrov Weisser, *A 'Craving Vacancy': Women and Sexual Love in the British Novel, 1740-1880.*
[25]William Acton, *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs in Childhood, Youth, Adult Age, and Advanced Life* (1857), 212. A sixth edition of Acton's work appeared in 1875.
[26]Ibid., 1.
[27]Stephen Marcus, *The Other Victorians*, 15.

ability to develop their grown-up selves; as marriage and procreation were seen as the goal of growing up, the roots of sex had to be found somewhere. In order to sanitize somewhat this concept, middle-class adults focused their anxieties on how children should learn about the erotic potential of their bodies and minds in conjunction with their emotional and moral development. Sex on its own was fearful; loving, marital sex was divine. Moreover, dreams of physical bliss were accepted as natural in those selecting a mate--at least, in males. Carpenter described in 1896 the masculine erotic drive as an irresistible and positive force of nature:

> The youth, deeply infected with the sex-passion, suddenly finds himself in the presence of Titanic forces--the Titanic but sub-conscious force of his own nature. 'In love' he feels a superhuman impulse--and naturally so, for he identifies himself with cosmic energies and entities, powers that are preparing for the future of the race, and whose operations extend over vast regions of space and millennial lapses of time. . ..[28]

The "sex-passion" itself was seen as a disease that "infected" adolescents, but sex "in love" was a cosmic force. Carpenter's encircling of the phrase with inverted commas draws attention to the fact that stereotypical behaviour in love is a construct, but also makes it the focal point of the paragraph; sex is small and insignificant, but paired with love it is "superhuman." The author's depiction relates individual human development to phylogenetic perfectibility. This connection appears to have been the key that unlocked the door of the secret garden of sexual education. Children's acquisition of sexual knowledge was to be slowly and carefully cultivated. They were to enter the garden hand-in-hand with a caring adult, who would help guide their development and direct their thoughts towards the potential of the human race.

Some child characters in the literature of the 1880s and 1890s provide examples of this educational plan. They were not without adventures of their own, of an excitingly romantic kind, but these were tempered with caution. Kenneth Grahame's *Dream Days* (1898) is a case in point. Grahame wrote this book of short stories as a sequel to *The Golden Age* (1895). Both are semi-autobiographical and centre on a family of five young brothers and sisters and their adventures. *Dream Days*'s unnamed narrator falls into

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[28]Carpenter, 3-4.

several eroticized situations. After meeting and falling half in love with a strange girl in a neighbour's field, the boy remarks that

> In five minutes we had each other's confidences, and I seemed to have known her for a lifetime. Somehow, on the subject of one's self it was easier to be frank and communicative with her than with one's female kin. It must be, I supposed, because she was less familiar with one's faulty, tattered past.[29]

The narrator here takes on the role of the bachelor discussing his merits in a kind of courtship dance with an attractive female; the scene is reminiscent of lovers' meetings in, perhaps, a Hardy novel. A more overtly sexual scene follows when the narrator watches a beautiful circus performer dance and ride bareback:

> Coralie, laughing, exultant, crashed through the paper hoops . . . It was her more than mortal beauty--displayed, too, under conditions never vouchsafed to us before--that held us spell-bound. What princess had arms so dazzlingly white, or went delicately clothed in such pink and spangles? Hitherto we had known the outward woman as but a drab thing, hour-glass shaped, nearly legless, bunched here, constricted there, slow of movement, and given to deprecating lusty action of limb. Here was a revelation! From henceforth our imaginations would have to be revised and corrected up to date. In one of those swift rushes the mind makes in high-strung moments, I saw myself and Coralie, close enfolded, pacing the world together, o'er hill and plain, through storied cities, past rows of applauding relations,--I in my Sunday knickerbockers, she in her pink and spangles. . ..[30]

This "revelation" is virtually a sexual initiation for the boy. A woman clad only in tights and spangles is something he has never before seen; he records her anatomy into his memory and dreams of being with her. In another moment, he is sexually experienced. A new performer by the name of Zephyrine, Bride of the Desert enters the ring:

> [H]er title was tinged with romance, and Coralie's display had aroused in me an interest in her sex which even herself had failed to satisfy entirely.
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> Brayed in by trumpets, Zephyrine swung passionately into the arena. With a bound she stood erect, one foot upon each of her supple, plunging Arabs, and at once I knew that my fate was sealed, my chapter closed, and the Bride of the Desert was the one bride for me . . . What was Coralie, with her pink silk, her golden hair and slender limbs, beside this magnificent, full-figured Cleopatra?[31]

The boy instantly proceeds to thoughts of marital passion with this more grown up and womanly seductress: she is his "one bride." He has grown up over the course of an hour,

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[29]Kenneth Grahame, *Dream Days*, 49.
[30]Ibid., 88-9.
[31]Ibid., 91-2.

and makes the correct connection of monogamous marital passion with true love in the course of becoming a man.

Grahame claimed that he had intended his work for an adult readership. Certainly many adults did read it, making it a critical and popular success. But from its initial publication, *Dream Days* (and its earlier companion work) had an enormous reader base made up of children. Grahame must certainly have known that the book would appeal to young readers, with its child protagonists and inclusion of a fairy tale within a tale, "The Reluctant Dragon." This knowledge is made explicit in his descriptions of adults as "Olympians" who never speak directly and generally ignore the children in their charge. In describing the adult characters' cancellation of a promised trip to the circus, Grahame comments, "[W]ith those who are below them, whose little globe is swayed by them, who rush to build star-pointing alhambras on their most casual word, they really ought to be more careful."[32] Some critics have seen the book as a forerunner of J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* backlash against adult didacticism in children's literature.[33] The author is clearly sympathetic to children here and throughout his works. But he acknowledges that he is no longer a child and can no longer entirely sympathize with children's lives. In an introductory chapter to *The Golden Age*, Grahame asks, "Can it be that I also have become an Olympian?"[34]

He has indeed. *Dream Days* has a developmentalist subtext. The scenes of passion can be read as a blueprint intended to show children the best way to love when they are adults. The circus description is a miniature of the accepted late-Victorian, middle-class road to erotic fulfillment. The boy dreams of the performers' physical charms and of living with one of them permanently. Dazzling as the scene may seem, it provided child readers with the late nineteenth century's soundest middle-class principles for happy courtship and marriage. Advisors of the era were not averse to people marrying for physical attraction, at least in part. The author of *The Lover's Confidential Advice* (1877),

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[32]Ibid., 71.
[33]See, for example, Juliet Dusinberre, *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art*, 16.
[34]Grahame, *The Golden Age*, 12.

for example, gave male readers a list of "Qualities Necessary in a Wife." After the winning qualities of chastity, sobriety, and industry comes beauty.[35] On a Darwinian note, another writer explained in 1887, "Physical beauty in women is indeed what primarily most attracts men. In this they only follow the order of Nature--the beautiful divine provision to save the human race from degeneracy, by causing the survival of the fittest."[36] Grahame, in late-Victorian fashion, gave his adult and child readers a "true" account of idealized erotic development in autobiographical detail, and, whether mockingly or not, specifically gave his young audience standards to follow in order to help perfect the human race. The most telling example of this idea is when *Dream Days*'s narrator discovers a wonderful book of romantic tales in an adult relative's library and peruses it at length. Though he cannot read the crabbed text, he is ravished by the colourful illustrations:

> Well, no doubt they were now being married, He and She, just as always happened. And then, of course, they were going to live happily ever after; and *that* was the part I wanted to get to. Story-books were so stupid, always stopping at the point where they became really nice; but this picture-story was only in its first chapters, and at last I was to have a chance of knowing *how* people lived happily ever after. We would all go home together . . . And then the story would really begin, at the point where those other ones always left off. . ..[37]

The illegible text points to the fact that the boy is not yet at a level where he might understand adult sexual relationships, echoing the developmental stage theory of language education. The point where the other "stupid" fairy stories always left off, of course, is the lovers' wedding night and sexual fulfillment. Grahame makes the boy's curiosity natural and acceptable to readers, both adults and children. Though the boy never gets to the end of the book, he is set on the developmental road to sexual and romantic maturity, while retaining his "natural" innocence until he is ready to understand the mechanics of how the individual and the race might in fact get to "happily ever after."

Some late-Victorian adults, however, recognized children as sexual beings for

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[35][n. a.], *The Lover's Confidential Advice: Showing the Qualifications and Essential Characteristics Necessary in a Good Wife. A Complete Guide for the Selection of a Partner; and Thereby Securing Perpetual Happiness in the Conjugal State*, 9.
[36]Lady Bellairs, *Gossips with Girls and Maidens, Betrothed and Free*, 178. See also Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 573-85.
[37]Grahame, *Dream Days*, 115-6.

different reasons. Harriett Frean's "frightening thing," the man behind the fence waiting to attack her, provides an example. Certainly paedophilia has always existed, but adults' sexualization of children--and fear of that sexuality--came out in the open in the last half of the nineteenth century. Proto-*Lolita* narratives were a popular underground pornographic sub-genre throughout the century; the protagonist of the 1881 *The Amatory Experiences of a Surgeon* at one point in his erotic adventures longs "for an unripe beauty, a young girl, a child even. . .."[38] This work, and others like it, sexualized children for adult purposes. Those children who tended to be sexualized in this manner were generally of the lower classes, a fact that helped form the later middle-class anxiety regarding premature sexuality in children.[39] The advent of photography in 1839 had created new possibilities in erotic imagery; popular "life studies" of nudes were more soft pornography than artists' tools. One book, *Animal Locomotion; an Electro-Photographic Investigation of Consecutive Phases of Animals* [sic] *Movements, 1872-1885* (1887), contained 219 plates on animals and birds, and 562 on men, women, and children, often naked, in various attitudes. Although the nudity was "for both artistic and scientific purposes," [40] it is fundamentally erotic, especially in the images of children. One series of sequential plates shows a young child crawling on the ground; she is naked and shown from the side so as to display the entire length of her body. The child looks to be at least four or five years old--too old to be still crawling--and one senses that the photographer had her pose on the ground for the potential sexuality of the position. Other photographers, most famously Charles Dodgson, gave even more direct visual form to children's erotic natures. Their photographs of little girls, naked or in their nightgowns or underclothes ("one hardly sees why the lovely forms of girls should *ever* be covered up!", wrote Dodgson),[41] draw attention to the children's bodies as sexual objects. These

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[38]"James Campbell," *The Amatory Experiences of a Surgeon* (1881), cited in Marcus, 237.
[39]W. T. Stead's "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" articles in 1885 helped to bring out in the open the sexual exploitation of children, primarily working-class girls. See Walkowitz, 81-134, and Jennifer Payne, "The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 and Sexual Assault on Minors," http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/7023/Consent.html (April 2001).
[40]Michel Frizot, *A New History of Photography*, 246.
[41]Dodgson to Gertrude Thomson, 27 February 1893, *Letters of Lewis Carroll* (Vol. 2), 947. Dodgson convinced most of his friends and young subjects' parents that his interest was purely aesthetic, but his diaries reveal much self-castigation that seems to involve guilt over sexual feelings (see Morton N. Cohen,

children's "innocence" was what purportedly charmed such photographers, but they are clearly figured as potentially sexual objects or subjects. Although a large debate surrounds the question of whether Dodgson, and pornographic authors such as Campbell, were paedophiles using children for their own ends,[42] their works and the controversy make clear the uneasy mid- to late-Victorian recognition that children did have a sexual side.

Dodgson's models are not mere objects of an adult gaze. They appear entirely self-contained, often refusing to look at the camera as if in defiance, or gazing at it head-on. In Lady Hawarden's photographs of her daughters, taken during the 1860s and 1870s, the models look even more self-absorbed in their sensuality. *Young Girl with Mirror Reflection* (c. 1863-4) shows a pubescent girl in a languorous dancer's pose beside a mirror; she is so clearly aware of herself that she does not even glance at her reflection. These images suggest that adults recognized (and sometimes admired) children's sexual potential, and, more importantly, that they had begun to observe young people's absorption in their own erotic natures. In 1867, the French writer Barbey d'Aurevilley scorned the advent of cheap photographic portraiture as "music to the ears of self-love!"[43] He captured middle-class adults' unease with their growing recognition that children were sexual, self-contained beings. Middle-class anxiety over young people's erotic potential sprouted at least partly from the fact that children's sex was not tied to love, but to self-love. This trepidation was connected to the recognition that children should develop "naturally," with parental guidance, but that self-development could go awry.

Painters, too, began apprehensively to depict children's erotic autonomy during the late nineteenth century. Sentimental images of very young, non-sexual and therefore unthreatening "lovers" began after about 1850 to share space with portraits of children alone. Thomas Cooper Gotch's *The Child Enthroned* (1894) depicts a seated girl, dressed

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Lewis Carroll: A Biography, 201-5).

[42]See, for example, Cohen, 199-231; James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*, especially 196-7 and 319; and Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes*, 223-5 (on the Victorian-created repugnance for paedophilia). Kincaid also discusses modern and late-Victorian ideas of paedophiles as "trapped" at a childhood stage of sexuality (see 183-210), suggesting the influence of developmentalism on theories of sexuality from the late nineteenth century onwards.

[43]Barbey d'Aurevilley, "Le portrait photographique," cited in Frizot, 106.

in quasi-Medieval robes, staring down the viewer. We are unsure how to confront the subject, who seems entirely self-contained and in no need of adult opinions of her. She is nobody famous (the model was Gotch's young daughter Hester) but commands respect. As Lionel Lambourne points out, the work was painted the same year that the "Children's Charter"--the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children--was amended,[44] giving its enthroned subject still more prominence in the nineteenth-century middle-class viewer's mind. Moreover, the popular "fleshly school" of grandly developed Pre-Raphaelite bodies and emotions began to die out in England in about 1870. What took root in its place were realism and a more constrained aestheticism, especially in the depiction of the human body.[45] In becoming "closer to nature," it appears, the bodies of nude and semi-nude figures became more and more childlike. The mountainous breasts and hips of early- and mid-Victorian females in art were shrinking, developing backwards; men's bodies lost their hard musculature in a regression towards sexual immaturity. John William Waterhouse's famous mermaids of the 1880s and 1890s are small-breasted and look just pubescent; Sir Edward Burne Jones's later figures, especially those of the 1880s, are seldom more developed than young adolescents. Henry James summed up middle-class adults' views of these paintings in reviewing the first Aesthetic exhibition, in 1877; of Burne-Jones's female figures, he wrote, "[T]hey are sublimely sexless, and ready to assume whatever charm of manhood or maidenhood the imagination desires."[46] James's description, however ironic, hit squarely on adult ambivalence towards children's sexuality. Because young children had so long been considered sexless--many girls and boys continued to be referred to as "it" for several years after birth in the late

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[44]Lionel Lambourne, *Victorian Painting*, 189. The original Act was made law in 1889.

[45]See Quentin Bell, *Victorian Artists*, 77, on the importance of the year 1870 in British art. Bell also contends that Impressionism did not make its mark on English art until late in the century, much later than in France.

[46]Henry James, "The Picture Season in London, 1877," in *The Painter's Eye: Notes and Essays on the Pictorial Arts*, 147. Burne-Jones used Julia Stephen as a model for several works. In his *Annunciation* (1879), she is a childlike Mary, despite having been 33 and pregnant with Vanessa Stephen at the time of the painting. Given their family's artistic connections, even the Stephen children were evidently aware of this trend; in the family newspaper, they reported a talkative visitor as saying that a painting by G. F. Watts (another family friend) was "of a young girl going up a mountain with a semi-male figure with wings who is very plain" ("Hyde Park Gate News," 9 May 1892). This comment probably relates to "Love and Life" (pre-1885), which was causing a sensation in the United States around this time.

nineteenth century--their gender was perceived as fluid. The slow acknowledgement of children's sexuality brought about the recognition that their erotic potential was open to anything. Kate Greenaway's 1885 poem "Wishes" demonstrates the middle-class adult's reaction to children's labile gender and sexuality. A boy narrator says to his young female friend,

> OH, if you were a little boy,
> And I was a little girl--
> Why then you would have some whiskers grow
> And then my hair would curl.

The girl replies,

> Ah! if I could have whiskers grow,
> I'd let you have my curls;
> But what's the point of wishing it--
> Boys never can be girls.[47]

Boys, though, did have the potential to become girls, and vice versa, in the late-Victorian imagination. Pornographic writing makes this clear; many flagellation fantasies of the late nineteenth century involve a boy victim dressed as a girl (which is the way in which boys under five or six were generally dressed), or even "supposed actually to be a girl."[48] Late-Victorian disquietude over children's sexual selves was further reflected in laws meant to discourage child prostitution. In 1861, the age of female consent was 12, while in 1885 the Criminal Law Amendment Act modified it to 16. In theory, this change was a means to protect children from adult predators, but its very existence demonstrates that adults were well aware of children's sexual potential, however they may have attempted to deny it. The conversion of the law can be seen as an attempt to safeguard adults from having to acknowledge children's poorly understood eroticism. Although it was a recognized and scientifically sanctioned stage of early childhood, "genderlessness" frequently caused parental anxiety. It did not simply represent innocence, but unknown sexual potential. Containing the latent sexuality of both men and women, young children

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[47]Kate Greenaway, "Wishes," from *Marigold Garden. Pictures and Rhymes*, in *The Kate Greenaway Treasury*, 207. Some children of the period played (perhaps unconsciously) with this idea. Before she was six, Virginia Stephen informed her older stepbrother in a letter, "I AM A LITTLE BOY AND ADRIAN IS A GIRL" (Virginia Stephen to George Duckworth, [n. d.], *Congenial Spirits*, 2).
[48]See S. Marcus, 255.

could develop the power to attract anyone.[49] In the case of boys, some parents were concerned about the possible "warping" of erotic development towards future homosexuality, although this subject was rarely discussed or even conceptualized in most middle-class homes.[50] What provoked most worry, however, was that children, as both male and female, had a "completeness" that allowed them sovereignty over their sexuality, and encouraged sensual and moral self-absorption. Freud would later term this idea "narcissism"--an early stage in the development of love and sexuality[51]--but he was far from the first to acknowledge its presence in young children.

Although children's sexuality was slowly being recognized, children's innocence remained one of their greatest assets in the eyes of middle-class adults of the period. This nostalgia was part of the dual conception of children as both self-contained beings and people containing their adult potential. Consequently, acknowledging them as potentially erotic beings was a difficult and delicate matter. Many writers, however, like Grahame, commonly portrayed child characters as "lovers" in tender situations. The Romantic idea of children as possessing pure feelings of love appears to have retained its great appeal with middle-class readers of the later nineteenth century. Again, the partnering of sex with love de-clawed it, and made it safe and suitable even for children; this association also de-emphasized children's natural self-interest in favour of love for others. The very young David Copperfield's relationship with Little Em'ly retained its attraction for decades after Dickens's work was first published in 1849-50. This juvenile pair loved

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[49]Some theorists, such as Geddes and Thompson, attempted to prove that sex differences were biological--even at a cellular level--but the sense that the gender of early childhood was fluid was bolstered by the idea that young children were ontogenetic representations of early, unrefined animal life. As Freud summarized it in 1905, discussing the bisexuality of childhood, the "long-familiar facts" of the vestiges of hermaphroditism in human anatomy "lead us to suppose that an originally bisexual physical disposition has, in the course of evolution, become modified into a unisexual one" ("Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," in *The Freud Reader*, 244). It was not until later in the twentieth century that male and female roles were generally seen as being entirely dictated through biology.

[50]Homosexuality did not begin to be scientifically explored in Britain until the 1880s and 1890s, after the term was coined in 1869. The trial of Oscar Wilde in 1895 did much to increase popular awareness of its existence, but "sexual inversion" (as Havelock Ellis titled his seminal 1898 work) was still little understood and generally thought to be a rare "condition" in the late nineteenth century. Lesbianism was only popularly conceptualized later. See, for example, Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800*, 96-121.

[51]See Sigmund Freud, "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood" and "On Narcissism: An Introduction," in *The Freud Reader*, 443-81 and 545-61.

each other, as Copperfield puts it, "because we had no future. We made no provision for growing older, than we did for growing younger." The adults around them whispered admiringly, "'Lor! wasn't it beautiful!'" as the children cuddled.[52] Dickens's mid-Victorian view demonstrates the nostalgic half of the later vision of childhood--the child existing purely within himself or herself, in a kind of ideal tenselessness. Some later Victorians, however, grew to care very much about children's future, including the future development of their romantic sentiments, and attempted to analyze them. Frederick Greenwood's *Lover's Lexicon* (1893), an encyclopedia of terms connected with romance, defined "child-love" as follows:

> This is one of the wonders of the world. A flower rooted and blooming in the air could hardly be more strange than the love which many a little man of ten years old shyly cherishes for some little maid no more grown up than he. And had we to choose a flower to emblem it . . . *Rosa rubiginosa*: with its full share of thorns, perfume breathing from every tiny leaf, and its breaking buds so lovely in their deep red rosy innocence that nothing in Flora's kingdom can match with them. Child-love is not a mere affectionate friendship . . . It is the true passion in that all poets tell of its intensity, its absorption, its fancy-kindling romance.[53]

Child love, then, was a species of the real--that is, adult--thing. It was innocent but "blooming" like a rose, the ideal combination for adults attempting to prescribe a course of romantic development for children. Greenwood did not neglect to describe the thorns that vex the sensitive plant:

> [N]ine times out of ten there is no capability of response in the object of your affections. Should she be older by a couple of years she is above them, and ah! what desperation it is then! Should she be younger, or of an equal age, she knows not when nor how she stabs you in company with other little boys; parting oranges with Another when you are by, or nestling to him over a picture-book for *hours* though she knows that to-morrow you will be far away at school.[54]

The author's tone is certainly patronizing and sexist, but his intention appears to have been twofold: to teach his adult readers to understand (or remember) the emotions of childhood, and to assist his readers, in turn, to be able to guide those young people

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[52]Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, 42. Emily's later sexual transgression is thus made to seem all the more horrific. Dickens similarly focused on the joys of very young love, purportedly from boys' and girls' point of view, in his children's book, *A Holiday Romance* (1868).
[53]Frederick Greenwood, *The Lover's Lexicon: A Handbook for Novelists, Playwrights, Philosophers, and Minor Poets; but Especially for the Enamoured*, 91-2.
[54]Ibid., 93.

through the stages of child love. Adults were to aid children to comprehend that these feelings were the roots of their adult romantic life, and that they must cultivate them carefully in order to develop along prescribed middle-class lines. When Kipling wrote in "The Brushwood Boy" (1894) of a boy and girl who dream a fantastical, wonderful relationship with each other, and then meet and marry in adulthood, he anatomized middle-class adults' highest hopes for the proper development of children's erotic lives. Child love, like children's sexuality, was something of a mystery, and therefore potentially dangerous to growing up; middle-class adults observed children carefully in order to analyze and standardize it. It was, however, a necessary corollary to children's perceived erotic self-containment, and an essential stage in elevating the human race's potentiality.

Writers of adult works were not the sole anatomizers of young people's love lives during this period. Children's authors also put child characters in romanticized situations throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, as we have seen in Grahame, and with George MacDonald's child lovers, Princess Irene and Curdie. Juliana Horatia Ewing's novel *Six to Sixteen* (1875) tells the story of an orphaned girl, and was a favourite with the young Rudyard Kipling as well as many others. It is a good example of the juvenile *Bildungsroman*, popular with both genders of middle-class children. The first chapter describes Margery Vandaleur's early days in India when her parents were alive:

> When callers came, I was often sent into the drawing-room . . . I was dressed in pink silk, my hair being arranged in ringlets round my head, to be shown off to the company. I was proud of myself, and was wont rather to strut than to walk into the room upon my best kid shoes. They were pink, to match my frock, and I was not a little vain of them . . . There were always plenty of gentlemen . . . and they used to be very polite to me, and to call me 'little Rosebud,' and give me sweetmeats. I liked sweetmeats, and I liked flattery. . ..[55]

Margery in her pink is clearly marked out as feminine, and even as a little woman with her vanities and flirtations. Her parents encourage her romantic interactions with her papa's gentlemen friends; late-Victorian middle-class girls, like girls for decades before them, were incited to charm the opposite sex from an early age, as the music and dancing

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[55]Juliana Horatia Ewing, *Six to Sixteen*, 24.

lessons present in nearly every period autobiography by women of this social stratum attest.[56] After Margery is shipped off to England to live with relatives, she often meets officers of her dead father's regiment who, she remarks, "speculate on the possibility of my growing up like my mother." They tell her she has "'Th' same expressive eyes, you know, and just that graceful gracious little manner poor Mrs. Vandaleur had. By Jove, it was a shocking thing! She was an uncommonly pretty woman.'"[57] The girl is valued for resembling an attractive adult woman from whom she has evolved; though the men are not actively flirtatious towards a child in mourning, they are certainly aware of her potential to be even more desirable than was her parent.[58] Margery herself immediately becomes at least partially aware of her own promise:

> The mirror was 'full length,' and no one could see me better than I now saw myself. Once more I attempted to make expressive eyes . . . advancing on the mirror with mincing steps, I threw all the grace and graciousness of which I was conscious into my manner, and holding out my hand, said, in a 'company voice,' '*Charmed* to see you, I'm sure!'[59]

She becomes conscious that she has "something." This is the embryonic adult within (as represented by the dead mother), making her erotic capacity felt. Ewing was careful to keep her child character's innocence intact, however; Margery's vanity is dashed by her observing great-grandmother's laughing comment, "'*Mais c'est bien drôle!*'"[60] The novel's most aged character gently reminds the protagonist that she is still a child. But because she is Margery's direct ancestor, her presence recalls to the reader that the girl will one day be a woman whose beauty might progress beyond that of her female antecedents as, with each generation, the human race was seen to come closer to perfection.[61] Indeed, Margery does grow up as the story progresses. At its culmination, she is 16 years old, and receives a letter from her older sister Eleanor, who has just married. Eleanor declares, "'Oh, Margery dear, I do often feel so thankful to my mother

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[56]See Chapter 2 on the Stephen girls as typical in this respect.
[57]Ewing, 64-5.
[58]This is part of the common Lamarckian view that traits acquired during an individual's life (such as charm) could be inherited by his or her offspring, and represents the uncertainty over the extent of heredity during the period.
[59]Ewing, 66.
[60]Ibid.
[61]See Chapter 1 on this telescoping of Darwin's natural selection theory.

for having given us plenty of rational interests . . . you can't tell, till you have a husband of your own, what a double delight there is in everything we do together.'"[62] The author leaves her main character on the verge of adulthood. At this juncture, Margery again has an older mentor--who, in turn, remembers her own mother as an advisor--to teach her about the future development of her romantic life. Ewing's young readers were meant to become aware of their own marital potential and to follow the character's example by abandoning vanity, following the advice of elders, and having "rational interests." Virtually all paths led to marriage for good middle-class girl characters; even the increasingly popular tomboy figure, whose prototype was Louisa May Alcott's Jo (1868), becomes a Little Woman and Good Wife in the end. By thinking of their future selves as spouses and parents (continually, in the case of girls), children of both genders would inherit the step-by-step approach to passion prescribed by the developmentalist adults around them. Each stage in successive human descent was seen to improve the race, and the goal of loving regeneration created an appealing blend of science and romance.

> *As she was condemned to know more and more, how could it logically stop before she should know Most? It came to her in fact as they sat there on the sand that she was distinctly on the road to know Everything.*
>
> -*Henry James*,
> What Maisie Knew, *1897*

What was "Most," and how far was "Everything"? The popular combination of truth and romance had made itself felt in children's literature, giving children some knowledge of the fact that they were on a path of romantic emotional development. What adults worried about most was how to let children know where this garden path led. The standard storybook's happy ending with its pairing off of characters in marriage was allowable. The wedding night, however, was almost invariably curtained, as *Dream Days*'s narrator astutely perceives. An even greater anxiety, however, was the increasing

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[62]Ewing, 296.

suspicion that children were born sexual and did not need to grow up to gain knowledge of "Everything." Lewis Carroll's Alice summarizes these fears in a conversation with Humpty Dumpty, who represents a stunted adult mentality:

> "Seven years and six months!' Humpty Dumpty repeated thoughtfully. 'An uncomfortable sort of age. Now if you'd asked *my* advice, I'd have said 'Leave off at seven'--but it's too late now."
>
> "I never ask advice about growing," Alice said indignantly.[63]

Through the ponderous Humpty Dumpty, Carroll demonstrates middle-class parents' semi-nostalgic desire for children to remain children alongside the recognition that they must nonetheless grow up as part of humanity's unstoppable progress. This ambivalence brought about the beginning of standardized sexual education in the middle-class late-Victorian home.

Because children were coming to be seen as having erotic potential, the question of sexual education was evidently at the forefront of middle-class thought in the late nineteenth century. Although virtually all middle-class children of the time picked up on the heterosexual ideal of marriage in which their culture had heavily invested, many children, especially girls like Emily Lytton, had almost no specific sexual information, and "pestered the servants with questions."[64] Boys, too, were often ignorant; when a girl placed his hands on her chest, the young Edward Benson found to his astonishment that "instead of being flat, she had two swellings there, and I asked her if they were bruises."[65] Virginia Woolf said that until she was about 16, she understood from reading Plato that sex meant sodomy,[66] but also that her freedom to read anything in her father's library taught her "all that can be known of sex in theory from very early days."[67] More horribly, at least one early instance of abuse by one of her half-brothers also added to her

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[63]Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (1872), 184.
[64]Emily Lutyens, *A Blessed Girl*, 10. See Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914*, 214-8, on girls' attempts to find out about sex from their reading.
[65]Edward Benson, *Our Family Affairs, 1867-1896*, 57. Boys tended to have somewhat more sexual knowledge than girls, however. Many late-Victorian middle- and upper-class boys picked up their "facts" at school. Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell reported the pronouncement of "the Head Master of a large school" in the 1870s: "'Few boys . . . ever remain a month in any school, public or private, without learning all the salient points in the physical relation of the sexes'" (Blackwell, *Counsel to Parents on the Moral Education of Their Children*, 37).
[66]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, 104.
[67]Ibid., Monk's House Papers A16 (1922), Sussex.

sense of sexual shame early in life.[68] Although the young Virginia Stephen's freedom to read whatever she liked was somewhat unusual for her gender, time, and class,[69] the abuse she suffered at home, sadly, cannot have been entirely exceptional among middle-class children during the period.[70] I do not believe that the patriarchal middle-class family set the scene for the omnipresent incestuous abuse of women and girls;[71] it is impossible to know how much incestuous abuse went on in middle-class families, as the subject was rarely discussed or even recognized during this period.[72] But it is a fact--perhaps not unrelated--that in the later Victorian years, many uneasy middle-class parents were beginning to want to systematize sexual education for their children's moral and physical

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[68]As an adult, Woolf wrote of Gerald Duckworth touching her "private parts" when she was very young, seated on a ledge at the family's holiday home in St. Ives, and less clearly of George Duckworth as "lover" to her and to Vanessa Stephen much later, after their mother's death in 1895, caressing them and intruding into their bedrooms at night (see, for instance, ibid., and "A Sketch of the Past," 69; "Old Bloomsbury," 182; and "22 Hyde Park Gate," 177, in *Moments of Being*). For varying interpretations of the abuses and their effects, see, for example, Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf*, 153-9, and Louise DeSalvo, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*. The fact of the earlier instance of abuse, however, should not be allowed entirely to colour our view of Woolf's childhood. Although this and the passivity of childhood were subjects to which she returned several times, she also remembered enjoying family life in many ways as a child before her mother's death: "It is true that I enclosed that world in another made by my own temperament; it is true that from the beginning I had many adventures outside that world; and often went far from it; and kept much back from it; but there it was, the common life of the family, very merry, very stirring, crowded with people. . ." ("A Sketch of the Past," 84).

[69]See Flint, 199-201, on Victorian fathers' shaping of adolescent girls' reading.

[70]The recognition of the sexual exploitation of children generally applied to working-class girls after the "Maiden Tribute" articles of 1885. The homosexual abuse of middle-class boys was virtually unrecognized. Murky prohibitions were given to boys in some schools: Edward Benson remembered the public disgrace and expulsion of "[t]wo boys, one high in the school, a merry handsome creature, the other quite a small boy," for mysteriously "filthy and contaminating" behaviour (Benson, 85). Such warnings could also apparently relate to consensual acts; the headmaster of Clifton College, Bristol, which Thoby Stephen attended, vaguely admonished his students to "subdue your flesh . . . by avoiding all luxury and effeminacy. . ." (Rev. J. M. Wilson, *Sins of the Flesh* (1885), 7). But middle-class children at home could also be vulnerable, though the public often had little conception of the fact, and the subject remains shrouded in mystery. In a draft of *The Years*, Woolf herself wrote, "The actual fact, that children of Rose's age [ten] are frequently assaulted, and sometimes far more brutally than she was, is familiar to any one who reads the Police Court news." But, as she pointed out, these assaults were not only perpetrated by strangers outside the late-Victorian middle-class family: she hinted, "Love, then, whether of the drawing room or of the street variety, affected the lives of the Pargiter sisters profoundly. . ." (*The Pargiters: The Novel-Essay Portion of* The Years, 50-2).

[71]As Louise DeSalvo argues, using modern theory and examples to substantiate her claim that middle-class incest was pervasive in the Victorian years (see, for example, Introduction, 8-13). Although it is likely that more abuse went on than that of which we are (or the late-Victorian middle-classes were) aware, I have found no other description or recollection by a middle-class author of the time of incestuous molestation, despite extensive research. This does not mean that home sexual abuse did not go on, or that such authors are all entirely reticent, but rather that incestuous abuse was probably not as vastly widespread as DeSalvo believes.

[72]The middle classes themselves saw incest, if they recognized it at all, as a working-class disease during the late nineteenth century (see R. von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1877), especially 409). It was not criminalized until 1908. This was a reflection of the state's slowness to involve itself in private family life, as well as of the bourgeois family's image as the happy and healthy base of human society.

safety. Despite possible dangers within the family, however, it was easier for the staunchly home-loving bourgeoisie to make the contaminating possibilities of sex something that was always outside, on the streets, and this was one of the hinted-at motivating factors behind the beginnings of standard sexual education. In her preface to *Counsel to Parents on The Moral Education of their Children, in relation to Sex* (2nd ed., 1879), Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell wrote,

> [I]t is with a keen sense of responsibility that I venture to lay before the wide community of parents, a subject which must necessarily bring forward questions, not generally considered suitable for public instruction. I know however, from long medical experience, that such instruction is now needed, and ought no longer to be withheld by physicians. . ..[73]

Another author declared in 1902,

> In conversing with earnest parents and enlightened teachers . . . I have become more and more convinced of the pressing need of a work dealing frankly and explicitly with all matters pertaining to the physical, mental, and moral well-being of our children . . . Were it possible and safe to leave them entirely ignorant and untrammeled concerning their origin, and all sexual matters, until adult years and mature understanding made full enlightenment expedient, I would gladly advocate complete silence . . . [T]he only alternative now left, if we do not wish to have our offspring at least mentally contaminated, is to impart ourselves, purely and reverently, all they need know. . ..[74]

While part of the necessity for sexual education was related to children's overall security, the general "pressing need" for such educational works appears to have been instigated by Darwinism, both scientific and social, as the second author's use of "origin" suggests. The future of the race was necessarily bound up with sexuality--specifically, with children's sexual development--and the potential glory of humanity was easier for reticent parents to discuss with children than was the squalid possibility of sexual abuse and assault.

Darwin himself provided parents with a positive way to tell the story of sex. In *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871), Darwin discussed his evolutionary theory in great detail. His proposition was of course that human heritage was animal, but also that human emotion had its counterpart in the animal world. He

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[73]Blackwell, Preface, iii-iv.
[74]Guerber, Introduction, v-vi.

wrote, "Besides love and sympathy, animals exhibit other qualities connected with the social instincts, which in us would be called moral. . .."[75] If birds and beasts, long considered in Christian tradition to be without souls and put in this world for human use, were now shown to have a similar morality to that of people, then humans had to come down to earth, as it were, and acknowledge their own animal and sexual nature.[76] For early Victorians, animals in art and literature had been symbols of the lower passions, such as sexuality and aggression: "Vestiges of the earlier attitudes . . . remained through the Victorian period . . . in the attribution of human faults such as cruelty or sensuality to the . . . 'animalism' of man."[77] It appears that many late Victorians took this idea of an animal nature to heart. Children, as ontogenetic representations of the earlier stages of human life, were particularly affected by leftover animal characteristics. Rather than regarding themselves as lowered in the grand scheme of things, however, I would argue that the middle classes simply raised their estimation of animals and their purported morality, which allowed them to recognize children's sexuality. Even animals had to be "in love" in order for their sexuality to be accepted. The "love lives" of creatures then became useful metaphors for the naturalness and beauty of pure--married--human sexual relations. The appearance of Patrick Geddes's and J. Arthur Thompson's *The Evolution of Sex*, a treatise on plant and animal reproduction, in 1889 may have been a catalyst for the increase in works on pre-pubescent home sexual education in the last decade of the century. Discussing "Common Ground between Animals and Men," the authors conclude, as had Darwin, that

> emotions which we ourselves experience, are likewise recognisable in less perfect, or sometimes more perfect, expression in the higher animals. Those which are associated with sex and reproduction are indeed among the most patent; love of mates, love of offspring, lust, jealousy, family affection, social sympathies, are undeniable.[78]

By attributing the natural world with affection and morals potentially "more perfect" than

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[75]Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 103.
[76]Julia Stephen's stories for children make definite, unpretentious links between animals (especially monkeys) and humans. See Chapter 1.
[77]Richard D. French, *Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society*, 385.
[78]Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thompson, *The Evolution of Sex*, 264.

their own, late-Victorian parents and educators were indirectly able to discuss human sexual development while maintaining what they saw as innocence for their children. Books for children took a similar tack: the Reverend J. G. Wood, a popular writer of natural history books for children, described in 1884 "the mental and sympathetic connection which . . . exists universally between man and beast, and is in fact the link that unites, through mankind, the spiritual to the material world."[79] A Valentine poem of the same era provides a good example of adult attitudes to sex education during this period:

> IN the springtide, flower and bee,
> Bird and beast make love, you see,
> All things spoon, and so will we.
>
> Little boys and girls scarce three,
> Flirt as well as you with me;
> All things spoon, and so will we.
>
> Shameful, surely, it would be,
> Those Darwinian flowers to see
> Spooning, if so *didn't* we.
>
> Birds choose mates on every tree,
> Sweet, my Valentine then be;
> All things spoon, and so will we.[80]

All of nature is here imbued with affection, including small children; reproduction is evolutionary but romantic and non-sexualized. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "spooning" in its nineteenth-century sense as "To make love, especially in a sentimental or silly fashion."[81] The poem would have served well as a disclaimer for anxious middle-class parents looking for "safe" or sentimental works on sexual education for their children. As one author of such a work reassuringly wrote, "[Children] may have much

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[79]Rev. J. G. Wood, Preface to *Petland Revisited*, [n. p.]. The Stephen children owned his *Illustrated Natural History* (see Chapter 5).

[80][n. a.], "All Things Spoon, and so Will We," *The Lover's Birthday Book and Valentine Verses for Young and Old*, 205-6. This book was published in 1881.

[81]*OED*, "spoon" (v. 2). The first appearance of the word in this sense was in 1831, but more examples proliferated towards the end of the century. D. H. Lawrence's story of his late-Victorian youth, *Sons and Lovers* (1913), provides an instance: when Paul Morel's mother tells her son he is too young to be "courting," he indignantly replies, "Do you think we spoon and do?"

pure knowledge and be most sweetly innocent."[82]

With these kinds of ideas behind it, *The Evolution of Sex* began with a discussion of asexual self-regeneration, and then moved on to chapters on "Fertilisation in Plants" and "Fertilisation in Animals." This Darwinist pattern, initiated in children's literature by Charles Kingsley in *The Water Babies: A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby* (1863), appears to have set the standard for sex education texts in the late-Victorian years. H. A. Guerber's *Yourself* (1902), a culmination of late-Victorian theories, was a volume

> designed for children under twelve . . . couched in language of extreme simplicity, a very small vocabulary and short sentences being purposely used, so that they can read it understandingly themselves . . . A sufficiently detailed explanation is vouchsafed, to make them realize the sacredness and privacy of the whole subject . . ..[83]

The details Guerber offers are based on reproduction in the natural world. Indeed, he refers to sex itself as "Nature's Secret." He exhorts his child-reader to maintain pure thoughts on the subject and to "show [yourself] worthy of this trust by not talking at all about sacred matters like this to any one except your mother."[84] Accordingly, the author goes on to explain sex in a Christianized evolutionary scale of reproduction in nature.[85] He begins with "About Plant Babies," in which he explains that "God wanted creatures of the same kind to love each other, and be kind to one another, so He also divided all living things into families."[86] From the loving relationships of plants, Guerber moves on to "The Fish Babies." These creatures are pure-minded on the subject of their reproduction:

> The male fish says: 'When God made the first male fish, He gave him the power to give life to other fishes just like himself. In my body there is a liquid. If I could only pour it over some fish eggs, I am sure there would soon be nice little fishes just like me. I wonder where I can find some fish eggs?'

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[82]Mary Wood-Allen, Preface to *What a Young Girl Ought to Know*, 20.
[83]Guerber, Preface, viii.
[84]Ibid., 226. Some middle-class fathers discussed sex with their sons, but this was usually only to warn against the dangers of masturbation. See below.
[85]The Romantic doctrine of Natural Theology, which viewed the workings of the natural world as evidence of an omnipotent and benevolent Creator, still had its adherents in the late nineteenth century. Nonetheless, Christianity had been deeply influenced by evolutionary theory; God could now be seen as allowing humanity to perfect itself through successive generations, as is symbolized by sexual education books' account of "Creation" by beings from fish to humans. Darwin himself was careful never to deny the existence of God, though he had fluctuating doubts. See Randal Keynes, *Annie's Box: Charles Darwin, his Daughter, and Human Evolution*, 282.
[86]Guerber, 227.

> Then the female fish says: 'I know. If you come with me, I will show you. I have some nice fish eggs. You can be father, and I'll be mother to a big family of fish babies!' Then the two fishes swim off together.[87]

The fish affectionately start their big family, and the author introduces the reader to mammalian reproduction with a description of a bovine mother and child:

> This [cow's] egg is very, very small and soft, although the cow is so very big, but when the life fluid once gets into it, it begins to grow. In a little while it hatches into a baby calf. The calf stays in the little room . . . When it is big and strong, the door opens, and the calf drops out, or is born, as we often call it. The mother cow then licks her calf to show it how dearly she loves it, and when the calf stands up on its long, shaky legs, and says in calf-talk: 'I am hungry!' the mother answers: 'Well, my dear, God knew you would be hungry, so He sent some milk into my milk bag (the cow's breast). Just help yourself, my dear, suck all you want.'[88]

Although there is some anatomical detail, Guerber provides his audience with virtually no description of sexual intercourse; the father's "life fluid" simply "gets onto" the egg, and that is that. More important to the author is the cow's anthropomorphized love for her calf, which she calls "my dear" in the manner of an ideal human mother. Guerber's explanation of where human babies come from is very similar to his tale of cow-love. He tells the reader,

> Mamma knew that in her body, just as in the body of all female animals, there was a little room in which God made a home for tiny babies . . . Just like the bird's egg, it grew and changed as soon as some of the father's life fluid got onto it . . . [M]other loved you so dearly, that she wanted you to have the very best she could give you, and she did not care at all what happened to her, as long as she knew that you were all right.[89]

Again, the sex act is glossed over while maternal love is foregrounded. Human birth itself is described as "when God opens the door of the little room,"[90] in a near-exact parallel to the calf's birth. Any physical detail the author gives here relates to the umbilical cord. Genital anatomical information was not easily connected to love, and so remained potentially dangerous to children's emotional and sexual development at the pre-pubescent stage. Human marital and parental love, the pinnacle of sexual relations in the natural world, were marked out for middle-class children as the way towards individual

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[87]Ibid., 233.
[88]Ibid., 242-3.
[89]Ibid., 248-50.
[90]Ibid., 251.

and general human perfection.

The point of works such as Guerber's was to make children aware of their future place in the evolutionary chain. Two volumes in the Self and Sex series, *What a Young Girl Ought to Know* and *What a Young Boy Ought to Know* (both 1897), are very similar to Guerber's opus in their explanations of reproduction and love. They both extol the virtues of "love" in the hierarchical natural world and emphasize parental affection. In the girls' version, the narrator is a mother who has various "twilight talks" with her young daughter. After long, somewhat dry descriptions of *stamina* and pollen, fish eggs and lactation, the mother comes to the point:

> It seems as if God had the purpose of working out the thought of fatherhood and motherhood little by little. Among the plants we find fathers and mothers, but really they know nothing about it . . . they just accept. In the lower animal there is voluntary action, but even there they know no affection, they give no care. A little higher up, as with the birds, we find a giving up of comfort to secure the life of the young . . . The mammals show more love, and care longer for their young. And in all these cases there are two parents.
>
> Now we come to man, and here we find both fathers and mothers uniting more in the preparation for the coming of each little one, and caring for it more tenderly after it has come. . ..[91]

What a young girl ought to know, then, is that plants and animals somehow make babies and love them with varying intensities. God's design was to teach children, "little by little" as they moved through recognized developmental stages and observed the wonders of affection in the natural world, that the great human duty as the apex of the evolutionary progression was to mate (in the sense of pairing up rather than of having sex) and, most importantly, to love one's offspring. A slightly earlier Victorian child who had learned her lesson well, Margaret Bowen (later Lady Asquith, 1864-1945) desired "passionately and desperately . . . to look after a large family of children." Tellingly, she recalled that "I did not at that time think of a husband or a lover."[92] This focus on future offspring was even more strongly emphasized to children as the century progressed and evolutionary theory took a firmer hold among the middle classes. In the boys' book, the requisite plants, fish, and mammals again make their appearance. The author offers a

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[91]Wood-Allen, 87-8.
[92]Margot Asquith, *Myself When Young*, 60.

somewhat more mechanical description of how human babies are made. He tells his readers of the

> spermatozoa or life germs, contained in the fluid called semen which forms in the body of a man, and by which, in the state of pure and holy marriage, God has ordained that the ovum, while yet in the body of the wife, shall be fertilized by the requisite and proper bodily contact of the husband. . ..[93]

Boys were to understand that marital sexual congress was "pure and holy" but ought to know very little physical detail beyond the technical description of fertilization. In writing standardized chronicles of love and reproduction throughout the natural kingdom, these authors managed to blend Christian doctrine with Darwinian theory and avoid direct discussion of the sexual nature of humanity. They provided children with a "pure" way to think about "Nature's Secret," making sex a stopping point on the way to the ultimate goal of parental love. The hierarchical nature inherent in these texts parallels the cautious way in which adults viewed children's sexual maturing; as Dr. Blackwell counselled, "In Moral Education the first step to secure is the slow development of sex. . .."[94] Parents wanted their children's gradual "loss of innocence" to be as stratified as the descriptive buildup to human reproduction in these texts.

Sex education, then, was couched in romantic or evolutionary terms for pre-pubescent middle-class children in the late nineteenth century. When it came to the characterization of physical maturation, experts kept Nature's Secret very secret from pre-pubescent children, emphasizing rather parenthood as the natural end of a physical and emotional developmental process. Dr. Blackwell informed middle-class parents, "The latest work of nature in forming the perfect being, is the gift of sexual power. This is a work of development, not simply of growth . . . This change takes place, as a general rule, from fourteen to sixteen years of age."[95] Those writing for children also emphasized the teleological aspect of puberty and systematized its stages. Guerber told his young readers,

> During their 'teens' we see [children] grow taller and broader, more wise and

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[93]Sylvanus Stall, *What a Young Boy Ought to Know*, 62.
[94]Blackwell, 121.
[95]Ibid., 9-11.

> more thoughtful, the boys' voices change, and the girls' forms grow rounder, and by all these signs all grown people know that Nature is finishing her work, and little by little turning these children into men and women.[96]

The author refers to parental guidance of growing up; "all grown people" are watching their children develop into finished products. The parent-child relationship, both current and future, is his focus. Of the sexual maturation of the body, the author gives very little physiological detail. He does not name names, but waxes philosophical:

> God has put into each human body a sacred little place which is the body Holy of Holies. He wishes us to keep it pure . . . In a man's body, this Holy of Holies is the place where the life fluid or seed is made; and in the woman's body, it is the little room which God made as a nest for babies. The place where the seed is made is in man's private parts, and the door of every woman's little room opens in the same passage as the one which empties the waste water.[97]

The arrival of reproductive ability is meant to be a source of joy for Guerber's readers. The child readers are encouraged to think of their potential to produce children of their own in the future rather than of any sexuality they may develop. *What a Young Girl Ought to Know* gives slightly more detail, making brief allusion to the growth of body hair and possible irritability, but never once mentions menstruation.[98] The narrator skims over womanhood and goes straight to motherhood. After this discussion, she cheerfully tells her listening daughter, "Meanwhile, I want you to be my happy little girl, enjoying every day with that kind of pleasure that you will be glad to remember all your life, and which you would be perfectly willing to have known to the world, or repeated to your children."[99] This ending sums up developmental experts' theory; the child hears only of her two ideal incarnations, that of innocent little girl and happy mother. The child is intended to think of her future life, and this is a future that naturally involves producing her own children. Her life-record should be without a blot; guilt is invoked to cause the girl to think of the reputation of her future offspring before they are even born. Boys, too, had future children to think of, and were not permitted to forget it. The physical changes

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[96]Guerber, 259.
[97]Ibid., 265. The author's last comment is obviously misleading.
[98]This lack may be because the book was intended for pre-pubescent girls; a later volume, *What a Young Woman Ought to Know*, does discuss the onset of menstruation, but, one imagines, possibly too late for some girls. The average age of menarche in Britain in the 1890s was 15.5 (see Introduction).
[99]Wood-Allen, 190.

of puberty are no more clearly described to them in the series' male counterpart volume. The author gravely tells his boy readers that puberty is "a time of great mystery, perplexity, and danger"[100] (which it obviously was in middle-class adult imaginations). He mentions briefly that

> When the time comes the boy begins to leave behind him the characteristics of childhood. The body grows rapidly . . . The skin becomes coarser. The beard starts to grow. The bones become harder. The sexual parts begin to develop, and in a few years the wisdom teeth appear.[101]

The casual, passing mention of genital development between descriptions of bones and teeth is symptomatic of the late-Victorian, middle-class attitude to the sexual development of children. Children's sexual potential was certainly present as an idea, but it was regarded as a "secret" and only important in so far as it related to future parenthood. Middle-class children had the perfectibility of the human race to consider.

The aspect of child sexuality that late-nineteenth-century middle-class adults discussed at greatest length was masturbation, which they "combatted like an epidemic that needed to be eradicated."[102] Indeed, children's tendency to onanism was an open secret, much talked-about by psychological experts and doctors. Our somewhat soft-spoken sex educators denounced the practice with uncharacteristic violence. The author of *Notes for Boys (And Their Fathers) on Morals, Mind, and Manners* (1885) implored his readers,

> by all that you hold most sacred, to avoid secret sins of impurity--*scelus Onanis*--the source of the most fatal results in after years, and the destruction of all that is pure and good in a young man's heart and life. I could tell you of souls hopelessly smirched and befouled, and of lives utterly ruined and lost, by this deadly habit. More I dare not say: thus much I dare not suppress.[103]

What a Young Boy Ought to Know includes close to 50 pages of detailed anti-masturbatory admonishments, threatening readers with the fact that offenders "often have to be put in a strait-jacket" to save them from "total mental and physical self-destruction." Girls were not left unwarned. Among other evil effects, young female

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[100]Stall, 174.
[101]Ibid., 177.
[102]Foucault, 42.
[103]"An Old Boy," *Notes for Boys (And Their Fathers) on Morals, Mind and Manners*, 65.

onanists were told that their habit "leaves its mark upon the face so that those who are wise may know what the girl is doing."[104] These adults' overt surveillance of children's sexual behaviour, rather than destroying it, gave it a life of its own before Freud had made his mark. The fact that experts composed such numerous and detailed tracts against masturbation demonstrates that they were all too aware of its prevalence, and could only deal with it by codifying it.[105] Late Victorians' main problem with children's masturbation was that it took away children's purity--their supposed lack of sexual curiosity--but had no connection to a future parental role, nor to useful self-development. Nor was onanism sweetly romantic as was the adult conception of "child-love"; indeed, it was self-love by its very definition. In short, middle-class parents and educators ended up attacking the solitary vice in children by relating it to future motherhood or fatherhood, and the potential of the human race. Mary Wood-Allen, in an anti-masturbatory lecture, told her girl readers, "It is the little children of to-day who are deciding what will be the health and vigor of the nation of the years to come."[106] *What a Young Boy Ought to Know* went further. Its author assured boys,

> When a boy injures his reproductive powers, so that when a man his sexual secretion shall be of an inferior quality, his offspring will show it in their physical, mental, and moral natures . . . you will see how even the little boys of to-day are unconsciously molding and shaping not only the character and destiny of the children that are to come after them, but how they are also shaping the history and destiny of the nation.[107]

Late-Victorian educators' social Darwinism encouraged children to consider their future marriages and their own offspring as a way of neutralizing the perceived dangers of sexual development. Although the eugenics movement did not really take hold until early in the twentieth century, its roots are clearly apparent in these earlier ideas on how children were to be educated.[108] Many middle-class parents acted as a conscience to their

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[104]Wood-Allen, 106.
[105]See Foucault, especially 42.
[106]Wood-Allen, 103.
[107]Stall, 113-4. Again, these ideas were influenced by Lamarckian evolutionary theory; qualities acquired during one's lifetime were seen to affect offspring and direct the course of the next generation's evolution.
[108]Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term "eugenics" in 1883. He also wrote a book on *Hereditary Genius* (1869, republished 1892) that included the Strachey and Stephen families, and helped spark interest in the possible inheritance of artistic and intellectual traits. See Chapter 4 for its influence on writing by children.

children, or attempted to instill the adult self as a conscience. Children, after all, were only to discuss "Nature's Secret" with Mamma, or to think about it in terms of their own futures. In these years, parents even encouraged proto-Oedipus and -Electra complexes in their children. An 1881 book of young people's Valentine poems includes one work entitled "Naughty Papa!", which describes a father's "little lady love / Who's not [his] wedded wife."[109] The lover turns out, at the end, to be his ten-month-old daughter. Transforming sexuality into romantic love for one's parents appears to have been accepted by adults as a way of dealing with children's undeniable sexual side; the parent could act as conscience on the sexual development front as well as that of moral growth. Harriett Frean's father, after admonishing her for the disobedience that led to her sexualized experience in the forbidden lane, embraces her, and Harriett thinks of him as "[S]o beautiful. So good. So wise."[110] The child's future self as a parent hovered like a ghost around his or her sexual behaviour and thoughts in the middle-class imagination. If the middle-class child were innocent and self-contained as well as filled with evolutionary potential, his or her sexuality was acceptable to developmentalist adults.

I RECOLLECT a nurse call'd Ann
Who carried me about the grass,
And one fine day a fine young man
Came up, and kiss'd the pretty lass.
She did not make the least objection!
Thinks I, 'Aha!
When I can talk I'll tell Mamma.'
--And that's my earliest recollection.
-Frederick Locker-Lampson,
"A Terrible Infant," 1872

Naturally, children were not just passive receptacles for all the erotic imagery and discussion that surrounded them in the late-Victorian period. They actively observed the adults who observed them. Boys and girls had a great interest in the prevalent middle-class ideas on love and sex, most likely because they were not supposed to understand them, and because they were defined by secrecy. As we have seen, children were

[109][n. a.], "Naughty Papa!," in *The Lover's Birthday Book and Valentine Verses for Young and Old*, 369-70.
[110]Sinclair, *Life and Death of Harriett Frean*, 24.

expected to remain innocent; what sex education there existed was provided for the purpose of building a strong human race. But as writers, parents, and educators built up a discourse around romance and sexuality, many children turned it on its head. Although parents (especially mothers) hoped that their sons and daughters would confide in them, children frequently turned to each other or inwards in investigating adult love and sex. The sheer nonsense inherent in nineteenth-century love language was manna to the literate middle-class child. Perhaps Locker-Lampson's knowing infant might as well have said, "When I can talk, I'll mock Mamma." The secretive, untalking child absorbing experiences caused anxiety not only regarding his own development, but in terms of what he might be thinking about the adults around him.

The general bourgeois culture of love provoked much mirth among late-Victorian children. The popular love-letter anthologies of the period were designed to appeal not just to adult readers, but to the young as well. Certainly some of the amorous epistles included in J. T. Merydew's 1888 anthology would have engaged children. A letter from Jonathan Swift to his "Stella" of 1710 is one example used here and in various other collections. Swift wrote,

> Do you know what? when I am writing in our language I make up my mouth just as if I was speaking it . . . Poor Stella, will not Dingley leave her a little daylight to write to Presto [Swift's Italianized nickname]? Well, well, we will have daylight shortly, in spite of her teeth; and *zoo must cly Lele and Hele and Hele aden. Must loo mimitate Pdfr, pay? Iss, and so la shall, and so leles fol ee rettle. Dood mollow.*

Merydew translated the italicized passage as "you must cry There and Here and Here again. Must you imitate Presto, pray? Yes, and you shall. So so, there's for your letter. Good morrow."[111] Swift's letter, de-sexualized and infantile, sounds like a prototype of one of the children in late-Victorian juvenile literature whose difficulties in speaking were intended to be charming. As we have seen, this love of made-up baby talk was part of the late-Victorian nostalgia surrounding childhood; it also made children comprehensible to adults.[112] Young readers, however, would have delighted to see the

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[111]Jonathan Swift to "Stella" (Esther Johnson), March 1710, in *Love Letters of Famous Men and Women of the Past and Present Century* (Vol. 1), ed. Merydew, 151.
[112]See Chapter 2.

Olympian Swift brought down to a childish linguistic level, in a parody of his Gulliver moving from Brobdingnag to Lilliput.[113] Late-Victorian middle-class children may have remarked that the language of adult love was, paradoxically, a childish tongue, in which words could be made up and played with. Lovers in the late nineteenth century were often seen as behaving childishly, and many indeed seem to have become childlike in love, as had lovers for centuries before. An 1883 collection of selected letters from agony columns, to which sweethearts wrote in order to contact each other anonymously, included one from a young man "who startled a young lady one evening by throwing 'Motto Sweeties' up to the window."[114] Another termed his lover his "Little Mite."[115] Just as pet names for children were taking the form of increasingly young creatures--lamb, chick, and so forth[116]--standard affectionate nicknames for adult lovers seem to have become "younger" over the course of the century as well. Late-Victorian writers on the subject of romance found this childlike behaviour charming and even useful. One such author explained in 1891, "I have often noticed what a real factor of happiness a little make-believe may become . . . We may learn a lesson in this from children: how they surround this mundane world with their bright fancies!"[117] For young observers, however, such manners were simply amusing or bizarre. Gwen Darwin remembered seeing a production of *Charley's Aunt* as a child:

> This was the first real play we ever saw. It did not seem to me at all funny, only tremendous and exciting; and, at one point, most dangerously improper . . . as I remember it, one of the young men dressed up as Charley's Aunt, and ran across the stage, lifting up his petticoats, and showing his trousers underneath.[118]

To this young, late-Victorian, middle-class girl, a cross-dressed man foolishly pursuing

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[113]This was another story adapted for children in the nineteenth century (see Chapter 1). Andrew Lang included a version of the Lilliput adventure, by May Kendall, in his *Blue Fairy Book* in 1889. The Stephen children were familiar with Swift from an early age, as their father wrote a biography in 1882 and read "Gulliver" to them in 1886 (Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 23 March 1886). They themselves described an unpleasant short boy as "a Liliputian" in the "Hyde Park Gate News" (28 November 1892: see Chapter 5 on the Stephen children's home reading). Woolf later wrote an essay on the relationship of Swift and Stella, in which she pictured how the author "pursed his severe lips into baby language," and appreciated the childishness and secrecy of their letters ("Swift's 'Journal to Stella'," *Collected Essays* 3, 71-9).
[114]"J. T. L.," ed., *Love's Bliss and Sorrow, Extracted from the English and Scottish 'Agony Columns,'* 98.
[115] Ibid., 88.
[116]See Chapter 1.
[117]"E. M. T.," *Loving and Living*, 25.
[118]Gwen Raverat, *Period Piece*, 113-4.

his love interest while displaying his legs was baffling, but, as she admits, exciting. This performance was confusing in terms of its representation of sexuality, and the juvenile actions that followed thereupon. Many children at the time found this type of "calf-love" fantastical but very interesting. Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965) also recorded a memory of onstage eroticism. She saw her first pantomime as a very young child, and was intrigued by the woman playing the role of the Principal Boy. The actress sang a slightly risqué song entitled "Oh What a Difference in the Morning!", and when the young Eleanor clapped, her father held her hands so she would stop.[119] In this case a woman dressed as a boy literally demonstrated the theme of an adult lover acting as would a child, with a sexual overtone that was not lost on Farjeon's father nor on the child herself, whether she understood its implications clearly or not. Virginia Woolf recalled a similar scene at a theatre when she was 18; she watched, interested, as a howling actor onstage pursued and finally leapt upon a woman, and then felt the stiff, speechless horror of the adults accompanying her.[120] The contrast between the grown-ups with her and those tussling erotically onstage necessarily confused her (even at 18, she was still considered partly a child, as were most unmarried middle-class girls of the period). The fact that adults could behave so regressively when in love gave credence to the idea that children themselves had inherent erotic potential. Observing children could perhaps justify their own sexual and romantic feelings to themselves (if not always to their parents and the rest of the adult world) when grown lovers comported themselves in such an intriguingly childlike fashion.

Of course, late-Victorian children were unlikely thoroughly or even consciously to understand the complexities of adult love and sex, despite the new educational material on offer. Mary Butts, as we have seen, described her youthful feelings on the subject as follows: "I did not know what I knew, except that about it all there was something I must

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[119]Eleanor Farjeon, *A Nursery in the Nineties*, 365.

[120]Virginia Woolf, "22 Hyde Park Gate," in *Moments of Being*, 174-5. The scene may have reminded her of the young men she knew: her sometimes abusive half-brothers; her half-sister Stella's husband, who talked frankly with her about sex; or her cousin J. K. Stephen, who had literally gone mad and was himself passionately in love with Stella (see below).

not have explained to me. It was silly."[121] What intrigued such children was the fact that such "somethings" were part of "Nature's Secret," and had a language and standardized behaviours of their own. When Butts remembered seeing sex as "silly," she touched on a major line of late-Victorian middle-class children's thought about how to deal with eroticism. Either it was "silly" and not worth thinking about further, or "silly" with a kind of hilarity that could be expressed in parody. For many children at the time, love and sex were still so mysterious as to be nonsensical, and therefore they could enjoy stories and verses built around both, perhaps in an effort at relief from adult warnings of danger. Edward Lear was one of the first to cleverly pick up on children's delight in mocking adult eroticism. His 1877 poem "The Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò" was one of his most popular, not just because of its infectiously jangling rhythm, but also due to its treatment of romance. The eponymous creature meets a woman and, off his head with love, begs,

> 'Lady Jingly! Lady Jingly!
> 'Sitting where the pumpkins blow,
> 'Will you come and be my wife?'
> Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.[122]

He offers her all his worldly possessions (two old chairs, half a candle, a broken jug, and a sea view), but Lady Jingly is already married to an Englishman called Jones. The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò then departs on the back of a sea turtle for pastures new, and Lady Jingly Jones "weeps, and daily moans" for him.[123] The poem's success is in its combination of banal details about the ins and outs of love (proposing and being refused; offering an account of one's estate) and amusingly unexpected features such as a turtle from nowhere. In this way the world of grown-up middle-class love that adults carefully kept private had its cover peeled back; it was revealed to observing children in all its mundanity and silliness. Young people reading such works delighted in the fact that they were admitted to a secret realm and helped to blow it up.

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[121]Butts, 61.
[122]Edward Lear, "The Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò," in *The Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear*, 238.
[123]Ibid., 241.

Many late-Victorian middle- and upper-middle-class children went further than reading and came up with their own tales of adult love, and its associated banality and childish language. Earlier young writers had not infrequently tackled the subject of grown-up romance themselves, an example being the teenage Jane Austen's satires such as *Jack & Alice* (c. 1788), in which the hero has to set bear traps in order to fend off the ladies.[124] Late-Victorian child writers often came up with violent, bawdy, and parodic stories. Most famously among young late-nineteenth-century authors, the nine-year-old Daisy Ashford, in *The Young Visiters: Or Mr Salteena's Plan* (written 1890), made fun of her grown-up characters' declarations of love ("This is agony cried Mr Salteena clutching hold of a table my life will be sour grapes and ashes without you")[125] and sexual feelings ("I shall be quite lost in that huge bed she added to hide her embarrassment. Yes I expect you will said Bernard. . ").[126] When *The Young Visiters* was eventually published in 1919, a debate ensued amidst its success over the propriety of the child author's sexual references.[127] But at the time the story was written, Ashford's parents evidently found her mainly innocent and joking sexual guesswork appropriate for her age. They faithfully wrote down all her earlier stories from her dictation, including "A Short Story of Love and Marriage" (c. 1889),[128] in which twin babies are born seven hours after the start of a honeymoon trip. Ashford's younger sister Angela was also

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[124]Extant pre-Victorian parodic juvenilia, however, frequently choose education as their butt (see Chapter 4 on the young Austen's educational parodies, as well as those of the Brontës). Barring Austen, child authors of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (especially girls) generally seem to have written about love in an approving manner, despite Austen's famous satirical examples. See, for example, the epistolary romance *Indamora to Lindamira* (1703), by Lady Mary Pierrepont (later Wortley Montagu), or Charlotte Brontë's equally passion-filled *Albion and Marina* (1830), both written at 14. Late-Victorian child writers often only began to show non-mocking interest at a somewhat later age. The cessation of collaborative works in favour of more private writings also often altered late-nineteenth-century child authors' outlook on love, as may have been prescribed by developmentalist ideas on the "period of secrecy" before puberty (see Chapter 2).

[125]Daisy Ashford, *The Young Visiters: Or Mr Salteena's Plan*, 70.

[126]Ibid., 64.

[127]For a discussion and an account of the debate over the story's authorship, see Jeffrey Mather, Introduction to Ashford, *The Young Visiters* (1997 ed., ix-xvii).

[128]In Ashford, *Daisy Ashford: Her Book*, 1-11. Ashford claimed that in dictating her tales, she "very occasionally asked for a word to describe something and wrote whatever they suggested in all seriousness . . . My father always refused to give me even a word saying it was my story and not his, but my mother and grown-up step-sisters would always come to the rescue" (Ashford to James Barrie, who wrote the preface to the first edition of *The Young Visiters*, cited in R. M. Malcomson, *Daisy Ashford: Her Life*, 98). Ashford clearly dictated to and wrote for an adult audience.

obsessed with the mystery of where babies come from, and was not shy about exploring the subject in her story "The Jealous Governes" (1892),[129] most of which was dictated to her parents and governess (here, a doctor brings a baby in a cardboard box to one Mrs. Hose, waiting in bed, and the eponymous character visits his office to quiz him on how she might get one for herself). The Ashford parents were clearly involved in their children's work, and were the intended audience. Unlike some earlier parents, they saw the children's sexual questioning as appropriate to their developmental stage.[130] As the children themselves grew older, they continued to follow developmentalist standards in their writing. From about the age of 12, Daisy Ashford went on to write dramatic tales of love for her parents and governess, such as "Where Love Lies Deepest" (1893),[131] which conformed to adult moral, romantic, and literary conventions. Many late-nineteenth-century middle-class parents saw children's writing as symbolic of their erotic and romantic development, and tolerated or even encouraged parodies of grown-up love as "natural" to the young writers' early developmental stages.[132]

The Stephen children's "Hyde Park Gate News" (1891-5), a family newspaper, was, like the young Ashfords' works, filled with jokes about the nonsense of grown-up romance and sexuality,[133] and was equally influenced by an awareness of the adult

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[129]In Ashford, *Daisy Ashford: Her Book*, 255-87.

[130]The young Jane Austen's parodic works on love were apparently only read by her siblings and cousins. The 14-year-old Lady Mary Pierrepont wrote, after the excision of some of her works from her notebook, "T'was folly made mee fondly write / (For what [have] I to do with Love and wit?) / I own I trepass'd wickedly in Rhime / But oh my Punishment exceeds my crime" (cited in Introduction to *Indamora to Lindamira*, v). Isobel Grundy infers that "adult authority--governess? father?--intervened to punish the young scribbler" (Introduction, iv-v). Even the seven-year-old Marjory Fleming, writing early in the nineteenth century, was subject to romantic censorship; in her diary, she fancied herself the "loveress" of a young man, only to reflect later, "O I forgot Isabella [Keith, her cousin and tutor] forbade me to speak about love" (Journal (1810-1), in *The Complete Marjorie Fleming*, 49 and 108. See Chapter 4 below on Fleming). For a study of adult censorship of some children's works, and young writers' attempts to get around it, see Juliet McMaster, "Virginal Representations of Sexuality: The Child Author and the Adult Reader," *English Studies in Canada* 24 (September 1998), 299-308.

[131]In *Daisy Ashford: Her Book*, 47-80. Siblings could also have an influence; of her self-perceived magnum opus, Ashford wrote, "I put solid work into 'The Hangman's Daughter' [1895] and really tried to write well. I shall never forget my feeling of shock when I read it aloud to my brothers and they laughed at the trial scene!" (Introduction to *Daisy Ashford: Her Book*, vi). Ashford's three half-brothers were grown up by this time, however, and so formed part of the adult audience whom she had in mind when writing. But perhaps naturally as siblings, they were less accommodating of developmental stages in writing than were the Ashford parents.

[132]See Chapter 4 on the late-Victorian belief in the child as "natural" writer.

[133]Juliet McMaster sees the "Hyde Park Gate News" as being solely by Virginia Stephen and Vanessa Stephen, who were in places seeking romance or "a little sexual thrill," and dangerously close to arousing paternal or brotherly displeasure (McMaster, "Virginal Representations of Sexuality," 301). The "Hyde

audience. As befitted the tastes of the times, the young Stephens' favourite parodic medium was the mock love-letter. They came by this taste honestly; their older cousin, J. K. Stephen (1859-92), was an acclaimed (and misogynistic) parodist in the 1880s and early 1890s. One of his poems, "After the Golden Wedding," (1891) has a wife describing 50 years of putting up with her husband as he "snored and snorted after tea," and how she showed him her love when she always "chose the joint / [He] liked the best of all for dinner." The husband is no less pedestrian in his description of marriage; his wife is decidedly "not an angel in disguise." When the two have finished soliloquizing, the vicar blithely takes his turn:

> A good old couple! kind and wise!
> And Oh! what love for one another!
> They've won, those two, life's highest prize,
> Oh! let us copy them, my brother.[134]

J. K. Stephen's ironic take on ideal love and the middle-class exhortation to "copy" its pattern would directly have appealed to his young relations, who sought both to mock adults and to write in adult voices.[135] As an introduction to the letters between "Fanny Smith" and "John Lovegate" in one of the earliest issues of the "Hyde Park Gate News," the editors declaimed that the following "Love-letters are to show young people the right way to express what is in their hearts." John writes to his lady love,

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Park Gate News," however, was partly written by Thoby Stephen (and sometimes Adrian Stephen), not just the girls, and its success depended upon the parental audience appreciating its parodies, not being truly "outraged" by the pushing of boundaries (see Chapter 5). Although it is possible, I do not believe that any of the love-letters was intended to be romantic, in the ruthlessly anti-sentimental Stephen environment (witness the way in which Julia Stephen's maternal feelings are continually ridiculed: see Chapter 5). It seems unlikely that the Stephen girls were after essentially sexual or romantic thrills, given their fear of sexual danger on the streets (and possibly at home, at the time the "News" was being composed), and the blatant mockery of nearly all representations of romance.

[134]J. K. Stephen, "After the Golden Wedding. (Three Soliloquies)," in *The New Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*, ed. Ricks, 577-80.

[135]J. K. Stephen, known as "Jim" or "Jem," was also a somewhat disturbing sexual presence in his young cousins' lives. He developed mental problems following a head injury in the 1880s, and pursued Stella Duckworth violently. Looking for her, he "would burst into the nursery and spear the bread on his swordstick" ("A Sketch of the Past," 98), behaviour which Woolf used to more nostalgic effect in 1919 in *Night and Day* (Mrs. Hilbery remembers her father "singing up the stairs to the nursery, and tossing the loaf for breakfast on his sword-stick, and then off we went for a day's pleasuring. . ." (120)). Jem Stephen's passion both frightened and intrigued the young Virginia Stephen. The adult Woolf recalled him as "some tormented bull," but subsequently noted, "There was a great mystery about love then" ("A Sketch of the Past," 99), suggesting that Jem's bizarre courtship may have helped inspire the parodic hashing out of grown-up love in the "Hyde Park Gate News" love letters.

> My heart is so full that I feel I cannot express my sentiments with mere pen and ink but I will at least make a poor endeavour. As I gaze upon thy sweet face I see with what condecending grace You look upon your humble lover And give him many a qualm to suffer.[136]

John declares himself speechless with sentiment, but the young authors mocked adults' adoration of the language of love by following his initial poetical statements with a letter full of banal descriptions of a party, where he danced "with a girl who was high upon aristocrats but who did not speak with half the fluency or originality of [his] own true love."[137] Again, love's private language is foregrounded; the young writers sharply recognize the lover's frequent inability to express his feelings despite his attempts at flowery language, and his turning to everyday detail instead. In the newspaper's next issue, this perception becomes even clearer. "Tom Comton" writes to "Nora Howard,"

> My own sweet love Will you O will you wade down the stream of live with your would-be fiancé who is waiting impatiently out-side your hearts door . . . sometimes I feel the green eyed monster jealousy take possesion of my heart when I see another young fellow courting your affections.

Tom is unsuccessful at expressing his love eloquently; he asks Nora to "wade" down life's stream with him as if they were a pair of anglers. His love is far from perfect, for, as he casually remarks, he is subject to fits of jealousy. Nora's letter is even more matter-of-fact:

> My Own Tom
> I love you with that fervent passion with which my father regards Roast beef but I do not look upon you with the same eyes as my father for he likes Roast Beef for its tast but I like you for your personal merits. I went to stay with Mrs Figfort up in the north of England and some young men took me put in a boat and when I felt very sick all the young men stood gigling like a lot of apes and then O then, I felt the loss of your companionship, these words may not sound very elegant in your polished ears but you comprend my meaning.
> Good bye your Own
> Nora[138]

The woman's self-expression is so hackneyed as to be hilarious; true love is compared with the taste of roast beef, in an echo of J. K. Stephen's cut of meat as symbol of romance.[139] Love is infantilized as the delights of food are substituted for the silliness of

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[136]Stephen family, "HPGN," 14 December 1891.
[137]Ibid.
[138]Ibid, 21 December 1891.
[139]It may also have been inspired by folk tales of the "Cap o' Rushes" variety, in which a young woman

sex. It appears that even some late-Victorian children anticipated Freud in this aspect, recognizing that some people childishly (or sensibly?) prefer food to love all their lives. Adults' language of love has here broken down irrevocably and cannot even be recovered with Nora's passionate "then O then" towards the end of her letter. Her words are inelegant indeed, and her meaning is lost in their pedestrianism. Love is associated with nausea. To the child writers, eroticism was something of a strange grown-up disease whose major symptom was babbling. The Stephens recognized that for all their talk of passion, many adult love letters said very little indeed, and this was the source of their humour. The private life of the Victorian lover was shown to be a rather dull place where nothing world shattering occurs, and "secret" languages are banal and useless.

At the same time, the young Stephens' emphasis on the practicalities of love--the way things should be done--revealed that they had absorbed at least some of the romantic developmentalism around them, however much they joked. The Stephen parents showed developmentalist tendencies in raising their children, generally accepting their games and wildness as a normal stage of growing up. Woolf wrote of her mother's ideas on child-rearing in describing Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927): "[A]ll, she thought, were full of promise . . . Nancy and Roger, they were both wild creatures now, scampering about over the country all day long . . . She did not like it that Jasper should shoot birds; but it was only a stage; they all went through stages."[140] But Woolf's Mrs. Ramsay, like Julia Stephen, continually advocates that children ought to think of marriage.[141] The same applied to the romantic parodies in the Stephen children's writing, which were seen as part of the same "wild" stage of earlier childhood, but also as helping the children begin to understand the ways of adult marriage, however humourously. The Stephen children wrote teasingly of their older half-sister in relation to their Vaughan cousins: "we are

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says she loves her father "as fresh meat loves salt." He rejects her, only to realize his mistake and the depth of her affection when he eats bland, unsalted food. The first book to include this story for British children was Joseph Jacobs's *English Fairy Tales* in 1890. See Chapter 5 on the fairy-tale influence on the Stephens' writing.

[140]Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 58.

[141]See, for example, Mrs. Ramsay's refrain, "[P]eople must marry; people must have children," (*To the Lighthouse*, 60). The young Virginia Stephen absorbed this ideal; in one of the late issues of the "Hyde Park Gate News," she wrote of one Miss Smith, a zealously spinsterish "new woman" who eventually sees reason and "proved to be an excellent wife, and later on a devoted mother" ("HPGN," 7 January 1895).

quite assured that Miss Stella Duckworth will carry off quite as good a prize in the 'matrimony market' as they will. We will not presume to give any further prophesies as to you young ladies future. . .."[142] The "market" was something adult and amusing, but the writers knew that a child's sight was to be on his or her grown-up future, and that the goal of young women's life was marriage. The authors' protesting joke that the future was unreadable satirizes the fact that it was almost inconceivable for middle-class women like Stella Duckworth (then 23) *not* to think of future marriage. The Stephens were also entirely aware of the expectancy that they should eventually follow in their parents' romantic footsteps in order to become good future parents themselves. Many of the love letters state that young people must seek parental permission before marrying.[143] Not all of the "Hyde Park Gate News" letters on the subject of love are between amorous couples. Some are between parents and children. One, from "a Mother who wants to get a husband with plenty of money for her daughter," comes later in the "matrimony market" issue:

> My dearest Eliza.
> As you do not seem to be getting a husband I will tell you how I got your Papa. I asked him to my house and never objected to his smoking. But this was before our marriage I was quite different afterwards. I let him dine out with other pretty Ladies as he might have easily flirted with one of them. I always let him dine out at the museum which I was sorry for afterwards. I let him tramp though I knew it was bad for him and it was against the doctor's orders but in this way I gained him and a lot of money.
> Ever yours
> M. Gordon.[144]

The tale of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon clearly owes something to the courtship of Julia Stephen and Leslie Stephen. The two were friends and neighbours who visited each other often before their marriage, and engaged in a voluminous correspondence. Leslie was habitually covered in pipe tobacco ash and was a famous "tramper," walking miles at a time. He spent hours at the British Library, then part of "the [British] museum,"

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[142]Stephen family, "HPGN," 23 May 1892. Millicent Vaughan (1866-1961) and Emma Vaughan (1874-1960), the daughters of Julia Stephen's sister Adeline Jackson Vaughan, appear frequently in the "Hyde Park Gate News" as hungry seekers after marriage.
[143]For instance, Fanny Smith's recognition, after a few lines of gushing excess to her lover, that "I must however first ask my parents leave to marry you" ("HPGN," 14 December 1891).
[144]Stephen family, "HPGN," 23 May 1892.

compiling information for his *Dictionary of National Biography*. Although Julia Stephen was clearly not a shrewish wife, the children knew she had much quiet control over her husband, titling her "the head of the family."[145] Mrs. Gordon's obsession with money is perhaps a clever reversal of the truth; Leslie Stephen was the spouse unduly troubled by finances, convinced that the family was always on the brink of bankruptcy, or of "shooting Niagara," as he called it.[146] Mocking their parents to their faces was the source of the children's amusement, but their writing reveals a real curiosity, considered by developmentalists to be acceptable for their ages, about the proper (i. e., parental) patterns for "getting" a spouse and the attendant financial considerations. The Gordons' daughter Eliza is early on versed in the ways of marriage. Virginia Stephen once inquired of her mother, "'How did father ask you to marry him?' . . . with my arm slipped in hers as we went down the twisted stairs into the dining room. She gave her little laugh, half surprised, half shocked. She did not answer."[147] Although they had no direct answer at the time, the Stephen children used their understanding of their parents' courtship as a basis for the satirical romantic scripts they wrote in their family newspaper. The children had recognized the practical path to adult fortune and love. The paper's parodic tone does not disguise the fact that the Stephen parents were the designated audience for the newspaper, and found its jokes and questionings about love to be age-appropriate.

> *As long as you have a garden you have a future, and as long as you have a future you are alive.*
>
> *-Frances Hodgson Burnett, cited in Vivian Burnett*, The Romantick Lady: The Life Story of an Imagination, *1927*

For the late-Victorian middle classes, then, love and theories about love were abundant. "Expert" advice was easy to come by in a host of books, pamphlets, and periodicals. Sex was not left out. For middle-class Victorian adults, physical passion

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[145]Ibid., 15 August 1892.
[146]See Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 144, on the resentment this caused in his daughters.
[147]Ibid., 91. Leslie Stephen proposed in a letter, was at first refused, and later accepted with the sudden announcement, "I will be your wife and will do my best to be a good wife to you" (see ibid., and Leslie Stephen, *Mausoleum Book*, 57).

could not be entirely separated from love; the latter sanitized and legitimized sex. Parents and educators linked sex with love in order to deal with children's sexuality, which was necessary to future parenthood and the evolution of the human race towards perfection. The link with romance also served to discourage children's self-love, some years before Freud had made his mark with works such as *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905). Although the preservation of pre-pubescent young people's innocence was key in a world of sexual danger, pioneers in sexual education began to skirt around the issue, mainly by indirect, Christian-Darwinist discussions of "love" and reproduction in the natural world. Sexual education, however, was at the time something of a tool for proto-eugenicists, who created a conscience for children in the form of their future adult selves who would be parents to the next generation. Like Alice, children did not ask advice about growing, but they were given it. Middle-class young people held their own, however, by retaining an interest in sex and parodying the triteness and nonsense of adult romance. Adults' interested surveillance of the secret garden of children's sexuality was paralleled by young authors' own observations. For children like the Stephens, the writing of satirical love-letters became a weapon. The secret bubble of grown-up middle-class romance was revealed as a stuffy parlour where no one was able to express anything meaningful, and where roast beef was always on the menu. Young authors like the Stephens subverted developmentalism by having adults in love regress to the point of infantile behaviour and language. At the same time, however, they clearly absorbed adults' wishes for them to think about their futures; nearly all of their characters are grown-ups, however foolish, and love still follows a developmental pattern, however hackneyed. Indeed, these children's focus on adulthood, and their own adult potential, is the reason behind their writing in the first place. Though they were being mocked and parodied, middle-class adults' developmentalist message had been heard.

Chapter 4:
"The story could not go much further without becoming the history of a man": Directions in Late-Nineteenth-Century Children's Writing



Illustration for E. Nesbit, "The Play Times,"
Nister's Holiday Annual, 1896.

What, are they children? who maintains 'em? How are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to be common players,--as it is most like, if their means be no better,--their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

-William Shakespeare, Hamlet, II: ii.

Thus marking a state of affairs in which child actors were "most tyrannically clapped" for their efforts, Shakespeare encapsulated the nature of a debate that persisted long after his own era. The question was--and is--whether children's art is worth adult attention and critical consideration. The child genius has long been a figure of fascination, with the boy Mozart impressing audiences in the eighteenth century, and the juvenile Jane Austen seen as a wonder from the time her childhood works were first published after her death.[1] But the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a surge in child stars in various artistic media. Entertainment could be had in 1892 in the form of "the recitation of 'The Seven Ages of Man,' by Miss So-and-So, 'aged seven'" (as *The Spectator* snidely noted).[2] Columns by child authors in women's magazines of the 1880s and 1890s, such as the *Lady's Pictorial* (1887-1921), became widespread. Audiences of various classes thronged to witness prodigies of the "Infant Phenomenon" type onstage. Many parents longed to produce such a child of their own, and critics wrote various articles deploring the mass-production of the child luminary. As we have seen, the late-Victorian focus on the child led to a degree of romanticized child worship, especially among the middle classes. As Guildenstern might have it, this focus also

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[1]Juliet McMaster reports that in 1997, J. David Grey, an Austen scholar, "contended that there are two artists who composed world-class work as children: one was Mozart, and the other was Jane Austen" ("Apprentice Scholar, Apprentice Writer," *English Studies in Canada* 22 (March 1996), 14). The works of many other young writers, however, have always provoked interest and acclaim, as McMaster points out.
[2][n. a.], "The Infant in Print," *The Spectator* 68 (28 May 1892), 742. The choice of recitation has characteristic developmentalist implications.

ushered in a general "throwing about of brains" on the subject of prodigies, especially young writers, who were the most copious and most discussed in the firmament of child stars. Moreover, with the growing interest in artistic development, young literary stars increasingly began to shine within the late-nineteenth-century middle-class home instead of in the commercial press. More and more, adult worship surrounded the "natural" child, purportedly writing spontaneously from his or her own mind.

In this chapter, I will investigate the place of the child author on late-Victorian literary and family stages. I will consider how critics and parents viewed young authors and their productions over the course of the nineteenth century, and, in turn, what kind of audience the children themselves were seeking. In examining a selection of child authors' works from the second half of the century, I will undertake to explain similarities in authorial and editorial styles. The magazine or newspaper format so popular with these young writers requires further inquiry. The writing under consideration here is mainly that of children at home, up to about age 16 (the age by which most mid- to late-Victorian children had stopped writing family magazines). School writing by children, such as the public school magazine, is another subject, and one that has been covered.[3] Such magazines, along with commercial periodicals, increased in number in the second half of the nineteenth century, and were undoubtedly an influence on some home writings, at least in their format.[4] Home writing, however, was generally produced for a family (mainly parental) audience, and was thus subject to different influences, which I will examine, from those of school periodicals. The educational and developmental theories we have seen in the previous chapters apply to these kinds of writing, and I will therefore investigate some of their ramifications.

> *My [juvenilia] book was a heap of imitations, all but absolutely worthless.*
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> -*Leigh Hunt,* Autobiography, *1850.*

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[3]See, for example, Neville Braybrooke, ed., Introduction to *Seeds in the Wind* (especially 18-24); Sally Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915* (74-102); and Jenny Holt's Oxford D. Phil thesis, "The Influences of Public School Literature and Culture on Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Concepts of Adolescence."

[4]See Chapter 1 for a discussion of commercial children's magazines of the time.

Leigh Hunt's (1784-1859) first book of poetry was proudly issued by his father under the title *Juvenilia; or, a Collection of Poems Written Between the Ages of Twelve and Sixteen* in 1801. It went through four editions in three years, but was largely ignored during the later nineteenth century. Paradoxically, while indulging in varying degrees of admiration of child writers, the late-Victorian middle- and upper-middle-class literati displayed a certain disdain for the childhood creations of contemporaneous adult authors. Although the adult Hunt's shame at his early works represents a somewhat common authorial attitude for the time,[5] critical opinions of writers' juvenilia prior to the late-Victorian years were generally favourable. Neville Braybrooke, editor of an anthology of twentieth-century juvenilia, observes that in the collected works of earlier authors such as Milton, childhood "treasures" were virtually always included.[6] Why did earlier writers and editors accept childhood writings as an unquestioned constituent of an oeuvre? The classical influence, representing moral tradition, retained its hold on writing until the mid-nineteenth century, and was probably the strongest motivation for adult writers to take seriously their youthful effusions. The ten-year-old Abraham Cowley in 1618 composed "The Tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," inspired by Shakespeare, which begins sonorously with the lines, "Where Babilon's high Walls erected were / By mighty NINVS wife: two houses joyn'd."[7] Such compositions required work and some degree of scholarship; these authors evidently felt them to be more than mere poetic exercises, and were proud of their ability to assimilate knowledge. Educators of the day, along with many general readers, sanctioned this method as a means of moral

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[5]This attitude continued in the later nineteenth century. Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, wrote to his editor in 1894, "I see with some alarm the proposal to print *Juvenilia*; does it not seem to you taking myself a little too much as Grandfather William? . . . I felt indignant at even John Ruskin when he did something of the kind I really feel myself blush from head to heel" (Stevenson to Sidney Colvin, 18 May 1894, *Vailima Letters*, 330). Ruskin, however, as an earlier-born author, was very interested in his own juvenile writings, publishing in 1885 something of a facsimile edition of his Edgeworth-inspired "Harry and Lucy Concluded" as he had written it at age seven. He also saw in them signs of lifelong consistency of thought and judgement (see Ruskin, *Præterita* (1885-9), 36-45).

[6]Braybrooke, ed., Introduction to *Seeds in the Wind,* 14-5. Milton's youthful poems were included in the 1738 edition of his complete works, as well as in an 1870 collection of his poetry. The later inclusion may be more due to the desire to scrutinize everything a great author ever wrote than to an appreciation of his earliest writing.

[7]Cowley, "The Tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," in *Minor Masterpieces*, ed. Randall, 47.

development. The 15-year-old Cowley published his tragedy and other early poems in a collection that ran to three successively enlarged editions. Moreover, despite the argument that juvenile writings were worth nothing to Milton "in a market that yielded him fifteen guineas or so for *Paradise Lost*,"[8] examples of his early poetry are indeed extant, evidently due to the author's own retention of his childhood manuscripts. One could argue that as the human lifespan was generally shorter during these authors' times, the period of childhood was perceived as proportionately shorter. These authors might thus have defined their work as mature earlier than did writers in the late nineteenth century. It appears, however, that the writings were primarily perceived to be valuable because of their imitation of moral historical works, in societies in which Christian virtue was intensely important. They provided a record of the imitative period then seen to be necessary to a writer's moral progress, and worthwhile in itself. The predominance of classical theme and style in these and similar works lent them authenticity and durability, and frequently assured their survival into their authors' adulthood. Writers' collected works began to be laid out chronologically, emphasizing the emergence from a classical grounding of their moral strength over a lifetime.

The concept of writerly development was itself developing at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Convention and tradition, however, maintained a strong hold on linguistic education. The importance of moral education remained high, and was joined by a widespread belief in the necessity for parental formation of children's characters, in order that the child might grow into a state of grace. These ideas were key shapers of children's writing. During this period, human progressivism was strongly tied to Christianity. The ideas of Erasmus Darwin (scientist and poet grandfather of Charles Darwin, 1731-1802), as well those as of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, were important to the middle- and upper-class view of childhood during the first decades of the century. Combining proto-evolutionary ideas with the image of a benevolent creator in 1794, Erasmus Darwin wrote that the general improvement for all life through the ages of the earth was "consonant to the idea of our present situation being a state of probation, which

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[8]Harry Randall, ed., Introduction to *Minor Masterpieces*, x.

by our exertion we may improve, and are consequently responsible for our actions."[9] Educationalists applied Christianized theories like the elder Darwin's to the individual child as writer, putting him under a "probation" period of prescribed writing until he had learned enough to compose moral works on his own.[10] The Greek and Roman dominion also held sway over educated middle- and upper-class children's (especially male children's) minds well into the nineteenth century. Lytton Strachey remarked that despite Dr. Arnold's reputation as an educational reformer, the public school of the 1820s and 1830s "remained, in essentials, a conventional establishment, devoted to the teaching of Greek and Latin Grammar."[11] Arnold, like many parents of the period, saw himself as forming children's characters, and he did not wish to deviate from the morality of Christian and classical tradition.[12] Even his then-radical introduction of history at Rugby, taught for one hour a week, was part of Arnold's plan to make Christianized classical heroism the basis of an early-nineteenth-century middle-class boy's education. Arnold himself said, "The study of language seems to me as if it was given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth; and the Greek and Latin languages seem the very instruments by which this is to be effected."[13] The educator made clear that writing was the basis of morality training. Tom Brown, during his famed early-Victorian schooldays under Dr. Arnold, was made to compose 114 "vulgi" per year, these being exercises "in Greek or Latin verse, on a given subject, the minimum number of lines being fixed for each form." Part of Rugby tradition, according to the author, was the keeping of one's vulgus verses "written out in a book, and these books were duly handed down from boy to boy."[14] Tom upheld this custom with copies of handed-down vulgi,

> picking out a line here, and an ending there . . . till he had gotten all that he

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[9]Erasmus Darwin, *Zoonomia; Or, the Laws of Organic Life* (Vol. 1), 509. See Chapter 1 on Lamarckian theory, and Nora Barlow, "Charles Darwin and his Grandfather Dr. Erasmus Darwin," in *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin* (149-73), on the younger Darwin's ideas about his grandfather's theories.

[10]See Chapter 2 on the late-Victorian adaptation of developmental laws to children's language education.

[11]Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, 187.

[12]See Chapter 1 on early- and mid-Victorian parents' view of themselves as formers of character.

[13]Cited in Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, 171.

[14]Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 258. Published in 1857, the book was an evocation of Hughes's own schooldays earlier in the century. Readers would have been made aware of this fact through Hughes's pseudonym, "An Old Boy."

> thought he could make fit. He then proceeded to patch his tags together with the help of his Gradus . . . and finishing up with two highly moral lines extra, making ten in all, which he cribbed entire from one of his books, beginning "O genus humanum," and which he himself must have used a dozen times before. . ..[15]

Tom's friend, Martin, unlucky enough to be without a vulgus, uses the "dogged or prosaic method," which consists of writing an unimpassioned verse in English, and then forcing it into scannable Latin, "by main force of Gradus and dictionary," while the angelic Arthur composes his own polished verses extempore, through the "artistic method."[16] The three levels of composition methods reflect the middle-class perception of children's writing before the later nineteenth century; as writing education methods were based on centuries of classical and Christian tradition, they would accordingly shape young people's morals. Boys like Tom, with vulgi in hand, were meant to develop the virtue of boys like Arthur. By writing along stardardized lines, children were seen to construct the foundation of their own morality (Tom's spiritual growth over the course of the novel reaches a pinnacle when he disposes of his vulgus books and writes from his own heart--albeit to classical and Christlike standards). Non-fictional authors' childhood writings prior to the late Victorian years were often similarly esteemed as artifacts of the early shaping of an author's integrity on his journey through life.

Tom's father, Squire Brown, however, spoke for many non-fictional middle-class parents when he mused, sending his son off to Rubgy,

> I don't care a straw for Greek particles, or the digamma, no more than does his mother. What is he sent to school for? Well, partly because he wanted to go. If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truth-telling Englishman, and a gentleman, and a Christian, that's all I want.[17]

Strachey concurred; during Arnold's days as headmaster, he wrote, the traditional "system of education was beginning to be assailed by the awakening public opinion of the upper middle classes. On the one hand, there was the desire for a more liberal curriculum; on the other, there was a demand for a higher moral tone."[18] Although morality remained important in adults' view of children's development as the century

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[15]Ibid., 259.
[16]Ibid., 260.
[17]Ibid., 72.
[18]Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, 166.

progressed, language learning was slowly beginning to become less symbolic of moral progress. Liberalization gradually began to win out, and the strictures of standard language education loosened slightly.[19] Popular Christianity was softening towards an emphasis on self-development, a movement of which Samuel Smiles's 1859 *Self-help* was a pinnacle. In the 1840s, classicism had begun to lose its overall grip, although it retained a stranglehold on public school curricula for decades to come. Home writing was the first to show the change. Middle- and upper-middle-class girls, most of whom never went to school, were at the forefront of the transitions in juvenile composition. Indeed, this is the first period for which any amount of female juvenilia is extant; girls previously were not expected to learn much of Greek and Latin, or classical morality. Adults (and the girls themselves) might have seen little reason to keep, as signs of their moral development, whatever works they may have composed. Now, some girls began to write on their own, outside the strictures of set composition topics and forms.[20] The young satirist Jane Austen, whose works anticipate the early-Victorian period's sanctioned categories of children's writing, was a forerunner of these changes. Her "History of England," written for her sister at 15 in 1791, owes a literary debt to a semi-classical education, and owes its conception to young writers' perception--and that of the adults around them--of historical and educational subjects as valid.[21] However, it subverts the very traditions that gave it birth. "There will be very few dates in this History," announces the author in a pre-textual note. Austen's chapter on Edward V reads: "This unfortunate Prince lived so little a while that no body had time to draw his picture. He was murdered by his Uncle's Contrivance, whose name was Richard the 3d."[22] In the

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[19]See Chapter 2.

[20]Some girls throughout the nineteenth century, of whom Charlotte M. Yonge's Ethel May is a famous fictional example, followed the curricula of their schoolboy brothers. Christina Rossetti's (1830-94) "The Chinaman," written at age 12, was composed in order to compete with her brother William's (1829-1919) set school verses on the Anglo-Chinese Opium War.

[21]Austen's work mocked Oliver Goldsmith's four-volume *A History of England in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son* (1764). Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Prichard note that by the early nineteenth century, "most juvenile booksellers were producing accounts of English history" (*The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*, 252). Nineteenth-century children continued to compose histories, but, as adults became more involved in children's home writing, many were more serious than Austen's. The works of the young John Stuart Mill provide one early example (see below).

[22]Austen, "The History of England," in *Minor Works*, 140.

voice of a "partial, prejudiced, and ignorant Historian," the adolescent Austen mocks the piecemeal way she and children (especially girls) of her time were taught. History and the classics were gutted for their most moral morsels, which young writers were expected to incorporate into their own moral attitudes and compositions. Austen goes further in her piece on Edward VI, in which she includes a description of Lady Jane Grey,

> who has already been mentioned as reading Greek. Whether she really understood that language or whether such a Study proceeded only from an excess of vanity for which I beleive she was always rather remarkable . . . while conducting to the Scaffold, she wrote a Sentence in Latin & another in Greek on seeing the dead Body of her Husband accidentally passing that way.[23]

The high moral tone Austen takes with the short-lived queen for her studies not only pokes fun at pomposity, but mocks the educational conventions of the day, in which compendia of the "Elegant Extracts" type were the norm in teaching, and in which most girls were expected only to dabble in the classics. To Austen the satirist, Jane Grey is a fool for having learned classical languages to no avail; she can only vainly spout verses on her way to the executioner's block. While parodying the continuing educational norms of her day, the young author foreshadowed the way in which middle-class standards for children's writing were set to change.[24]

The Brontë siblings, whose miniature books are now eminent among juvenilia, were also displaying changes in standards for writing by children in the 1820s and 1830s. All of the children were familiar with classical language and literature; John Dryden's translation of Virgil was a well-thumbed book in their parsonage home, and, somewhat unusually for their time, place, and gender, the girls of the family were fairly adept at Latin grammar.[25] Yet it was the satirical and political *Blackwell's Magazine* that made

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[23]Ibid., 144-5. See Margaret Anne Doody, Introduction to Austen, *Catharine and Other Writings*, xvii-xviii,on the implications of Austen's revision of "*Cockylorum*" to "vanity" in the manuscript of the text.
[24]This, along with their witty spark, may be part of the great appeal of the early Austen texts; they are almost entirely different from any extant children's writing of her period. Most eighteenth-century juvenilia are in Leigh Hunt's imitative mode, or, in the rarer case of extant girls' writing, in the standard romance vein (see, for example, the work of the young Lady Mary Pierrepont (later Wortley Montagu), as discussed in Chapter 3.
[25]Juliet Barker, *The Brontës*, 147. Isobel Hurst has pointed out that many clergymen's daughters did learn Latin and Greek in the early to mid-Victorian period, although this was generally for the purpose of reading rather than composition ("'Lady's Greek': Classical Daughters and the Victorian Novel," lecture to Victorian Graduate Seminar, 7 May, 2001, St. Cross Building, Oxford).

the most impression on this family's writings. The children adopted its ironical stance and modelled their own stories' heroes on the men lauded and decried in its pages. In an 1830 issue of one of the children's own magazines, the 13-year-old Branwell Brontë, himself wont to strew his stories with Latin tags, mocked his sister Charlotte's classical tastes:

> O how I fancy I can see the yong Author brimfull of himself after having finished this passage rise up take the Manuscript in his greasy hand rubb his head stick out his shirt frill give a few hems pop into Popes homer to see if their was a passage their equal to it . . ..[26]

In revenge, Charlotte set upon her brother, through one of his most beloved magazine characters, Young Soult the poet:

> What's that? Oh! 'twas but the wind, mournfully serenading me on its passage through the sky. Methinks I will apostrophize it. Yea, the thoughts are crowding into my mind. Dost thou, o wind, look from they ever resounding halls with pity on me, the Forsaken? . . . Let me see. That's good poetry. I'll versify it.[27]

Charlotte Brontë mocks not only her younger brother, but also, perhaps less consciously, the system and language through which children were taught to write. In her view, the poet grasps at any subject he can find, and pens stock verses on it, much as Tom Brown and his friends used their vulgi in composition. Branwell is still more derisive of sanctioned writing methods for children; the "yong" writer, having finished a work, immediately "pops in" to the classics as a basis for comparison to his writing. Pope's Homer is nothing more than a yardstick. The author is uncouth and filthy, hardly the angelic Arthur whom Hughes nostalgically saw as the pinnacle of young writers' development during this period. Although the Brontë children's works became more serious and romanticized with time,[28] they frequently retained educationally subversive aspects. It should not go unnoticed that their father was well acquainted with Miss Richmal Mangnall, educationalist and author of the standard early-nineteenth-century history text for home and school, Mangnall's *Historical and Miscellaneous Questions for*

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[26]Cited in Barker, 163.
[27]Cited in ibid.
[28]As does most later nineteenth-century juvenilia. See Chapter 3.

the use of Young People (1813).[29] The children had a copy of this book for their moral edification, and evidently did not forget its pedantic tone when penning their later histories and romances. Mangnall's work, in accordance with educational methods then in vogue, is literally a series of questions and answers for memorization. A typical example is the query, "How did the Egyptians become such an easy prey to the Persians?" The correct response is, "They had long been accustomed to a luxurious life; their manners had become effeminate. . .."[30] The clever young Alexander Percy (later Rogue), Branwell's favourite protagonist in his childhood stories, turns the tables on his tutor as a child in an 1834 tale, continually asking the unanswerable: "'Mr Bud where shall we go when we die', 'What are our spirits like Sir', 'Why doesnt the judgement day come now when men are so wicked'."[31] The traditional historical and moral questions, for the use of parents and educators on children, are themselves questioned here. Due to his "overmuch unassisted thinking,"[32] Percy falls into Romantic melancholy and atheism, demonstrating the young Branwell Brontë's belief that the rote means of teaching children were useless. The character becomes a hero in spite of his early education, not because of it. Of course, this was a somewhat private thought, shared only with his sisters in their tiny books away from grown-up eyes, as was Jane Austen's "History," written for her older sister's amusement (Cassandra Austen contributed the illustrations).[33] Indeed, the private nature of these children's works is likely what led to their survival. Unlike Cowley's or Hunt's eagerly published juvenila, these works were treasured due to the opportunities they offered for private thoughts and jokes, including the educational

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[29]The two eldest Brontë daughters, Maria and Elizabeth, who both died very young, briefly attended a school founded by Mangnall.
[30]Richmal Mangnall, *Historical and Miscellaneous Questions*, 7.
[31]Cited in Barker, 205.
[32]Ibid.
[33]Austen's father evidently gave her one or two of the notebooks in which her juvenilia were written, but I do not believe that this means he read all her works as they were produced or understood her satires (which he lightly called "effusions of fancy" in the inscription of one of the books). The very young Austen's primary audience was made up of her siblings and cousins (for another view, and for a discussion of collaboration in Austen's late juvenilia, see Doody, Introduction, xv-xxii). Austen also revealed a subversive attitude towards standard education in her satirical *Henry and Eliza* (c. 1787-9), written for her cousin Jane Cooper (1771-1850), in which the three-month-old Eliza has "sprightly answers" to any questions her foster parents ask in an attempt "to incite in her a Love of Virtue & a Hatred of Vice" (in *Minor Works,* 33-4). See Doody, xxviii-xxxviii, for a discussion of the tendency to ignore important subversive patterns in the early Austen texts.

subversions discussed above. Although they were being allowed to write somewhat more freely beginning in the pre-Victorian period, many children writing had made a move underground, for parents and teachers had yet truly to give up on "Greek particles and the digamma," alongside Christian morality, as the bases for children's maturation through writing.

That middle- and upper-class children *should* write as part of their moral education had become an axiom by the early nineteenth century. Although the rule of classicism was crumbling, the desire to instill morality had not entirely disappeared from adults' view of children's writing. By the second half of the century, the general understanding of what and how children should write was once again changing. Now, adults were no longer actively to form children's moral characters, only to help them along the road to adulthood. Because parents had begun to take on the roles of observers rather than prescribers of their children's development, it was at home that children's writing took on less stratified forms. Middle-class parents began to ease the rules of childhood composition in an attempt to understand development of all kinds, not simply the moral, through children's writing. With the rise of the idea of children's "natural" artistic self-development, the child as "natural" writer came to the fore. As *The Spectator* put it in 1893,

> There are few changes in our own civilisation which are more creditable than the regard now shown for the feelings of children, and the relaxation of those rigid forms which once compressed their natural and spontaneous exhibitions of affection. They are now allowed to write as they please, just as they are allowed to talk as they please; and no better evidence of the growth of confidence and love between old and young could well be found than in the ill-spelled pages of children's letters.[34]

The mention of allowing children "to write as they please" in the same breath as "love between old and young" gives an air of adult self-satisfaction to the piece. Yet the author also demonstrates adults' anxious desire to understand children's private languages and romantic feelings during the period.[35] Middle-class parents began to designate themselves

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[34][n. a.], "Children's Letters," *Spectator* 71 (23 September 1893), 398.
[35]See Chapters 2 and 3.

as the audience for children's "spontaneous" writings. Children, if permitted to write "just as they please," late-Victorian critics seem to have had it, would grow up to be virtuous, loving, intelligent, and perhaps artistic adults. The cult of the "natural" child writer had its roots in Rousseau's and Pestalozzi's eighteenth-century works. The late-Victorian belief in so-called naturalism came with the foregrounding of a child's adult potential. If a child contained his or her adult future at birth, he or she would naturally develop it with relatively minimal adult guidance. The interest in origins sparked by Darwin also made the child the ontogenetic miniature of the human race, and not just in a physical sense; the child's imagination was seen as a spring of semi-mysterious creativity from which future art and culture would evolve to the general good. The concept of natural selection ensured that many middle-class parents thought of their children as individuals able to improve themselves and future humanity. Encouraging children to write "spontaneously" ensured that a record of self-development was made in accordance with these ideals, and helped parents to understand the secrets of childhood.

It took the death of a small girl to foreground the "natural" child author in the late-nineteenth-century imagination. Marjory "Pet Marjorie" Fleming was born in 1803 and died in 1811, and managed to compose a prodigious amount of poetry and prose, often religious, before her premature demise from a case of measles. No other child writer received the posthumous attention paid to Fleming. To her admirer Mark Twain, Fleming was "The Wonder Child."[36] Her friend Sir Walter Scott declared, "She's the most extraordinary creature I ever met with, and her repeating of Shakespeare overpowers me as nothing else does."[37] To her biographer and editor Lachlan MacBean (1853-1931), she was the preeminent "real, natural child."[38] Succeeding generations appear to have concurred with MacBean's determination of Fleming. Her most-quoted poem, on the death of a trio of turkeys, is cited even today as a charming effusion of a

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[36]Title of Mark Twain's essay on Fleming, included in Lachlan MacBean, *Marjorie Fleming's Book: The Story of Pet Marjorie* (1928). Fleming and her family spelled her name "Marjory": the "-ie" ending and the "Pet Marjorie" nickname were bestowed by the first editor of her works, H. B. Farnie, in 1858.
[37]Cited in Myra Cohn Livingston, *The Child as Poet: Myth or Reality?*, 90.
[38]Marjory Fleming, "[Poem] Dedicated to Mrs H Crawfurd by the author MF" (1810), in *The Complete Marjory Fleming*, 29.

born writer. It begins,

> Three turkeys fair their last have breathed
> And now this world for ever leaved
> Their Father & their Mother too
> Will sigh and weep as well as you . . ..

Some lines later, Fleming concludes poetically, "Here ends this melancholy lay / Farewell Poor Turkeys I must say[.]"[39] Nineteenth-century and present-day adult readers have seen this verse as prototypically childlike; the subject is mundane, but the writer's evident sincerity, along with her misspellings and incorrect usage, lend it the ingenuous and spontaneous quality that have characterized the "natural" literary child ever since. The young Fleming, in a bid to please her encouraging governess, parents, and adult literary admirers, also wrote historical verse, a subject sanctioned by early-nineteenth-century educators, especially for girls. Like the young Jane Austen, Fleming took Mary Queen of Scots as her subject:

> Poor Mary Queen of Scots was born
> With all the graces which adorn
> Her birthday is so very late
> That I do now forget the date
> Her education was in france
> There she did learn to sing and dance
> There she was married to the dauphin
> But soon he was laid in a coffin . . .
> There is a thing that I must tell
> Elisabeth went to fire and hell
> Him who will teach her to be cevel
> It must be her great friend the divel[.][40]

Fleming's sense of history demonstrates once again the standards of her era in writing education: she dutifully takes on a historical subject, but finds she cannot recall the dates she is meant to have learned; and she displays the morality she has acquired in this education by sending her subject's antagonist Queen Elizabeth to "the divel." Her moral stance applies most severely to herself. In her journal, Fleming confessed that she had one day been thinking

> how I should Improve the many talents I have. I am very sory I have threwn them

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[39]Ibid., 29-30.
[40]Fleming, "The Life of Mary Queen of Scots by M. F." (1811), in *The Complete Marjory Fleming*, 135-48.

> away it is shoking to think of it when many have not half the instruction I have because Isabella [Keith, Fleming's cousin and tutor] teaches me to or three hours every day in reading and writing and arethmatick and many other things and religion into the bar gan[.][41]

When she failed to do her lessons properly, Fleming castigated herself as a "little young Devil."[42] Her self-disappointment is manifested in her inability to write in what she saw as a suitable manner without direct adult instruction and approval. Pet Marjorie's "natural" writerliness, then, was a product of adult intervention and adult admiration of her work.[43] Her journal was hardly a private one; her tutor underlined misspellings in it, and her parents and adult friends read it even before her death. Isabella Keith wrote to Fleming's sister, "She continues her journal every day entirely by herself it is a very amusing production indeed, and when finished I shall send it over for your Mothers perusal, and I hope she will find it more correct and better written than the last."[44] Though Fleming's compositions may have seemed spontaneous, and written "entirely by herself," they did not come from nowhere. Even Fleming's admirer Mark Twain could not help but parody her work and adult admiration thereof when his Huck Finn meets the Grangerford family, whose worshipful admiration of their prematurely dead poetess daughter Emmeline, who "could write about anything you choose to give her to write about, just so it was sadful,"[45] is the subject of sly humour. Adults, especially parents, had begun to be very much a part of the seemingly artless composition process, as they coaxed children's private thoughts and writings into the spotlight.

The cult of Pet Marjorie sprang up from the romance of her early death, and her connection with famous literary figures. It reached its height in the late nineteenth century, with the middle-class focus on the child's potential and the appeal of his or her purported self-development. Middle-class adults of the time took up earlier theories of writing as a sign of children's morality, and adapted them to reflect the perceived

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[41]Fleming, Journal (1810), in *The Complete Marjory Fleming*, 40.
[42]Ibid., 53-4.
[43]Myra Cohn Livingston writes of Fleming's fame, "Had she not written a journal and some rhyming verses, she would be no different from thousands of other children whose parents did not write down what *they* said!" (92). Fleming in fact wrote out most of her own works, but her family was obviously involved in the composition process.
[44]Isabella Keith to Isabella Fleming, 1 April 1811, in *The Complete Marjory Fleming*, 179.
[45]Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, in *Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn*, 273.

perfectibility of the entire human race and its culture. This conception is shown in the popularity of Marjory Fleming during this period; because this child's potential was cut off before it had truly shown itself, she became the individual representing the "natural" capacity of all child writers. In compiling the *Dictionary of National Biography* in the 1870s and 1880s, Leslie Stephen wrote approvingly of Fleming. He decided that her poems and diaries "show singular quickness, vivacity, and humour," and that "no more fascinating infantile author has ever appeared."[46] Like Fleming, later middle- and upper-class children were seen to contain their adult selves, and their writing became a signpost to their futures. Fleming was not the only child whose writing was thus foregrounded. Another early example is demonstrated by James Mill's then-radical education of his son John Stuart in the 1810s and 1820s. The younger Mill, who was versed in Greek from the age of three and Latin from eight, was throughout boyhood "addicted . . . [to] writing histories"[47] based on his reading:

> I successively composed a Roman history, picked out of Hooke; an abridgement of the *Ancient Universal History*; a History of Holland, from my favorite Watson and from an anonymous compilation; and . . . no less than a history of the Roman Goverment . . . of which I wrote as much as would have made an octavo volume. . ..[48]

All of this before the age of 12. Mill noted, "My father encouraged me in this useful amusement, though, as I think judiciously, he never asked to see what I wrote; so that I did not feel that in writing it I was accountable to any one. . .."[49] The elder Mill, like many parents later in the century, seems to have wanted to believe in the "spontaneity" of his child's writing. The boy's works, however, were not entirely private or "natural." His

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[46]*Dictionary of National Biography* (Vol. 7), 281. Stephen's approbation of Pet Marjorie as a "natural" author was part of his own children's motivation to win his regard through writing (see Chapter 5). He proudly noted on a letter from the six-year-old Virginia Stephen to her "godfather," James Russell Lowell, "This is a spontaneous production of Miss Stephen. . ." (in Woolf, [n. d.], *Letters* 1, 1).

[47]John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (final draft), in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, 17. Leslie Stephen also owned this work.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid. Children later in the century continued to compose histories, sometimes influenced by works such as Dickens's prejudiced and dramatic *A Child's History of England* (1852). The young Maurice Platnauer (1887-1974), who later became a classical scholar, serially composed "Maurice's New English History" (Bodleian Library MS) from 1896-7. Although the work was ostensibly for the edification of a younger cousin, it is clear that Platnauer was writing to impress his parents; his father was a museum curator in York.

father had him compose verse in English; an "Ode to Diana," written at about age seven, is a very classical sample of his works. As Mill later wrote, his writing, "begun from choice, was continued by command."[50] These exercises were a large part of his father's belief in "indirect" moral teaching.[51] In composing classical and historical pieces, the young Mill was expected to learn uprightness and steadiness of character. In short, his purportedly spontaneous boyhood compositions, like Fleming's, were meant to shape and reveal his adult self.

Theories of writing education similar to but less extreme than the elder Mill's spread over the course of the later nineteenth century. Late-Victorian parents and educators began to sanction new types of children's home writing as a part of their self-development, and became increasingly involved in their children's original compositions. Middle-class children later in the century were not meant to learn Greek as toddlers,[52] but to compose their own "natural" productions, albeit under the influences of their parents and their implied adult selves. A ten-year-old poet, Julia Willoughby, penned "The Song of the Child of Nature" in 1868 in order to appeal to her family audience, who indulged the hope that its publication would help "bring forth those gems of thought that, mayhap, in coming years, may help to illustrate and adorn our future literature."[53] When John Russell's seven-year-old son Frank refused to "do a little more writing" and "threw his copybook into the fire" in the 1870s, his father worried that he would "be like this" for life. Like other late-Victorian parents, Russell linked children's writing, more than any other lessons, to adult success.[54] Composition, no longer an exercise solely in classical imitation and Christian moralization, had become a key to a productive adult life through its emphasis on "ingenuous" self-revelation and artistic self-development. A home market in juvenile writing thus quickly sprang up in competition with the child stars of

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[50]Mill, 19.
[51]Discussed in ibid., 49-50.
[52]See Chapter 2 on the slowing down of the language education process for children in the late nineteenth century.
[53]See Preface to Julia Willoughby, *A Child's Poetic Thoughts*, iv.
[54]Bertrand Russell and Patricia Russell, eds., *The Amberley Papers: The Letters and Diaries of Lord and Lady Amberley* (Vol. 2), 511. See Chapter 2 on Leslie Stephen's despair over his daughter Laura, who was "mentally deficient" and could not learn to read or write.

late-Victorian ladies' magazines; as one critic avowed in 1892, "[T]he nursery audience is by no means to be despised, and ought to content the literary aspirant of nine years old."[55] Juvenile writing went under the auspices of home, private creation, with publication mainly being disdained by the middle classes, but it was earnestly scrutinized by parents and educators for signs of young writers' future selves and artistic development. This is not to say that children's home writing in this period was always constricted in choice of subject; many late-Victorian juvenilia were satirical and rude, violent and bloody, and obsessed with money, sex, and food. These qualities are often most apparent in works by younger children, and were sanctioned by parents and educators as appropriate to their less "evolved" developmental stage.[56] Children's writing was expected gradually, and "naturally," to become more serious, literary, and adult as young authors grew up. Even the most satirical works of the youngest authors, however, show an awareness of adult audience, and many aspire to adulthood. An example of what later became a general trend is provided by the writings of the Bradley family. Nearly all of the children of the large Marlborough family wrote in their early youth. Recalling in 1891 her children's upbringing in the 1850s and 1860s, Marian Jane Bradley noted in her diary that her maternal plan had been "Not to fuss over them, or pull up the roots to see if the buds were promising--My Motto was that children's roots should grow underground, that the plant may be strong & fruitful afterward. . .."[57] Fruitfulness was not simply a moral or regenerative metaphor, but a representation of the parental hope that children, purportedly left to themselves, would naturally develop the ability to produce beautiful creations of their own.[58] The buds that promised fruitful futures for the Bradley children

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[55]"The Infant in Print," 742.

[56]See Chapter 1 on the ontogeny-philogeny mantra of the time, and Chapter 3 on the young Ashford children's interest in sex and their parodies of adult love, which, in at least Daisy Ashford's case, later developed into the writing of standard romances. Both styles and topics were seen by the Ashford parents as appropriate to the age at which they were written--as well, perhaps, as to the gender of the young authors.

[57]Marian Jane Bradley, "Diary," May 1891, British Library MS. A section of Marian Bradley's journal, akin to later baby diaries as discussed in Chapter 1, was titled "Private Book about my children," in which she mused on their futures.

[58]Marian Bradley copied into her diary "a few of [her son's] ideas one night when he ws watching the moon & stars over the sea," which she had "put in verse with as few additions as I could. . ." ("Diary," [January?] 1893). Arthur "Wa" Bradley was two years old.

were prominently displayed in their joint writings, which were ostensibly spontaneous, but which became increasingly literary and intellectual as the journal ran its course, and were always a subject of great interest to parents and literary friends.[59] When Shakespeare asked, regarding the child actors, "Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing?", he foresaw middle-class parents' concerns for their young authors in the second half of the nineteenth century. Moral progress was no longer the main issue; it had become wrapped up with artistic, psychological, and intellectual self-development. How children would develop into adult "singers" through their writing was the question.

> *I could write a better paper on my head, but an editor is not allowed to write all the paper. It is very hard, but he is not. You just have to fill up with what you can get from other writers.*
> *-Oswald Bastable, in E. Nesbit,*
> The Story of the Treasure Seekers, *1899.*

The Bastable children's example was a fictional culmination of children's writing in many late-Victorian middle- and upper-class homes. Nesbit's young characters produce a collaborative newspaper of their own, along the lines of contemporary commercial children's magazines, in an attempt to gain an adult audience ("[b]ut we want the money too").[60] Juvenile writing of the period, supposedly left to bloom "naturally" and on its own, was subject to adult influences, and especially to adult readers. Some late-Victorian children did continue to keep their writing entirely private, in the Brontë tradition, especially in diaries and journals. Some, like the young Beatrix Potter in the late 1870s, even developed elaborate code languages to ensure their works' secrecy.[61] A new and more general trend, however, emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century. With the rise of developmentalism came a corresponding increase in serial stories written by children, which enabled parents to "read" their children's psychological

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[59]See below on the Bradley children's magazine.
[60]E. Nesbit, *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*, 113. Nesbit based the children's newspaper on a somewhat more sentimental piece she originally wrote for *Nister's Holiday Annual* in 1896, "The Play Times" [n. p.], in which "Mother" makes a few editorial comments. In the book, the young Noël Bastable also sells his poetry to a "grown-up" magazine, which evidently sentimentalizes it as an appealingly "natural" child's production, much to his editor brother's disgust.
[61]See Chapter 2 on adult interest in children's private languages.

and artistic progress in each installment.[62] Children were also encouraged to record their own development by writing about their day-to-day activities and thoughts, as extensions of the domestic baby diaries popular at the time.[63] The collective manuscript family magazine, as satirized by Nesbit with the Bastable children's "Lewisham Recorder" (with its "Serial Story. By Us All.),"[64] provided the ideal form for this kind of writing during this period, and remained widespread until the First World War era.[65] The forerunners of these magazines are the family "Commonplace Books" of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Sheridan and Tickell families' 1787-1816 compilation, for example, is a series of neatly copied poems by ten adult and adolescent family members (one of whom was the dramatist Richard Brinsley Sheridan) on subjects from a sleeping infant to falling off a horse.[66] These books were a means to "publish" works within families, for they were passed around to relatives and friends. Young people's writings were included in these collections, and the work of younger children took over as the family became more child-centred and commonplace books developed into family magazines. The magazine appears sometimes to have been a task set by governesses in the second half of the century, but many children began or continued to issue their

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[62]Moral growth was still sometimes a part of the rationale for encouraging this kind of children's writing. The March girls in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868) write a *Pickwick*-inspired paper whose content is fairly typical of the time, "filled with original tales, poetry, local news, funny advertisements, and hints" (112). It also provided "Weekly Reports" on its writers' behaviour ("Meg--good. Jo--bad. Beth--very good. Amy--middling") (117). It was based, however, on a "bona fide" newspaper (117) composed by Alcott and her sisters in the 1840s, and as such may have been influenced by the moral focus of the earlier nineteenth century. *Pickwick* may have helped inspire some later manuscript magazines, as it was high on both boys' and girls' lists of favourite books in Edward Salmon's 1888 survey (*Little Women*, too, was prominent on the girls' list. See Salmon, *Juvenile Literature As It Is*, 15, 22). Most children's home magazines in the later decades of the century subordinated the overt moral to a display of literary, intellectual, and psychological development.

[63]See Chapter 1. Francis Galton encouraged parents to assign "to every child some such book as the Life History Album [1884], prepared by the Collective Investigation Committee of the British Medical Association. The album is intended to serve as a register of the current events of a life from childhood onwards, so far as they are connected with development and health. If the register is faithfully kept, the album will serve the child in good stead the older he grows, and will be an advantage to his children after him" (*Record of Family Faculties*, 5).

[64]Nesbit, 114.

[65]See Olivia Bell and Alan Bell, "Children's Manuscript Magazines in the Bodleian Library," in *Children and Their Books*, ed. Avery and Briggs, 399.

[66]Sheridan and Tickell Families, "Commonplace Book," British Library MS (1787-1816). Some family periodicals also existed during this period; at 13, Jane Austen contributed occasionally to her brothers' semi-satirical weekly "The Loiterer." But Henry Austen and James Austen were not children and not at home (they were at Oxford by this time), making their production much more professional than and quite different from later nineteenth century children's manuscript magazines.

newspapers of their own volition, including jokes, "answers to correspondents," intellectual tidbits, and so on.[67] Adults, however, remained an essential component of these works throughout the nineteenth century. The Bastable children cease production of their paper after a single issue, which has sold only one copy to "Albert-next-door's-uncle."[68] Without a grown-up audience, most non-fictional young editors and writers would similarly have produced no copy at all.

One of the most famous early examples of this genre is the Dodgson family's series of home magazines, including "The Rectory Magazine" (1848) and "The Rectory Umbrella" (originated in 1849 or 1850). Charles Dodgson (1832-98), the editor, was a Rugby schoolboy at the time, and the influence of the school magazine, with its jokes and puzzles, makes itself felt here as in some other family journals. Dodgson recalled in a later magazine that "the issuing of each number was attended by the most violent excitement through the whole house; most of the family contributed one or more articles to it."[69] As Dodgson was the third of 11 children, the magazines were extremely varied in terms of contributions, although he copied out each issue in his own hand. The author's remarks foreground the three main motivations that impelled nearly all young Victorian editors and writers to compile their family magazines: the desire for an adult audience; the need for anonymity and collaboration; and the sense of attaining professional publication status. The Dodgson family's productions were quite sophisticated, and evidently designed to appeal to the grown-up inhabitants of the rectory. Lucy Lutwidge, the aunt who cared for the Dodgson children after their mother's death, made one contribution to "The Rectory Magazine," a satirical advertisement for "a Maid of all work, in a large but quiet family . . . Wages £3. 3*s*. 0*d*. a year, with or without tea and sugar accordingly as she gives satisfaction."[70] Aunt Lucy here mocks her own position,

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[67]See Bell and Bell, who distinguish between "spontaneous confections" and "governess-inspired" magazines of the "drawing-room" type (401). Although these types are generally different in form and level of polish, I would argue that neither can truly be called "spontaneous" due to middle-class adults' encouragement of children to write, and to most of the child writers' constant awareness of the adult audience. See below.
[68]Nesbit, 130.
[69]Dodgson, Introduction to "Mischmasch," cited in Morton N. Cohen, *Lewis Carroll: A Biography*, 22.
[70]Cited in ibid., 24.

but most importantly, her contribution reveals the Dodgson children's delight in adult collusion with the humourous tone of their magazine. The young people were the writers and editor, but the whole point of their exercise was to provoke adult response.

Other eminent authors were involved in the production of children's home magazines during the later nineteenth century, in the role of the grown-up rather than the child author or editor. Charles Dickens encouraged four of his sons to create the "Gads Hill Gazette," which was edited by Harry Dickens (1849-1933), and ran from 1863-8. The father of the family contributed pseudonymous letters, his own editor eventually gave the children a printing press for their endeavour, and by its final issues the highly professional Gazette had a circulation of 100 mainly adult readers (at a cost of twopence per copy).[71] The focus on children's "natural" artistic self-development later in the century led some literary parents to scrutinize their children's writing for signs of cultural inheritance and potential. The Strachey family, who, with the Stephens and others, had been the subjects of Francis Galton's 1869 *Hereditary Genius: An Enquiry into its Laws and Consequences*, was one example. Galton's book was republished in 1892, and inspired an interest in the generational progress of art and literature.[72] The indomitable poet Jane Maria Strachey (1840-1928) was evidently as convinced of her children's artistic potential as of her own abilities. Her family generated two similar journals, "Our Paper," which ran erratically from 1870 to 1886, and the more short-lived "Miscellaneous Gazette" of 1880. Like the Dodgson family's, the Stracheys' magazines were collaborative and semi-anonymous, professional in appearance, and designed for adult readers. Indeed, Lady Strachey is omnipresent, as implied audience and direct contributor. The massive volumes of "Our Paper," of which she was editor-in-chief, are completely in her tidy hand. The "Gazette" she had professionally printed and bound in

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[71]See Paul J. Allen, "The Gads Hill Original," http://members.tripod.com/~DickensFellowshipCD/ghgaz.htm (May 2001), and Peter Ackroyd, *Dickens*, 927-8.

[72]Although he was uncertain over heredity's extent, Darwin had agreed with Galton, concluding that "special tastes and habits, general intelligence, courage, bad and good temper, etc., are certainly transmitted" (*The Descent of Man*, 28). Leslie Stephen was typical of his class and times in his own ideas. Though he disagreed with some of Galton's assertions, he believed that "We inherit thoughts as we inherit wealth . . . and indeed our whole mental furniture" (*Social Rights and Duties: Addresses to Ethical Societies* (1869: Vol. 1), 54. See Chapter 1.

green. The number for 25 April, 1880 begins with the statement,

> This GAZETTE has been started by a Children's Society; it is intended for all kinds of original contributions and translations. News, charades, riddles, advertisements, essays, stories and poems, as long as they are original, will be thankfully received. Though this GAZETTE has been started by children, and is principally meant for children, yet we shall be delighted to receive contributions from others, and shall feel very honoured if our elders will encourage our efforts in this manner.[73]

Lady Strachey's voice resounds in this announcement. It seems highly unlikely that it was written by a child appealing to "our elders," or that the magazine was started by anyone but herself. Swift on the heels of this introduction is a poem by the matriarch, describing the Gazette's creation:

> How fast all the pens are now going!
> With scribbling and frowning and zest!
> How rhyme and translation are flowing,
> With riddle and story and jest!
> For no one a share in it shirking,
> And all on success in it set,
> The eager bright wits are a-working
> For the new Miscellaneous Gazette.[74]

This journal is clearly an adult enterprise; Lady Strachey is contributor, editor, and audience in one, with the children bending their wits for her. "All on success in it set," she writes of the magazine, and success came by pleasing Lady Strachey. The Strachey children aimed to satisfy their mother and editor with their contributions; Pippa (1872-1968), at age seven, wrote a rather perfunctory description of her schoolroom, ending with "There is a picture of Polly put the kettle on, drawn and painted by mama. I think I must end this story now, as I cannot think of anything else to tell you."[75] Mama's influence was everywhere, from the schoolroom walls to the Gazette's pages. Pippa's last sentence is written almost as if spoken directly to her mother. "Our Paper" takes a similar tone. The young Lytton Strachey (1880-1932) in 1887 dedicated his series of poems on "Animals, Fishes, and Birds"[76] to

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[73]Strachey family, "Miscellaneous Gazette," 25 April 1880.
[74]Ibid.
[75]Ibid.
[76]The series was structured by species, in the evolutionist vein typical of children's sexual education books of the period. See Chapter 3.

Oh Mama, dear Mama
How good you are!
You smile from morning till night,
And whenever you speak, & wherever you are
Everything seems like a heavenly star.[77]

Lytton's address shows how the adult audience was inbuilt within the Strachey manuscript magazines. Some level of childish hilarity remains; the contributors sign themselves off with "anonymous" anagrammatic names ("Lodly" is Dolly, or Dorothy, for example), and one letter "from a distinguished Foreign Author" extols "Our Paper" by expressing a wish that "each Contributor vomit forth contributions, each Author throw up poetry!!!!!!"[78] The presiding spirit of the journals, however, is an adult, whose presence ensured the child-authors' focus on maturity in writing and in life. The fact that Lady Strachey was a published author and a Galtonian "genius" in her own right made the children highly likely to follow her adult lead in their writing, and to envision her as a literary conscience while composing copy. Tellingly, when the adolescent Oliver Strachey (1874-1960) and Lytton Strachey boldly presented their own manuscript magazine, "The Scavenger," in the early 1890s, it lasted for one almost illegible number before vanishing, without audience, into oblivion. It could not live without its mother.

Although literary connections were helpful to creation and production, children's magazines were not limited to families of famous literary parents in the second half of the nineteenth century. Nor was an adult focus on children's individual potential and that of human culture. The children of diarist Marian Jane Bradley and George Granville Bradley, head of Marlborough and later Dean of Westminster, produced a polished family journal from 1867 to 1875. Olivia Bell and Alan Bell classify the Bradleys' "Miscellany" as of the "drawing-room" variety.[79] The magazine is closer in style to earlier commonplace books than to nursery magazines, with very sophisticated watercolours, ink sketches, and historical lessons among the more childish riddles and puzzles. Yet, like the "Gads Hill Gazette," it shows the gradual development of the

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[77]Strachey family, "Our Paper," Christmas 1887.
[78]Ibid., ["between 1873 and 1876"].
[79]Bell and Bell, 401.

family magazine genre over the century, as children were now often in charge of its production. It was copied out in a very neat hand into small lined notebooks. The "Miscellany" was edited by Daisy (Margaret, 11 at the time of the magazine's conception) and her older sister Edith,[80] who together solicited ever more adult productions for their journal. Some childish pieces were included, such as the Carrollian "The Ridiculous Story Again!",[81] in which time-travelling children encounter skeletal ghosts from King Arthur's court and are eventually transported home on the back of an enormous rabbit, and a later query from a young Bradley cousin, A. I. Philpot, who "would be glad to know if when one feather appears in a bulfinch that has no tail, it is a sign he is going to have one?" (The response, in a different hand, is, "Annie! how can you be so absurd?")[82] Overall, however, the various young writers' works are imbued with seriousness and attempts at maturity, even in humourous moments (the "Miscellany" had the classical tag "Dum spiro spero!" as its slogan, wittily positioned under a sketch of a singing sparrow on each volume's title page). Adults were clearly involved in both the reception and production of the magazine. One sharp-toned editorial criticizing a poem by the young Marian Bradley (junior) meets with an inserted rebuke in pencil, in an adult hand, saying, "This criticism is uncourteous, it passes the bounds of what is allowable in criticism. . .."[83] No further editorials of this type appear. Moreover, the Bradleys' connections brought them contributions from Andrew Lang and Hallam Tennyson. The Bradley sisters maintained Dodgson's editorial recipe for success: their magazine had up to 20 (often anonymous) contributors per volume, making it a collaborative enterprise; and the high finish of inserted art alongside Edith Bradley's carefully uniform hand throughout created a level of professionalism. Most importantly, the journal had a large

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[80]The Bells give Daisy Bradley's year of birth as 1846. An insertion by in adult hand in an 1867 volume of the magazine, however, refers to a poem by Daisy as being by "a little girl of 11. years old!," which would give her an 1856 birthdate. The Bells' date is almost certainly a misprint or miscalculation, as Marian Jane Bradley's unpublished diary refers to "my last baby's birth . . . This is our precious Daisy" on 18 October 1856. The change in age adds greatly to the magazine's level of editorial sophistication. Edith, who copied out most of the items into the magazine, appears to have been born in 1853.
[81]Bradley family, "Miscellany," January 1867, Bodleian Library MSS.
[82]Ibid., October 1867. Annie Philpot (b. 1856) was the subject of Julia Margaret Cameron's "first success" in photography in 1864 (see Cameron, "Annals of my Glass House," in Helmut Gernsheim, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 67-72). Cameron also photographed Daisy Bradley that year.
[83]Ibid., April 1867.

list of adult readers from Marlborough to Torquay, its circulation carefully set out in each volume with an "Order of Forwarding the Magazine" page, which subscribers were requested to sign as they received it. The "Miscellany" would not have existed without adult contributions and readership; its purpose was to "publish" children's aspirations towards an artistic adulthood.[84]

Most late-Victorian children's home magazines were less formally produced than the Bradleys' slightly earlier journal, but still followed a similar formula for success. The Benson siblings, children of the then Chancellor of Lincoln, produced a handwritten magazine intermittently in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Edward Benson described his family's effort as follows:

> Arthur would say one morning, 'Let's have a Saturday Magazine next Tuesday' . . . this habit of swift composition gave us all a certain ease in expressing ourselves if only because we expressed ourselves so freely. The contents . . . were, since all choice of subject was left to the author, of the most varied description. Arthur would produce (at least) an essay in the style of *The Spectator* (Addison's) describing how he threw a cake of yellow soap at a serenading cat, Nellie would refresh us with an imaginary interview with our Scotch coachman on the subject of sore backs, Maggie, whose chief avocation now was to rear an enormous number of guinea-pigs and find names for them, gave a dialogue between Atahualpa and Ixlitchochitl (only she knew how to spell them); poor Fred [Edward himself] treated them to a poem on the Devil, which he felt sure solved the very difficult problem about the origin of evil, and Hugh . . . produced adventures so bloody, that out of sheer reaction his audience rocked with unquenchable laughter.[85]

Individuality screened by a "professional" journalistic anonymity was the key to the hilarity of the "Saturday Magazine," as it was in many other family journals. The Bensons followed the now-standard method of collaboration ("the rule being that each member of the family should contribute 'at least' four pages of prose, or one page of verse"),[86] attempted professionalism, and an appeal to adult readers. Edward Benson felt that they expressed themselves "freely" and "naturally," even mocking their mother and father at times, but the parental reader was obviously held in mind when the young

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[84]The magazine seems to have succeeded in at least one case. The children's Uncle Andrew was 18 when the magazine commenced; he contributed various articles, and later became the Shakespearian critic A. C. Bradley.
[85]Benson, 89-90.
[86]Ibid., 89.

writers took on educationally sanctioned subjects such as "the origin of evil." Although the Benson children had come up with the idea of the magazine themselves, and had great fun with it, the journal was written for their parents, and for the opportunity it offered the siblings to sound grown-up and authoritative themselves. The Knox brothers were also children of a clergyman, and their 1890s family newspaper, "The Bolliday Bango," reflected a focus on adulthood. The boys called their work "the voice of 'Scholesia'"--that is, the schoolroom--and showed off their education in such pieces as the eight-year-old Ronald Knox's (1888-1957) Latin play.[87] When Ronald, the youngest, took over its editorship, he directly involved adults in the magazine, asking his stepmother to provide an illustration for his story: "'Please . . . draw me a picture of a man looking over the side of the ship, and a lady fainting just beside them, and a person looking on in Horror.'"[88] As wildly dramatic or childishly comical as some of the Benson and Knox pieces may have been, they were certainly written with the intent to impress and implicate an adult audience. The parents of these families, Evangelists influenced by evolutionary theory,[89] could read their children's serial literary output as records of both their self-development and of the increasing cultural potential of the human race. Edward Benson wrote of his carefully developmentalist upbringing, "Never can I sufficiently admire or be sufficiently thankful for the encouragement my father and mother both gave to these multitudinous hobbies, for hobbies, as they well knew, whether literary, artistic, or scientific, are a priceless panacea for the preservation of youth. . .."[90] The literary hobbies provided the greatest "preservational" record of development. By the time its last issues were produced, the "Saturday Magazine" had burgeoned "like Aaron's rod"--and like the children themselves, in their parents' eyes-- "into miraculous blossoms of prose and

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[87]Penelope Fitzgerald, *The Knox Brothers*, 49-50.
[88]Ibid., 55.
[89]E. W. Benson, who became archbishop of Canterbury, encouraged his children to search for fossils, and "Mrs. K.," who married the Knox boys' vicar father after their mother's death, had the children read Smiles's *Self-help* in order to aid their self-development (she would often find the boys hurling it out of the schoolroom window). The combined emphasis on Christian moral development and the improvement of the human race is more characteristic of the mid-Victorian years, but these families were perhaps especially religious among the middle classes during their time.
[90]Ibid., 53.

poetry."[91] Again, "spontaneous" children's writing had its roots in adult ideas about personal and cultural progress.

Many other late-Victorian middle- and upper-class children composed home manuscript magazines without direct adult collaboration, as children's "natural" writing was increasingly being encouraged. William Morris's (1834-96) two adolescent daughters, with several of the young Burne-Joneses, penned "The Scribbler" from late 1878 to 1880, a serious mixture of natural history, serial stories set in Italy, travel articles, and reports on the doings of the young people in their circle. Most of the issues are handwritten on foolscap, but "Jennyanmay,"[92] as the Jane Alice Morris (1861-1935) and Mary Morris (1862-1938) unit were known, tried their hand at typing and printing a few, evidently so as to increase their circulation with multiple copies, à la "Gads Hill Gazette." William Morris himself later noted, "I think it was the "serial" that killed the Scribbler: no magazine, however pronounced its vitality could survive a serial extending over a year and a half, with every prospect of running on into the next century."[93] As the journal's style and tone showed no discernible artistic improvement over its run, there was no visible progress towards adulthood and adult literary skill. What may really have killed the magazine, however, was its apparent lack of adult audience. The articles are pedantic and meandering, while the descriptions of social gatherings are peppered with the young people's in-jokes. Although the magazine includes some progressivist statements, such as "The Zoologist's" remark that "As the world goes on things must improve,"[94] there is little sense that the writers were aspiring to adult or general cultural betterment, but rather, simply "running on," which may have alienated developmentalist parents as readers. The fact that the Morris girls were older adolescents at the magazine's inception may also have meant that their parents were less interested in observing their remaining development towards adulthood. The girls' mother, Jane Morris, commented that William Morris took "little notice of them until they were in their mid-teens at which

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[91]Benson, 180.
[92]Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*, 398.
[93]William Morris, note bound with "Scribbler" manuscripts, British Library MS [n. d.].
[94]Morris family, "The Scribbler," British Library MS [November 1878], [n. p.].

point he began to talk to them as adults."[95] During the "Scribbler" era, the Morris daughters were already adults in the eyes of their writer parent. With no outside grown-up audience, and no observable progression of artistic self-development, the magazine fell apart.

Conversely, the Dixey brothers' "Unique Manuscript Magazine" (or "U. M. M.") ran for an astonishing and successful 70 years after its beginnings in 1904. It followed late-nineteenth-century traditions in manuscript magazine composition. Though not strictly a Victorian production, it owed its long life to a focus on adulthood, in the late-nineteenth-century developmentalist tradition into which its main contributors were born. Giles Dixey (1893-1974) and Roger Dixey (b. 1895), children of an Oxford entomologist, started the magazine on their own and invited their school friends to contribute, but quickly demonstrated an awareness of the need for adult approval of the magazine. In 1906, an Editorial Notice read, "The Editor has been much pleased at the Annual, all his family think it a very good Magazine indeed."[96] Although the early issues are full of "very exitting" adventure stories, fairy tales, and bad puns, the boys' attempts at professional-style writing steadily demonstrate a "when I grow up" desire for accomplishment, as well as a sense of the heroic potential of humanity. The child heroes of their *Boy's Own Paper*-influenced serial stories, from Eric the "boy of Iceland" in "A Surprising Story" to the frontier hero Richard Gordon,[97] always grow up to be good young men, as the Dixeys' writing shows they themselves planned to do.[98] They also

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[95]F. MacCarthy, 367.

[96]Dixey brothers, "Unique Manuscript Magazine," 1906, Bodleian Library MSS.

[97]Both begun in 1904, when the journal was titled "Our Own Magazine." See Chapter 1 on the imperialist progressivism of the *Boy's Own Paper* and similar magazines.

[98]These ideals were not only personal, but also related to the progress of the human race as a whole. It is significant that Charles Darwin's grandchildren composed a similar type of serial story on the heroic possibilities of humanity in the 1890s. "How Max Saved Kate's life" (British Library MS) composed in installments over two months in 1897, was written and illustrated by Margaret Darwin (1890-1974) and Charles Darwin III (b. 1887). The children were obviously exposed to developmental and evolutionist theories at home, as their sister Gwen Darwin described (see Chapter 1), and their writing shows that they apparently absorbed them. The plot is a convoluted one, but its point is that children must behave heroically--that is, like adults--and gain the approval of the grown-ups around them. When Max recounts his story to a kindly old woman, Kate asks her if she likes his tale, and the reply is, "Yes I do like it . . . Yes I like it very mach." At the end, the authors write an ode to their hero Max, the last lines of which are "Sing Oh for Max the bold / Long may he live." The Darwins recognized that the deeds recounted were only the dawn of the six-and-a-half-year-old Max's potential. They also saw their own adult potential and the need to record their own development: Margaret Darwin was exactly the same age as the heroic Max, and began

knew that their literary skills should be improving, as per developmentalist ideals. Giles Dixey wrote in 1906,

> They talk of "Boys' Own Papers"
> Of "Tit-bits", and the rest,
> But any day, you'll hear folks say,
> "The 'U. M. M.' is best!"[99]

The boys were aware of their potential for artistic progress, as well as their own heroic capabilities, as they grew up. Their eyes were on the future. They advertised coming stories for their next issues. Their tales improved in quality and increased in length and seriousness with every number of the magazine.[100] They continued to write for the magazine nearly all their lives. The Dixeys' journal provides a strong example of the magazine as a forward-looking record of personal and artistic development, in keeping with the progressivist standards of the late-Victorian and early-twentieth-century middle classes. To cite one of the young contributors' poems, "[T]he voice of invention / Is heard with attention / And our anticipations made real."[101]

> *It is easy to see that a struggle between the man, with his half-formed mind, and the world around will inevitably ensue. Sometimes the man will win, sometimes external Nature, but more often they will each gain something, and the result will be a race which is a product of the old characteristics and the new influences.*
> *-E. M. Forster, "The Influence of Climate and Physical Conditions Upon National Character," 1895 (Age 16)*

As the Bells note, "The fact that several of the examples discussed here come from academic families of course accounts for their survival in a university library."[102] The survival of the works of children who grew up to be famous authors, such as Charles Dodgson, may be similarly contingent upon their connections. Many, though not all, of the examples discussed above come from literary families. Yet their existence is not only due to academic or literary connections, but also to late-Victorian middle- and upper-

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a diary when very young (see Gwen Raverat, *Period Piece*, 65).
[99]Dixey brothers, 1906. See Chapter 1 on the wide appeal of *Tit-Bits* to children.
[100]As the Bells note, "The contents grew up with the principal contributors" (Bell and Bell, 408).
[101]R. S. Burch, "The Land of Mechanichs," in "Unique Manuscript Magazine" (1904), ed. Dixey family.
[102]Bell and Bell, 411.

class parents' view of children's writing as a record of "natural" development. The survival of earlier juvenilia is due to the fact that they were generally accepted as manifestations of classical moral grounding, or because they were hidden away, kept private from adults, due to their mocking of the educational methods meant to instill this morality. Over the course of the nineteenth century, parents and educators shifted their developmental emphasis from stricter classical and Christian moral standards to "natural" self-development as evolutionary theory made its mark. The idea of the "spontaneous" child writer, in the mould of Marjory Fleming, had great appeal for many middle-class adults. Yet these adults became more and more involved in their children's writing, and focused on guiding the emergence of artistic skill. Children's home magazines, therefore, were neither "natural" effusions nor simply pages of rote learning. They were parodic and serious, amusing and didactic. Most were collaborative and aspired to some degree of professionalism. All had an adult audience built into the text, and showed to varying degrees the influence of late-Victorian progressivism. Adult influence does not make children's writing any less authentic; the texts are frequently an honest reflection of the developmentalist atmosphere in which the young authors lived, read, played, and wrote, as we have seen in the preceding chapters. Most of the late-nineteenth-century child writers discussed thoroughly enjoyed having and actively courted an adult audience, which they saw as justifying their work. Moreover, most saw themselves as *future* authors, and the fact that some did not grow up to be professional writers should not deter us from considering this idea from the point of view of the child. Daisy Ashford (1881-1972), possibly the most famous late-Victorian child author, with her smash success *The Young Visiters* (written 1890), provided a strong summation of this idea. She recalled in adult years her 14-year-old self: "By this time I had really determined to become an authoress (an ambition which entirely left me after my school days) . . .."[103] Though she hardly wrote as an adult, Ashford was clear about how the ambitions of her youth coloured her writing at the time. She meant to be an author then, and the fact that she did

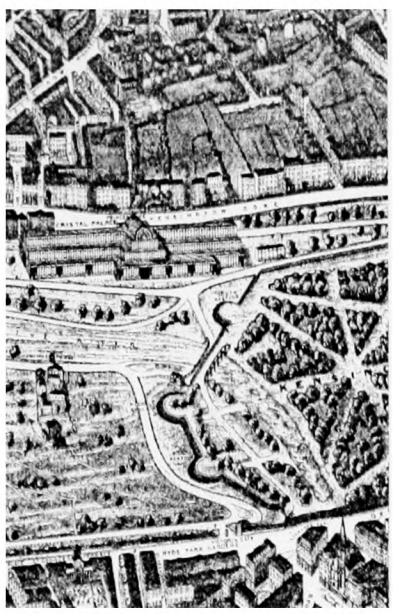
[103]Daisy Ashford, Preface to *Daisy Ashford: Her Book*, vii.

not ultimately become one is irrelevant in this context.[104] Mark Twain, in his conclusion to *Tom Sawyer*, wrote that his record of the boy's life "could not go much further without becoming the history of a man."[105] So was it with children's writing during the late nineteenth century; the man to whom Twain refers may as easily have been the parent looking over the child-writer's shoulder as the grown child himself. Middle-class adults of the time had a vested interest in young authors' magazines, which in turn would not have existed without them.

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[104]See Chapter 5 for further discussion.
[105]Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, in *Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn*, 180.

Chapter 5:
Consequences: The Stephen Family's Apprentice Texts and the Case for a Critical Definition of Late-Nineteenth-Century Juvenilia



Hyde Park and the Stephen family's neighbourhood. From *A Balloon View of London*, c. 1851.

Mr Adrian Stephen who as perhaps our readers remember produced a little newspaper (which however did not have a very long existence) at St Ives has now begun another similar journal. We hope that it will get the success it deserves. It will not be underrated by Mrs Stephen nor overrated by Mr Stephen. This enterprising young climber of the ladder of letters will at all events find his reward at the top if he gets there.

-Stephen family, "Hyde Park Gate News," 21 November 1892.

Like other children writing at home during the late nineteenth century, the Stephens were interested in climbing "the ladder of letters" all the way to the top. All of the siblings were "literary aspirant[s],"[1] as Virginia and Vanessa Stephen termed their young brother, and all sought success within the family. Their parents, too, were involved as critics, "rating" their productions. None of Adrian Stephen's journalistic productions lasted long (despite his sisters' mocking wishes for his ultimate "reward"), because they were solo efforts in the midst of a profoundly communal family and literary life. The children's weekly family newspaper was rooted in their home life--"the panoply of life--that which we all lived in common"[2]--with all its collectivity, in-jokes, competition, and literariness. Between 1891 and 1895, Virginia Stephen and her siblings produced "The Hyde Park Gate News," so titled after their London house at 22 Hyde Park Gate. Julia Stephen and Leslie Stephen were the designated parental audience, and their involvement was key to the paper's existence. As the children saw it, getting to the top of the literary ladder involved imitation of adults, as well as provoking adult response, through both parody and a search for approval.

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[1]Stephen family, "Hyde Park Gate News," 28 November 1892. The "News" is now in two bound volumes in the British Library, as unpublished Additional Manuscripts 70725 and 70726.
[2]Virginia Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, 83.

As did other young writers, the Stephens modelled their writing after leading periodicals of the 1880s and 1890s, both on the page's surface and in their overtly "writerly" style. Their paper followed the formula for a successful manuscript magazine in the late nineteenth century: it was collectively (and "anonymously") authored, attempted to be professional, and sought an adult audience. The children were creating a newspaper, and wanted it to be taken seriously as such. Indeed, they wanted to be seen as writers, with adult skills and perceptions. Woolf scholars have generally treated these works as "mere" juvenilia, or have used them only as family documents that furnish biographical background. Here, I will look at the importance of the "Hyde Park Gate News" as a text, and at how it fulfilled the traditions of children's home magazines. This chapter examines the impact of the Stephen parents and their developmentalism, as well as other cultural influences, on the Stephens' writing, and includes a bibliographic analysis, in order to provide a case study for my discussion of late-Victorian manuscript magazines by children. Finally, I will investigate the concept of late-nineteenth-century "public" juvenilia itself, whose present definition is imprecise. The question of what these juvenilia exactly are has been avoided in most discussions; their nature has been taken for granted as something along the lines of its Latin etymology: "works done in one's youth."[3] A critical definition has been wanting for texts of this period, and in this chapter I aim to move towards one, with the Stephen family as my exemplification.

> *Books descend from books as families descend from families . . . They resemble their parents, as human children resemble their parents; yet they differ as children differ, and revolt as children revolt.*
>
> *-Virginia Woolf, "The Leaning Tower," 1940*

The home into which Adeline Virginia Stephen was born on 25 January 1882 was, as she

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[3]J. A. Cuddon, "Juvenilia," *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 471. This is also the definition given by the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Cuddon's literary definition is as follows: "Juvenilia (L 'works done in one's youth') Such were Dryden's occasional poem *Upon the Death of Lord Hastings* (1649), written when Dryden was still at Westminster School and aged eighteen; Pope's *Pastorals*, composed in 1704, when he was only sixteen and published in Tonson's *Miscellany* (1709); Byron's *Hours of Idleness* (first called *Juvenilia*) published in 1807 when Byron was nineteen."

wrote from her later, adult perspective, not wealthy, but "well-to-do," and part of the "very communicative, literate, letter writing, visiting, articulate, late nineteenth century world"[4] to which many of the magazine-writing children discussed above belonged.[5] As we have seen, Leslie and Julia Stephen as parents were in many ways typical of the middle classes in their time. Leslie Stephen, the bearer of that elite Victorian title, "man of letters," was a historian of eighteenth-century ideas, the founder of the *Dictionary of National Biography* and editor of the *Cornhill* magazine, and seems to have been the quintessential late-Victorian "paterfamilias," to use the children's term.[6] He was an avowed agnostic as an adult, but still believed in the paramount importance of morality,[7] and used Darwin to support his theory that different social classes thought in different ways.[8] Looking back, Woolf remembered the father of her early childhood as "a curious figure sitting often dead silent at the head of the family dinner table."[9] But he could also be an entertaining parent, and was very interested in the raising of his children. Like many late-nineteenth-century middle-class parents, he took a special interest not just in their moral growth, but in their literary and linguistic development.[10] When Vanessa Stephen was nearly two in 1881, he recorded,

> Yesterday she looked at the picture and repeated all by herself
> Froggy ood ooing go
> Mother let'm or no.
> --her first bit of recitation.[11]

He wondered about the impact of heredity on artistic qualities, believing that "[w]e inherit thoughts as we inherit wealth . . . and indeed our whole mental furniture,"[12] and hoped that his young daughter Virginia, at least, would follow in his literary footsteps

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[4]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 65.
[5]See Chapter 4.
[6]See, for example, "HPGN," 15 February 1892. The children also titled the second part of their longest serial story "The Experiences of a Paterfamilias" ("HPGN," 20 October-19 December 1892).
[7]See F. W. Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, 144-5, and Noel Annan, *Leslie Stephen: The Godless Victorian*, 264-5.
[8]See Leslie Stephen, *The History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*. See also Annan, 227-31.
[9]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 111.
[10]See Chapter 1 on Leslie Stephen's "baby diary."
[11]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 14 April 1881, Berg Collection. See Chapter 2 on late-Victorian parents' focus on linguistic development, and on Leslie Stephen's belief that his mentally handicapped daughter Laura Stephen was a failure because she could not learn to read or write.
[12]Ibid., *Social Rights and Duties: Addresses to Ethical Societies* (Vol. 1: 1869), 54. See Chapter 4 for a discussion of Francis Galton.

("She takes in a great deal and will really be an author in time").[13] Leslie Stephen's second wife also strikes us as in many ways a typical late-Victorian figure, the matriarch of a large, extended nineteenth-century family. Julia Stephen too had lost the Christian faith of her upbringing, after the sudden death of her first husband. Like Leslie Stephen, she believed in the need for inculcating moral values, and debated the amount of adult guidance required by children. Despite her melancholic idealization of early childhood as the happiest time of life,[14] she believed in self-development, and under her the family "lived in a state of anxious growth . . . [Family] activities . . . urged even children, and certainly 'the eldest', to develop one side prematurely."[15] Woolf also remembered her as somehow merry, "striking out in a phrase or two pictures of all the people who came past her along the platform, and so she kept [the family] all laughing until the train went."[16] She taught her children to write, and was interested in their linguistic progress, evidently reporting the young Virginia Stephen's neologisms--"annydogs" was one--to the girl's sponsor, James Russell Lowell,[17] and sending her daughter's imaginative stories to friends to read.[18] She too was a published author. "The Servant Question" (1893), one of her works for adults, includes a developmentalist anecdote of a little girl crying at the thought of the vast number of times she will have to wash and dress as she grows up (the author notes dryly, "There is no escape we fear from the sorrow of that little girl, but washing . . . may have its good side").[19] Her stories for children, written in the 1880s, are variations on the vivid imaginative tale popularized by *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

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[13]Ibid. to Julia Stephen, 29 July 1893, Berg Collection.

[14]Julia Stephen's ambivalence was a common one in the late nineteenth century (see Chapter 1). Leslie Stephen, in his *Mausoleum Book*, reported that Julia Stephen had sent him a letter saying that the infant Thoby "could never be so happy again" (60). The children satirized her maternal sentiments: "It must indeed be sad for the Mother to see her sons growing older and older and then to watch them leave the sweet world of child-hood behind them and enter into the great world of manhood" ("HPGN," 7 March 1892). In her portrait of her mother in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Woolf took up the theme of the contradictory parental worship of childhood as well as of the future and its possibilities. Mrs. Ramsay thinks of her children, "They were happier now than they would ever be again," but also, "[A]ll . . . were full of promise" (58-9).

[15]Woolf, "Reminiscences," in *Moments of Being*, 30.

[16]Ibid., 36.

[17]See James Russell Lowell to Julia Stephen, 31 July 1889, Berg Collection. Most of Julia's own letters do not survive.

[18]In "A Sketch of the Past," Woolf wrote, "I found that she had sent a story of mine to Madge Symonds; it was so imaginative, she said; it was about souls flying round and choosing bodies to be born into" (95).

[19]Julia Stephen, ["The Servant Question"], in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 251.

(1865); like Carroll's, Julia Stephen's stories are full of anthropomorphic animals, class distinctions, and "absurdities of situation."[20] They reveal humour over her own evolutionist beliefs, as when one of many monkeys in her stories pities humans: "'Poor things, they have lost their tails--that makes them envy us.'"[21] With two such parents, the "rush and tumble of family life"[22] in the Stephen household, though not always happy or exciting, was full of satire and storytelling.

On both sides of her family, Virginia Stephen had authors, autobiographers and writers of great lives, and historians. William Makepeace Thackeray was the father of Leslie Stephen's first wife, Minny; Thackeray's other daughter, Anny Thackeray Ritchie, was a writer herself and a strong presence in the young Stephens' lives. Her "status in the family as a 'famous author' was of special interest to the little girl who had already chosen to be a writer."[23] Among the adult Virginia Woolf's books was her mother's copy of Ritchie's discussion and collection of fairy tales, *Five Old Friends and a Young Prince* (1876).[24] Children's literature played a vital part in a house full of grown-up books, and the grown-ups were involved in what their children read. Leslie Stephen's comic drawings filled the children's books, many of which Virginia Stephen kept into adulthood (her brother Thoby's childhood copy of Robert Buchanan's *The City of Dream: An Epic Poem* (1888), for example, is dotted with their father's lively sketches of animals).[25] At home, the young Stephens read, or had read to them, Charlotte M. Yonge's *The Daisy Chain*, Maria Edgeworth, Joel Chandler Harris's *Uncle Remus* stories, a *Pictorial Atlas to*

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[20]Elizabeth Steele, "Stories for Children," in Julia Stephen, *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 29-35.
[21]Julia Stephen, "The Monkey on the Moor," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 54. See also Chapter 1 on evolutionary theory in her stories.
[22]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 137.
[23]Winifred Gérin, *Anne Thackeray Ritchie: A Biography*, 241.
[24]Aunt Anny wrote several modernized versions of traditional fairy tales, as was common in the late nineteenth century (see Chapter 1). The children admired her, but also found her amusing. After Leslie Stephen was appointed president of the London Library, they reported that "Mrs Ritchie the daughter of Thackeray . . . expressed her delight by jumping from her chair and clapping her hands in a childish manner but none the less sincerely" ("HPGN," 21 November 1892). Julia Stephen also apparently told fairy tales to the children, as Mrs. Ramsay reads "The Fisherman and His Wife" to her son James in *To the Lighthouse* (in Woolf's drafts, she reads "The Three Dwarves," then "The Three Bears"). For a description of Anne Thackeray Ritchie's relationship with Julia Stephen, see Diane F. Gillespie, "The Elusive Julia Stephen," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 7-8.
[25]The Buchanan work (Washington University), was inscribed "Thoby-A-Angles--Mrs. Booth," probably by Mary Booth, the wife of Charles Booth, social reformer, author, and friend of the Duckworth family.

Homer, the Reverend G. J. Wood's *Illustrated Natural History*,[26] Bewick, fairy tales, *Sindbad the Sailor, Gulliver's Travels, Alice in Wonderland*, Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*,[27] R. M. Ballantyne,[28] Quiller-Couch's *The World of Adventure: A Collection of Strirring Scenes and Moving Incidents*,[29] *Robinson Crusoe*,[30] *Treasure Island, Tom Brown's Schooldays*, Scott's Waverley Novels, Shakespeare, Milton, Austen, Hawthorne, Tennyson, and Wordsworth.[31] The Stephen parents owned a copy of Sir Arthur H. D. Acland's *A Guide to the Choice of Books for Students and General Readers* (1891),[32] but gave their children ample space to find their own reading material (Virginia Stephen was given free rein in her father's library). In this sense, they were like many late-Victorian middle-class parents, concerned both with guiding their children and allowing them to develop "naturally" towards adulthood on their own. They were not averse to their children reading works of nonsense, adventure, or imagination, seen to be appropriate to the developmental stages of earlier childhood.[33] Virginia Stephen had read most of her "beloved Macaulay" before age 15,[34] but she also enjoyed satire and imaginative works. Indeed, with her siblings, she wrote some herself.

The Stephen children lived and wrote together, leading shared lives in the crowded family home at 22 Hyde Park Gate. Vanessa and Thoby were older than Virginia Stephen; Adrian was younger. The four tended to run in a pack, separate from their four older half-siblings,[35] though alliances and positions were continually shifting.

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[26]See "HPGN," 30 November and 7 December 1891; 4 April, 23 May, 31 October, and 19 December 1892.
[27]See Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 10 October 1883; 18 October 1884; 28 January, 23 March, and 28 April 1886; 4 February 1887; [18?] April 1888, Berg Collection.
[28]Thoby Stephen to Vanessa Stephen, 21 February 1891, cited in Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf*, 113.
[29]Adrian Stephen to Julia Stephen, 2 February 1894, cited in ibid.
[30]See Virginia Woolf, "Defoe," in *Collected Essays* 1, 62.
[31]See Woolf in Maitland, 474-5, and Annan, 109. Many of the works listed were favourites in late-nineteenth-century surveys of children's best-loved books. See Edward Salmon, *Juvenile Literature As It Is* (1888), and "What Children Like to Read. The Verdict," *Pall Mall Gazette* 67 (1 July 1898), 1-2, as discussed in Chapter 1.
[32]The "Hyde Park Gate News" reported in 1895 that Leslie Stephen "went down to Cambridge on Saturday to lecture to the Newnham young ladies upon (we think) 'The Choice of Books'" (11 March 1895).
[33]In Julia Stephen's story "The Black Cat or the Grey Parrot," a falcon's medical talk sounds "like something out of the 'Book of Nonsense'. . ." (*Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 118). Edward Lear's 1846 book by that name was in its 27th edition by 1889. See Chapter 3 on the appeal of Lear to children.
[34]See Lee for a discussion of Virginia Stephen's childhood and adolescent reading habits, especially 142-3.
[35]Vanessa was born in 1879, Thoby in 1880, and Adrian in 1883. George (1868-1934), Stella (1869-97), and Gerald Duckworth (1870-1937) were the children of Julia Stephen's first marriage to Herbert Duckworth. Laura Stephen (1870-1945) was the only child of Leslie Stephen and his first wife, Minny Thackeray. Due to her apparent autism or retardation, Laura was institutionalized during the 1890s. See

(Adrian, for example, seems to have been a target for the older children; he is frequently mocked in the children's writing as a "baby" or as his mother's special "Joy," as she called him.)[36] They learned reading and writing, along with French, Latin, history, and mathematics, under their parents' tutelage.[37] Like most middle-class Victorian siblings, they shared a nursery while they were growing up.[38] At night, Virginia and Vanessa would make up stories about their wealthier next-door neighbours, the Dilkes, which

> always began thus: 'Clémont dear child, said Mrs Dilke', and it went on to tell stories of the Dilke family and Miss Rosalba the governess; how they dug under the floor and discovered sacks of gold; and had great feasts and ate fried eggs 'with plenty of frizzling'. . ..[39]

But the children's stories were not just private ones. The eight-year-old Thoby Stephen wrote tales of squabbling castaway families for his parents, based on *Robinson Crusoe*[40] and *The Swiss Family Robinson*. Virginia Stephen did not speak properly until she was nearly three years old, but once she could articulate, she began telling stories to her father. When she was five, he reported to Julia Stephen, "'Ginia tells me a 'story' every night--it does not change much but she seems to enjoy it."[41] Soon, she evidently began to think about writing down her tales. An early letter to her mother contains this anecdote:

> Mrs Prinsep says that she will only go in a slow train cos she says all the fast trains have accidents and she told us about an old man of 70 who got his legs caute in the weels of the train and the train began to go on and the old gentleman was draged along till the train caute fire and he called out for somebody to cut off his legs but nobody came he was burnt up.[42]

As Hermione Lee puts it, "This shows a relish for narrative, as well as gore."[43] It also displays her desire to interest and involve the parental audience. The siblings' early

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Chapter 2.

[36]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 83.

[37]Vanessa Bell recalled, "not very well" (*Notes on Virginia's Childhood*, [n. p.]). Virginia Woolf condemned the lack of education that she and many other late-Victorian girls had experienced, repeatedly returning to the subject. See Chapter 2 on the Stephen parents as teachers, and the Conclusion on Woolf's argument with the traditions of her upbringing.

[38]See Chapter 1 on the late-Victorian middle-class nursery.

[39]Ibid., 79. "Clémont," or "Clementé," as Vanessa Bell remembered the incantation (*Notes on Virginia's Childhood*, [n. p.]), was Clement Dilke, a boy about the same age as Thoby (see "HPGN," 21 December [1891]). The "posh" or foreign-sounding pronunciations may have been a joke about the Dilkes' relative wealth.

[40]See Lee, 108.

[41]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 15 April 1887.

[42]Virginia Stephen to Julia Stephen [c. 1888], *Congenial Spirits*, 3.

[43]Lee, 107.

narratives extended to a family newspaper, the "Hyde Park Gate News," whose audience consisted of the Stephen parents, and sometimes Julia Stephen's mother, Maria Jackson, who lived at Hyde Park Gate in the early 1890s.[44] Issues from 1891, 1892, 1894, and 1895 are extant. In the Stephen family, it "came out" once a week, fashioned of blue, white, or cream-coloured foolscap. As in some other home manuscript magazines of the time, various, unsigned hands shuffle in different inks and pencils down the pages.[45] The paper was filled with jokes, fiction, reports on family doings, correspondence, and speculations about the future. It was parodic and solemnly literary at the same time. It was packed with the children's knowledge, which they were anxious to display to their grown-up readers.

The Stephen children's stories and newspaper were, not surprisingly, subject to family literary influence. The girls named the Dilkes' fictional governess after the princess in their step-grandfather Thackeray's children's story, *The Rose and the Ring* (1855). They demonstrated their early awareness of their storytelling forebears, and that of such stories' potential for an adult audience (the children's nurse and their father both read it to Thoby and Vanessa in 1887).[46] This nonsensical "Fireside Pantomime for Great and Small Children" had a distinct effect on the Stephen household. Julia Stephen's Emlycaunt, mythical home of "the frightful Riskodemba,"[47] is indebted to Thackeray's Rimbombamento and Paflagonia for the names of its inhabitants. Thackeray's absurd,

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[44]The children may sometimes have made up a separate copy for their invalid grandmother to read in her room. In one of the few instances of double copies (or references to them) of early "Hyde Park Gate News" issues, she makes an appearance; Thoby Stephen wrote, "Mrs Jackson has as no doubt our readers know brought her canary with her to H. P. G. It far excels in singing Miss Vanessa Stephens bird. N.B. Miss Vanessa put in her paper in whiteness of plumage instead of singing" ("Cristmas Number," [1891]). She died in April 1892.

[45]The hands are nearly always the girls,' although Thoby's scrawl and slang are evident in various instances. Quentin Bell writes that Vanessa Stephen claimed not to have been involved in the composition of the newspaper, and "presumably . . . acted as an amanuensis" (*Virginia Woolf* (Vol. 1), 37n). But the children wrote out the earlier issues of the paper collaboratively, as hands sometimes change in mid-sentence, and it is clear that some form of collaboration was involved in the composition. Moreover, the many jokes at Virginia Stephen's expense in the earlier issues (mainly regarding her greediness) seem unlikely all to have been written by Thoby (sometimes away at school) or by Virginia herself (who made (retaliatory?) jokes about Vanessa). By the later numbers, the enterprise seems almost entirely to have been taken over by Virginia, although Vanessa was still apparently the "Editor."

[46]See Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 22 March and 14 April 1887, Berg Collection ("[T]hey seem to like it. Nessa remarks that it is 'dikkifult' to distinguish between Bulbo & Giglio, in wh. I think there is some sense").

[47]Ibid., 6 April 1887. This reference is from a note to his mother dictated by the young Adrian.

fantastically romantic, and sometimes violent tale was one of the major inspirations for aspects of the Stephen children's newspaper as well. His mockery of the Paflagonian king and queen, who behave like bourgeois mid-Victorians and call one another "Mr. and Mrs. V." ("even royalty will have its sport"),[48] gave a foundation to the Stephens' class-based jokes about their neighbours,[49] while the servants' speeches about "his Roilighnesses shaving-water"[50] and the like were one source for the children's hilarity surrounding Cockneys. Thackeray's Princess Angelica is supposed to have the ability to "answer any one of *Mangnall's Questions*,"[51] demonstrating the author's ridicule of standard early- to mid-Victorian historical education methods. The Stephen children, like the young Jane Austen and Brontë siblings,[52] subverted this subject in their own writings: "An Easy Alphabet for Infants" of 7 December 1891 mimics schoolbooks' aids to historical memorization with its rhymes such as

> A for Prince Albert
> So good and so kind
> B for the Black Prince
> Who was never behind[.]

Towards the end of the alphabet, the children's own family makes an appearance:

> S for Leslie Stephen
> Who lives in Hyde Park Gate
> T for Mr Thackeray
> Who had a witty pate[.][53]

In putting their own relatives into this literary-historical procession, the young Stephens

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[48]W. M. Thackeray, *The Rose and the Ring*, 218.
[49]Mrs. Ashton Dilke, the fashionable suffragette next door, always had new clothes, while the Stephens noticed that their mother always wore the same black dress (Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 120). Following their parents, however, they scorned conspicuous consumption, as is made jokingly apparent in the "Hyde Park Gate News" when an officious sister tells her brother to give his bride-to-be "something like a serviceable dress which will last for almost 10 years" (11 April 1892)). The Dilkes were not the only target of the Stephen children's class humour. In the middle of the street lived the Maude family, "impecunious, shifty, disreputable people" ("A Sketch of the Past," 120), whose dog once knocked down Virginia Stephen (the police court trial was duly reported in the "News"). The children noted gleefully in 1892, "Miss Maude whose moral deficiencies are well known has at last broken the bounds of human rights for she has stole silver worth a large sum of money and she stole it in a manner so simple that it must have been found out sooner or later. This shows that though she had the evil intentions she had not the cleverness to carry them out" ("HPGN," 14 November 1892).
[50]Thackeray, 281.
[51]Ibid., 224.
[52]See Chapter 4 on the young Brontës' subversions of Mangnall, and Jane Austen's educational satires.
[53]"HPGN," 7 December 1891.

both elevated their family and themselves as writers, and brought out into the open the educational insurrections of earlier nineteenth-century juvenilia. Moreover, they drew in Leslie Stephen (and carefully advertised the name of their newspaper)[54] in a bid to secure the parental audience necessary to such writing's existence. Thackeray's influence was not only literary and satirical; it formed an authoritative basis with which to impress the adult audience who knew the older author's works so well. The children also showed that they knew their parents' works and literary status. The "Hyde Park Gate News" refers to the father of the family as "the celebrated author" (complete with cartoon portrait) and to "Mr Leslie Stephen whose immense litterary powers are well known."[55] Their choice of format was partly shaped by their father's journalistic career; Leslie Stephen wrote for, among other journals, the *Saturday Review*, and was editor of the *Cornhill* magazine from 1871-1882. Their mother apparently prepared her stories for sending to one of various children's periodicals,[56] and the young Stephens echoed her tales in the "Hyde Park Gate News" (a fancy dinner party is comically ruined in their "The Experiences of a Paterfamilias," as in Julia Stephen's "Tommy and his Neighbours," and their mother's favourite creatures turn up at the children's scene of an absurd declaration of love in the zoo: "[O]nly think darling what a pleasure it must be to me to see a face so pretty and gentle after pigs and monkeys").[57] The young Stephens were entirely aware of their heritage and of their audience, and endeavoured to put themselves on this adult literary level. Although the Stephen parents seemingly saw the writing of the paper as "spontaneous," and left the young writers to their own devices, they were distinctly part of the production.

Popular culture outside the home and family also influenced the Stephens' lives and their newspaper. The children reported going to pantomimes and to London entertainments such as Olympia and Imre Kiralfy's Venice, and singing the "vulgar little

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[54]The earlier version of this alphabet has "S for Leslie Stephen / Well known to you / T for Hal Talor / a poet so true" (21 November 1891). The authors evidently thought about how better to appeal to their literary family in the second printing, "repeated for the benefit of certain people who did not read it last time."
[55]"HPGN," "Cristmas Number" [1891], and 21 November 1892.
[56]See Elizabeth Steele, "Stories for Children," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 34-5.
[57]"HPGN," 14 March 1892.

song coming into fashion who's chorus is 'Ta ra ra bomteay.'"[58] The commercial magazine was one of their major sources. Perhaps more than any other young manuscript magazine writers of the later nineteenth century, the Stephens consciously modelled their own paper in their vein. Their news was structured in two-columned pages, divided with a vertical line drawn down the centre of each, and usually ran for two-and-a-half to three pages. Informational factoids ("Sundry Interesting Jotings" appeared on 21 December 1891) were sometimes included as a demonstration of the children's learning. A correspondence column ran for several issues, which was Virginia's favourite aspect of *Tit-Bits*[59] and was a feature of the *Boy's Own* and *Girl's Own* papers. The second issue ended with a notice: "THE AUTHORS OF THE HYDE PARK GATE NEWS WILL BE GLAD TO HELP ANY YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WHISH FOR ASSISTANCE OR TO RECIEVE LETTERS."[60] In the next numbers, enjoying their authority, they replied to queries from such "young people" as "REDSKIN," whom they advised to "Use PEAR'S SOAP every day" (à la *Tit-Bits*, whose advice-writers were evidently paid off by their most prominent advertiser), and from "READER," who was told to buy L. T. Meade's 1886 school story *A World of Girls*, or *The Girl's Own Paper* or boy's version thereof as a gift for a child (likely for one of the Stephens themselves, as Christmas was approaching). The letter from an obviously grown-up "Reader" and the editors' ensuing reply together form a good demonstration of the child-adult relationship necessary to the paper's existence. When the lengthier stories, "A Cockney's Farming Experiences" and its sequel, "The Experiences of a Paterfamilias," appeared in the "Hyde Park Gate News," they were serialized over several issues (six and ten chapters respectively) in order to hold the interest of the adult magazine-reading audience. Robert S. Surtees's popular Jorrocks and Mr. Sponge were evidently in the back of the children's minds; their title character was as much a "Cockney Squire," to use Surtees's subtitle, as was the grocer

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[58]"We are sure that the proper mind of Mrs Jackson would be properly shocked to know that this vulgar little ditty has actually been sung under the same house as the one in which she is" (28 March 1892). The sentimental hypochondriac, whose letters are rich in clichés, must have been a source for much giggling humour among her grandchildren.
[59]See Chapter 1.
[60]"HPGN," 30 November 1891.

turned lord of the manor Jorrocks in *Hillingdon Hall* (serialized 1843-4: reprinted 1888).[61] But contemporaneous humour from periodicals such as *Punch* was also a clear influence, and appealed to the magazine-reading audience at home. Both the tone and episodic production of these tales could well have been based on the Grossmith brothers' very popular *Diary of a Nobody*. It had been serialized in *Punch* between May 1888 and May 1889, and came out in book form in 1892, the year the children's story was written.[62] The Grossmiths' work parodies a suburban lower-middle-class family, the Pooters, who have grand social aspirations. They are out of their element whenever they leave Holloway, as are the Stephens' Cockneys in the depths of rural Buckinghamshire.[63] The Grossmiths' first-person narrative may have been the basis for the Cockney farmer's grumblings, and the Pooters' misadventures in their search for a refined lifestyle are directly reflected in several of the Stephens' class-based comic episodes. Both families are bourgeois consumers, seeking to furnish their homes in style. The farmer's wife, Harriet, "had already made the house look as if it belonged to a rich man for she had bought a comfortable armchair and was now covering it with some very expensive

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[61]Quentin Bell writes that *Punch*'s "Mr. Briggs" comic strip was the source of these stories (*Virginia Woolf* (Vol. 1), 30), but these sporting comics appeared in the 1850s and do not appear to have been reprinted as books until the early twentieth century. Virginia Stephen and Thoby Stephen, the signed authors of these two stories, did read Surtees at some point, probably in childhood or early adolescence (it is worth noting that Thoby's prep school, Evelyns, was in Hillingdon, so the title of this book may have appealed to him at the time). Later in life, Woolf wrote to Saxon Sydney-Turner, ". . . I think its your duty to unpack the bonded warehouse of your knowledge. That is Jorrocks, though, as Thoby used to say, it might well be Shakespeare" (*Letters* 2 (25 January 1920), 418). She has Mrs. Dalloway look at "Jorrocks' *Jaunts and Jollities* . . . [and] *Soapy Sponge*" in a bookshop window (10) (like many readers, she sometimes confused the author's name with his famous character's), and wrote again of Surtees's influence and appeal: "Indeed the English sporting writers, Beckford, St. John, Surtees, Nimrod, make no mean reading . . . They have had their effect upon the language" ("Jack Mytton," *Collected Essays* 4, 13).

[62]In *The Years* (1937), Virginia Woolf gives the aging Eleanor Pargiter a choice of reading material on an overnight visit: "She hoped it was Ruff's Tour, of the Diary of a Nobody; but it was Dante, and she was too lazy to change it" (163). Mitchell Leaska has suggested that Woolf had in mind a more up-to-date work, Jules Romain's 1911 *The Death of a Nobody* (*The Novels of Virginia Woolf from Beginning to End*, 207n), but it is equally likely that she intentionally invoked the Grossmiths' book from her own past, as Eleanor is thinking of the passage of time.

[63]Leslie Stephen in 1881 characterized himself and his brood, on holiday in Cornwall, as a "family of Cockneys" (Leslie Stephen to Maria Jackson, [August 1881], Berg Collection). He may have been some inspiration for the Cockney farmer: like the character, he once owned a collie, enjoyed talking about politics, and had peevish moods. But the farmer should not be seen as the true-to-life portrait of an abusive and violent Leslie Stephen, as in Louise DeSalvo, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work* (134-61). There is too much obvious hilarity surrounding the violence and mishaps--and too many characteristics unlike Leslie Stephen's--for this to be so. Some characteristics could equally have come from Major General James Pattle Beadle (d. 1902), a cousin of Julia Stephen dubbed "the Prince of Talkers" by the children, whose visits were frequently reported in the "Hyde Park Gate News." He disliked children and was fond of his country house (see "HPGN," 7 November 1892).

stuff,"[64] while Charles Pooter decorates his villa with *objets d'art* such as plaster deers' heads. Disgusting her crotchety husband, Harriet calls their baby Alphonso, perhaps as a reflection of the "suitable name" movement of the late nineteenth century,[65] and the Pooters' son Willie modishly decides that he will go by his middle name, Lupin (to his mother's delight and his father's chagrin). One of the most obvious links is when, at a society ball, Mr. and Mrs. Pooter have a "most unfortunate accident"[66] when they slip and crash headlong to the ground during a waltz: Harriet, in turn, is trapped "not in a very dignified position" when the table collapses onto her at a "swell" neighbour's dinner party.[67] Slapstick and class-related humour aside, the *Diary* may also indirectly have appealed to the young Stephens in its depiction of several games of "Consequences," which they themselves enjoyed, and which is evinced by the "anonymous," joke-filled, hybrid nature of their magazine.[68] The newspaper format was the perfect vehicle for collaborative writing in a unified "adult" voice, and for remaining anonymous among a group of writers. The serial nature of the game and the book was also inviting; the children were writing and editing in the manner of magazines like *Punch* in order to spread out their material and keep their adult audience interested in the development of characters each week. The succession of Cockney episodes, whose ending is left open, pointed towards the future, allowing for the Stephen parents' interest in their children's literary progress. As the story goes on, the installments become longer, characters are fleshed out, dialogue and suspense begin to appear, and literary references are thrown in

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[64]"HPGN," 26 September 1892.

[65]See Chapter 1. The infant character, whom his father sees as an autocrat, may have been called after the "Baby King" Alfonso XIII of Spain, who had come to the throne soon after birth in 1886. Much sentimental interest was shown in him in late-Victorian England, including in such children's magazines as *Nister's Holiday Annual* in 1890.

[66]George Grossmith and Weedon Grossmith, *Diary of a Nobody*, 41.

[67]"HPGN," 12 December 1892. The wealthy neighbours are named Robinson, as are other party-givers in the "News" (see "Love-letters between Fanny Smith and John Lovegate," 14 December 1891); the name was probably based on the highly popular *Robinson Crusoe* or *The Swiss Family Robinson* (see Thoby Stephen's stories). Whatever its source, it held its associations into Woolf's adulthood. In the "1911" section of *The Years*, Celia Pargiter says to her daughter, "I hope you were polite to the Robinsons this afternoon, dreadful as they are," to which Peggy replies, "They give ripping parties anyhow" (156).

[68]Only four bylines exist; the rest is "anonymous." See the children's reference to playing "Consequences" at a party (25 July 1892). Woolf also used the game in the final party scene of *The Years*. The young Bowen diarists were among others who also played it during the later nineteenth century (see Chapter 2).

("I philosophically say with Shakespear 'What's in a name.'?").[69] Well acquainted with journalistic criticism, Leslie Stephen and Julia Stephen would not fail to "rate" the writerly progress of their children with each new episode of the tale.

The Stephen children, especially Virginia and Vanessa, were highly conscious of their parents as an audience. The two would spy on the grown-ups' reactions to their paper from the little room that they had been given for their literary endeavours.[70] In an often quoted passage, the adult Virginia Woolf recalled her childhood thrill at the thought of her mother reading her work each Monday morning in the early 1890s: "Never shall I forget my extremity of pleasure--it was like being a violin and being played upon. . .."[71] Like her husband, Julia Stephen encouraged the children to write in adult voices. In an early note to Vanessa, she said, "I was so glad to get yr letter I cd fancy you 2 old maids writing[.]"[72] The "old maids" were very young at the time, but were expected to think of themselves writing in the future. The Stephen parents and their literary expectations for their children were a necessary part of the newspaper's composition. The children's references to their parents as readers are never overt, but an awareness of the fact that Julia and Leslie would see their work is unmistakably present. (Hoping to get out of a music lesson, the writers plead, "Imagine yourself dear reader a little girl with no cares in the world . . . You bound and play in the morning would you not rejoice if allowed to do so in the afternoon?")[73] One report in particular reminds us of the young Stephens' acknowledgement of their audience's literary expectations:

> The youngsters of the family of Stephen prepared an April Fool for their respected younger parent Mrs Leslie Stephen which consisted of a false epistle addressed to her. She opened it never guessing of the foolish contents which it contained and seemed to wonder at the slip of paper on which was printed in large letters "WE FOOLY WE FOOLY WE FOOLY BRER BUZZARD" by which name she is generally known. At last a gleam of recognition seemed to break on her. The anxious infants awaited her burst of laughter. And at last it came "Ha ha ha he he he" laughed she with all the good-natured vehemence of her nature. The

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[69]"HPGN," 10 October 1892.
[70]See Vanessa Bell, "Notes on Virginia's Childhood," [n. p.]. See also Chapter 1 on children's private spaces in the home.
[71]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 95.
[72]Julia Stephen to Vanessa Stephen, [1880s], Berg Collection.
[73]"HPGN," 12 December 1892.

letter was a success[.][74]

Julia Stephen's approval, for which the children waited "anxiously," made the joke, and indeed, the journal. It was as necessary to the newspaper's survival as Lady Strachey's more direct involvement in the "Miscellaneous Gazette" and "Our Paper."[75] Success came in adult collusion with the paper's tone. The children took part of Brer Terrypin's gleeful and triumphant song from Joel Chandler Harris's popular *Uncle Remus* stories (1880-1904): "'*I foolee, I foolee, I foolee po' Buzzud; / Po Buzzard* [sic] *I foolee, I foolee, I foolee,*'"[76] and made the chant fit their own family language. Harris's *Uncle Remus* tales were culturally established in England by the 1890s, with *Punch* using Brer Fox and Old Man Crow in political satire,[77] but the Stephen parents were particularly "in on" Harris's language and jokes. In a letter of 21 January 1887, Leslie sent his "love to Stella & Laura & to the Tarbaby, & Brer Fox & Brer Rabbit & the wild bull"[78] (Adrian was Brer Rabbit, Vanessa the fox, Virginia the tarbaby, and Thoby, presumably, the bull). Juliet Dusinberre notes that Harris's stories are all about the interchange between the listening child character and Uncle Remus telling his stories; the child is not always satisfied with the narrator's endings, wanting to know what happened next.[79] In the "Hyde Park Gate News," the children were in control of what would happen next, and were "anxious" to show their parents that they could write it properly, in an adult way. Harris's books also offered British children an appealing linguistic role reversal. It was usually adults who were intrigued by children's private languages during this period,[80] but here, it is the old black man of the Deep South whose language seems peculiar rather than that of the well-spoken white child's. Racial issues aside, the exchange of languages puts the child in the position of the adult. In their "buzzard" story, the Stephen children took control through their written language. Although some of the earlier issues are filled with childish and

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[74]Ibid., 4 April 1892.
[75]See Chapter 4.
[76]Joel Chandler Harris, "Brother Terrapin Deceives Brother Buzzard," in *Nights with Uncle Remus*, 80.
[77]See, for example, *Punch* 102 (11 June 1892), 281.
[78]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 21 January 1887 (Virginia's fifth birthday), Berg Collection. Julia's nickname for her youngest son may also have been *Remus*-inspired: Brer Bullfrog sings, "*Ingle-go-jang, my joy, my joy-- / Ingle-go-jang, my joy*!" (Harris, "Mr. Bear Catches Old Mr. Bull-Frog," in *Uncle Remus: or Mr. Fox, Mr. Rabbit, and Mr. Terrapin,* 108).
[79]Juliet Dusinberre, *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art*, 110.
[80]See Chapter 2.

school slang, the children here used lofty diction, such as "epistle" and "vehemence," in their attempt to transform their "foolish" doings into adult-worthy reading material. They wanted their readers to be aware of their literary development; they wanted the approval and complicity of their writer parents. When young fictional characters appear, such as the boy rescuer Ben Higgins in the Ballantyne-inspired adventure "A Midnight Ride,"[81] they usually develop a kind of maturity, or adult insight or heroism, and the Stephen children wanted to show that they were doing the same. They watched their readers anxiously and curiously to see if they were "doing it right"--to show that they were trying to write as adults, and developing into grown-ups in the process.

The fervent desire to impress an adult audience is what compelled the children to write their paper. Part of their strategy in drawing in that audience came in the very nature of their newspaper. The periodical, perhaps more than the book, depends on readership for its survival. If nobody reads a paper or magazine, it disappears from the scene, and its fragility means that it is less likely to be preserved than is a bound book (the Stephens' favourite *Tit-Bits*, like many inexpensive nineteenth-century magazines, was printed on particularly thin paper). The ephemeral, self-renewing quality of the weekly magazine may have been what appealed to the young Stephens as well as to their parents, for a newspaper is constantly evolving, as were the children's writing styles. The later issues of the "Hyde Park Gate News," apparently mainly Virginia Stephen's efforts, are increasingly literary, and include Austen-inspired stories of village life (again, in diary form);[82] musings on the pros and cons of (writerly?) omniscience ("I believe after all, that human beings would find it very difficult to exist together if they knew each other");[83] a timely fictionalized debate on the relative effects of nature and nurture;[84] and

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[81]"HPGN," 25 January 1892. Virginia Stephen's story, which tells of a North American boy who must make a dangerous trip to help his sick brother, was derived from such adventure tales as Ballantyne's *Charlie to the Rescue: A Tale of the Sea and the Rockies* (1890), which she and Thoby read (Ballantyne's Charlie "was born to aid mankind. He began by helping himself to everything in life that seemed at all desirable. This was natural, not selfish" (1)). The children's scorning of a "muff" in a later story likely came from the author's popular *The Gorilla Hunters* (1861), which said of this type, "[H]e will, when he becomes a man, find himself unable to act in the common emergencies of life" (71). Ballantyne's popular stories were frequently tales of children's potential heroism, which fit in with late-Victorian parents' developmentalist ideals (see Chapter 1).

[82]"Extracts from the Diary of Miss Sarah Morgan," "HPGN," 14-21 January 1895.

[83]"HPGN," 28 January 1895. This and another piece, which describes a dream of being God ("And what

a vision of the Stephen girls as an author and editor in the future.[85] The young authors knew that their parents were watching out for signs of literary development, and they tried to oblige with each new issue. They wanted to write as adults, and used the adult Stephens' reactions and voices to inform their own writing, which their parents encouraged. They wanted to sing in a grown-up voice, but one not purely mimetic or literary. The children's vehicle of choice was parody, a style for which the contemporary periodical made a perfect model. *Punch* in the early 1890s was full of blatant mockery, including, for example, "An ABC of Ibsenity" in Ibsen's own style.[86] Indeed, the Stephens composed their own such game in "An Easy Alphabet for Infants," as we have seen, which mocked contemporary education. This delight in parody extended to the physical replication of speech. The writers had an ear for Cockney accents, developed from *Punch*, Thackeray, and *Diary of a Nobody*. With a nod to well-liked caricatures such as "'Arry at 'Arrygate,"[87] the children created characters such as a maidservant who squawked to her dishevelled mistress, "Lor mum 'owever did you manage to get that [dress] torn? It'll take a deal of time to sow it up."[88] The children also put their parents' voices on paper, but rarely in a direct recording of something they had said, leaving a gap that allowed for personal interpretation--and parody--of adult ideas. Many parents saw this kind of humour (even about themselves) as allowable, a part of children's thinking about adulthood and gradually progressing towards becoming like their mothers and fathers. Mrs. Ramsay, the fictionalized Julia Stephen, sees that her children have "some joke of their own going on . . . from the twitching at their lips," and though she hopes "[i]t was not about their father" or herself, she accepts that it may be, and does not

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was I.? Why did I exist? Who made me? and who made my maker? . . . So I wondered in my dream, and the only solution I could find was by waking, and finding my self a person" (11 February 1894)) were likely written in order to appeal to the Stephen parents' agnosticism.

[84]Letter from "The Doctor," in "Correspondence," "HPGN," 4 March 1895.

[85]"HPGN," 8 April 1895.

[86]Ibid., 16 May 1891.

[87]See, for example, *Punch* 103 (24 September and 15 October 1892), 133, 169. Some of the servants in Julia Stephen's children's stories also speak Cockney ("'What business had he in the Dook's 'ouse, I should like to know. . .'" ("The Duke's Coal Cellar," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 192)). Many other late-Victorian middle-class children delighted in replicating Cockney accents as part of their class- and language-based humour: the thieves in the young Darwins' serial story, for example, tell the boy hero to "Coome ilang wath oos" ("How Max Saved Kate's Life," British Library MS. See Chapter 4).

[88]"HPGN," 12 December 1892.

reprimand them for it.[89] The Stephen children were similarly able to walk in their parents' footsteps, jokingly, and sometimes anxiously, trying out grown-up-hood within the safety of their family knowledge. The "Hyde Park Gate News" is full of examples. An article on a family trip to the country ends in a somewhat swift change to first-person voice: "Why live in London then? I hear someone ask. Ah child you are young and inexperienced but know then that your Father and Mother have friends in this great metropolis and besides to the 'grown-ups' it has it's beauties though to you it is a horror."[90] The new voice is authoritative, the parental tone (Julia's?) immediately apparent. The young Stephens frequently put on even sillier grown-up masks. Adult love and sex provided great humour, with Leslie and Julia Stephen's courtship and marriage a frequent butt. In a satirical letter based on this relationship, a father entreats his son

> to join some good clubs in London for I can tell you it is a conveient thing to have some place of resort when your wifes in a bad humour and its a rainy day. The next thing I advise you is to belong to some library for it is indeed a blessing to be able to get some books with out having the doefull thought of the bills not having been paid resting on you like a night mare[.][91]

Leslie Stephen, denizen of London libraries and financial fretter, is the obvious inspiration for the letter-writer. He and Julia Stephen had a very loving marriage, but the children recognized that they had occasional differences of outlook, and saw the potential for humour in this. They also mocked the traditions of parent-child advice (after expressing his woe about his "doefull" finances, the father blithely announces, "I suppose that you will follow the same calling as I do"). The writer was filled with the hilarity of satirizing grown-ups in their own voice. Behind the jokes, however, was a recognition of how things were done in adult life, and a desire to follow procedure. The practicalities of "Filthy Lucre,"[92] wooing, and marriage--all seen as adult concerns--were of great interest in the "Hyde Park Gate News." The Stephen children had little real knowledge of sex, like many middle-class children of the period, but were intrigued by the business of it.[93]

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[89]Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 109.
[90]"HPGN," 18 April 1892.
[91]Ibid., 4 April 1892.
[92]As the children termed it in a report on the financial concerns of their mother's quest for a nurse for the poor in St. Ives ("HPGN," 3 October 1892).
[93]See also Chapter 3 on the children's parodying of their parents' relationship, and on their sexual

In a report on their cousin's wedding, they made this clear: "On Wednesday, 16th of January, Miss Millicent Vaughan was married to Captain Isham. This statement is very simple, but the stranger can have no idea how much labour and forethought this same event caused."[94] Even in humourous fiction such as "Advertising for a Wife,"[95] in which a testy bachelor interviews several unsavoury prospects, or "The Experiences of a Paterfamilias," whose hero is surprised and disgusted when his wife suddenly "gets" a baby, the children displayed a genuine interest in the practical procedures of adulthood. The Stephens' schema was, through parody, to try out the voices of the adults they had heard and read, and even those of the adults they themselves might become, as was sanctioned by their readers.[96] Under their developmentalist parents, they lived in a "state of anxious growth," with "school, reports, professions to be chosen, marriage for the elders . . . the future was always too near and too much of a question for any sedate self expression."[97] The self-expression in the "Hyde Park Gate News," though parodic, anxiously showed the Stephen parents that the children wanted to grow up properly. The children mocked the developmentalist precept that they contained their adult futures, but at the same time, revealed that they had assimilated it.

> *Let each man, I heard it said the other day, write down the details of a day's work; posterity will be as glad of the catalogue as we should be if we had such a record of how the door keeper at the Globe, and the man who kept the Park gates passed Saturday March 18th in the year of our Lord 1568.*
>
> *-Virginia Stephen, "Phyllis and Rosamond," 1906.*

In "Phyllis and Rosamond," written at 24 and seen to be Virginia Woolf's first "mature" short story, the author shows a concern with the recording of one's own life.

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knowledge. Some of their jokes may have been a way to counteract the fear of sexual danger that had been instilled in the girls, at least.

[94]"HPGN," 21 January 1895. See Chapter 3 on the Vaughan sisters.

[95]Ibid., 27 June 1892. The joke was probably based on Mr. Lanham, a shopkeeper in St. Ives, who, the children heard, had found his wife "'through an advertisement'" (Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 128).

[96]For a study of modern children writing their own future, see Carolyn Steedman, "The Tidy House," in *Past Tenses: Essays on Writing, Autobiography, and History*, 65-89.

[97]Woolf, "Reminiscences," 30.

Although literary, psychological, and other forms of developmentalism were evidently present in their home, and the Stephen children accordingly wrote about their adult futures, they were also from an early age driven to record the events of their youth for posterity. A seemingly practical reason behind this need to record may have helped to make the Stephen children's genre choice of a newspaper. Most of the issues were written on cream-coloured foolscap, of fairly heavy weight, forming folios. The watermark of the cream 1891-2 issues is mainly "Fairfield / SUPER QUALITY" or "J. ALLEN & SONS / SUPERFINE," with an oval-shaped trademark showing a Britannia figure, while the cream and white 1894-5 issues are marked "TOWGOOD'S EXTRA-SUPER,"[98] with the same standardized Britannia drawing. In a time when paper was still expensive and not to be wasted, much of this supply was probably old, left over from some parental use and given to the children for their authorial attempts.[99] The Fairfield trademark, for example, does not appear in the *Paper-Maker's Directory* from its first year, 1884, to 1896, suggesting that it was at least eight years old by the time the Stephen children wrote on it in 1891-2. The fact that folios come folded into four pages naturally suggests a writing book, which may have had unpleasant associations with the endless perfecting of one's letters in copy books when learning to write (for some years, the Stephen girls had standard, almost identical handwriting).[100] Instead, the Stephens' answer seems to have been to make a newspaper of these booklets, which would have appeared more grown up than the writing books associated with the schoolroom. Horizontal fold creases are lightly apparent on all but one of the 1891-2 issues, which suggest that the paper may have been folded to half-length when it was stored. Most nineteenth-century foolscap was retailed folded in packets of six sheets.[101] In a house that was certainly full of newspapers and journals, these folded folios would easily have suggested broadsheets to the children

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[98]"Extra Superfine" refers to writing paper with a "high quality of material . . . or . . . finish." (E. J. Labarre, *Dictionary and Encyclopaedia of Paper and Paper-Making*, 93).
[99]When writing their "Saturday Magazine" in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the Bensons, whose father later became Archbishop of Canterbury, "called for a supply of that useful paper known as 'sermon paper,' which contains exactly twenty-three lines to a small quarto page, faintly ruled in blue" (E. F. Benson, *Our Family Affairs 1867-1896*, 89).
[100]See Chapter 2.
[101]Labarre, 108.

looking for something to write on and about.

The summer and early autumn issues of the "Hyde Park Gate News" were written on thick, light-blue foolscap, with similar horizontal creases. The inner pages are horizontally lined. This paper is marked not only with a name, but a date: "E. TOWGOOD / 1886." These numbers come from the Stephen family's holiday home in St. Ives, Cornwall. Clearly, this paper was past parental use by 1891, and was likely given to the children to play with. More intriguing, however, is the original purpose for which it was made. Towgood's entry in the 1884 *Paper Makers' Directory of All Nations* is as follows: "TOWGOOD, EDWARD & SONS, Sawston Mills--Sawston, Cambridge. Machine-made writings. 2 machines."[102] "Writings" is defined as "a general trade term used to indicate all papers more particularly intended to be written upon with a pen . . . [including] Account Book Papers. . .."[103] The colour of the paper suggests its purpose even more strongly, for it was the characteristic shade of ledgers.[104] The blue shade of these "Hyde Park Gate News" numbers, then, makes clear that they were written on old household ledger paper, for Labarre states that during the period, "for account-book papers and official use . . . the various shades of AZURE are almost *de rigueur*."[105] We can extrapolate the presence of grid lines on nineteenth-century account paper to include the similarly-lined early cream issues as account paper of a kind (J. Allen and Fairfield were both manufacturers of "writings" as well). All issues but the marginless first six have deep crease lines along the margins, suggesting that they may have been bound for storage when or before the children wrote on them. The fact that most of the margins are cleaner than the rest of the page suggests that the paper may have come from a bound book, meant for accounts, that had come apart, or even been taken apart by the children. We may speculate about the azure paper's Cambridge origins,[106] for Leslie Stephen had studied and taught there, and retained connections with the university. Wherever it was

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[102]S. Chas Phillips, *The Paper Makers' Directory of All Nations*, 15.
[103]Labarre, 374.
[104]Ibid., 11.
[105]Ibid., 375.
[106]The J. Allen paper was machine-manufactured in Stowford Mills, Ivybridge, Devon (Phillips, 6). I have so far been unable to locate with certainty a source for the older Fairfield paper.

originally bought, the paper very likely served as a journalistic inspiration to the children who wrote on it, and connected them to the adult workings of the household. (In one of Julia Stephen's stories, two children who have run away from home think it necessary and "grand" to do their business accounts in order to be like their father).[107] As the primary contributors to the "Hyde Park Gate News" were Vanessa Stephen and Virginia Stephen, the paper takes on further developmental meaning. Their handwriting is distinctly similar, especially in the earlier issues, as was seen to be necessary for girls during the period.[108] Women were the keepers of middle-class household accounts in the late nineteenth century,[109] and, as we have seen, wrote many of the baby diaries of the time. The women connected with the Stephen family were expected to be recorders of lives. The Stephen girls' half-sister Stella Duckworth made a photographic record of every visitor to the family's "palatial residence" in St. Ives in 1892,[110] and kept the family photo albums. Further, they were required as writers of (male) lives: Anny Thackeray Ritchie spent years writing biographical introductions to her father's works;[111] Leslie Stephen's sister Caroline Emilia Stephen edited her father's letters for publication; and Virginia Stephen would later contribute (anonymously) to F. W. Maitland's biography of her own father. The girls' intended futures as record-keepers, then, were already inscribed by their childhood writing.

In the "Hyde Park Gate News," the Stephen children recorded the process of their own development. Frequently referring to themselves as "the juveniles," they transformed themselves into adults, seeing themselves as if from their grown-up futures. Childhood

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[107]Julia Stephen, "Cat's Meat," in *Julia Duckworth Stephen*, 180.

[108]Anne Olivier Bell has stated that the "Hyde Park Gate News" is "almost entirely" written out in Vanessa Stephen's handwriting (cited in Mark Hussey, *Virginia Woolf A-Z*, 121). I am virtually certain, however, that two very similar handwritings are present throughout the earlier issues of the paper (Thoby's occasional hand is easily discernible). Vanessa's, I think, is slightly neater and more slanted to the right; Virginia's is more upright, very slightly larger, and the curves of her lower-case "h"s and "n"s are more distinct. The differences are small and subtle, but they are discernible in many places. See also Chapter 2 for a discussion of girls' uniformity of hand.

[109]After Julia Stephen's death, Stella Duckworth and then Vanessa Stephen had to take over the household accounts, a task they viewed with dread due to Leslie Stephen's financial rages. See, for example, Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," 144-5.

[110]As reported in the "HPGN," 26 September 1892.

[111]Anny Thackery is fictionalized as Mrs. Hilbery, who has been entrusted with the writing of her famous poet father's official "life," in Woolf's *Night and Day* (1919).

was a fluid state from which one could escape by using an adult's voice. "How nice it must be to be young,"[112] intoned Virginia and Vanessa Stephen, ages ten and 12, mocking the adults around them. As other young writers of home manuscript magazines at the time frequently did, the Stephens thought about climbing the "ladder of letters" in the future. But they were also conscious of providing a record of their literary and personal development for the parental audience. Adrian Stephen was frequently the subject of this focus in the children's newspaper. As the youngest, he was the least "developed," and his sisters and brother could therefore feel themselves to be superior observers, and show off their own development to their parents in the process. It was easy for the older children to take a mocking parent's-eye view of his progress (or lack thereof). His rival journalistic efforts were a favourite target. The children wrote, "Mr Adrian Stephen's little 'squitty' paper was supposed to come out on Thursday but as we feared he is not blessed with the spirit of punctuality which may be called the foundation stone of a paper as well as the beginning of a business man's life."[113] Their parents' focus on literary development was evidently on the minds of the young journalists. They went on to write,

> Mr Stephen . . . said that [Adrian] had better join our most respectable paper . . . we hope that Master A. Stephen will take his Father's advice not that we are in want of writers but because we wish to do him a good turn as it may prove the turning point in this young literary aspirant's life.[114]

The older children defined themselves too as "literary aspirants," and the writerly tone of the piece makes this clear to the parental reader. They were recording their own "most respectable" artistic progress, and their own intentions to write as adults, sounding much like their historian-biographer father. Living under the late-nineteenth-century umbrella of Darwinian debate over the hereditary transmission of artistic qualities, the young writers became historians of their family's literary works. But they also wrote about the day-to-day history of Stephen family life. When the children wrote of Adrian's departure for school, they made clear their recognition of their role:

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[112]"HPGN," 11 April 1892.
[113]Ibid., 28 November 1892.
[114]Ibid.

> The baby (but alas! he is now no longer one) has returned to Evelyns. Many a tear rises to our eyes as we think of the days that are past when his sweet baby prattle resounded oh how softly oh how sweetly through the house. He departed for Evelyns last Thursday at 5.30. P. M. taking with him 50 oranges.[115]

This piece is decidedly satirical, mocking the long-suffering Adrian as a babbling infant. Nor were the Stephen parents spared; the sentimental narrative voice is obviously derived from Julia Stephen's idealization of early childhood (the tearful parental eyes also fill with "misty moisture" upon receiving news from Thoby in a subsequent report).[116] The writers, emulating such works as the anti-romantic verse of their cousin J. K. Stephen,[117] avoided sentimentality at all costs. But there is a clear subtext; the children were, however teasingly, chronicling Adrian's baby days and his subsequent progress to the next developmental stage, in an echo of the period baby diaries in which "going to school" was one of the events to be recorded.[118] They documented Adrian at once as a baby and as a departing schoolboy, as if giving him a picture of his earlier life in the mode of commercially produced baby diaries, which were meant as "a guide for future occasions."[119] Their adult tone shows a consciousness of their mother's and father's parental feelings, and their self-satire is in tune with such popular magazines as *Punch*, which with disdain portrayed the fin-de-siècle child writer as recorder of himself or herself. 1891's "Notes from a Nursery-Garden *(By an Awfully Clever Child)*" is one example. Its narrator writes,

> DEAR MR. PUNCH,--I am a poetess. I am told that the Age is old, and that poetry is over. *My* age is ten, and my poetry is certainly not over. My nurse (one of those horrid critics) has ventured to suggest that I am not original. I leave you to judge. Yours impatiently, ENFANT TERRIBLE.[120]

Several melodramatic reworkings of nursery rhymes follow, referring to "Child-Innocence," which the ten-year-old poetess evidently saw as finished with in her own case. The sense of the child as recorder of his or her own development, then, was so much

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[115]Ibid., 25 January 1892.
[116]Ibid., 22 February 1892.
[117]See Chapter 3.
[118]See, for example, [n. a.], *Baby Life: A Remembrance of Baby Days; With Spaces for Recording Notable Events and Red-Letter Days* (1896), as discussed in Chapter 1.
[119]"H. N. M," Introduction to *Babys Biography* (1899).
[120]*Punch* 100 (16 May 1891), 240.

in the air in the 1890s as to be a frequent object of satire. What *Punch* and many middle-class parents may have seen as "terrible" about this kind of child was the apparent stagedness of her work in an era when children's writing was meant to be "natural." The middle-class engrossment with childhood development had produced the belief that children would "naturally," even unconsciously, develop their literary skills and record their own histories in their writings as they developed towards adulthood. But children's writings during this period were frequently as carefully orchestrated as the "Enfant Terrible's," though in a different way. They built their writing around their adult audience. The Stephen parents as readers of the "Hyde Park Gate News" encouraged literary self-development and self-chronicling. The children's recording of their day-to-day family life was often parodic or silly, but it represented a sanctioned effort to write in the historian's voice, and to include themselves as part of the historical continuum.

> *The lank female, whom we will call for the future the Author that apparently being her occupation, is anxiously watching the sun dive behind a black stretch of cloud. She wishes to be poetical. A band in the distance begins to play Auld Lang Syne. Let us hope the Author thinks of her childhood.*
>
> *-Stephen family, "Hyde Park Gate News," 8 April 1895.*

The Stephens, then, were parodists, recorders, and historians of past and future. They styled themselves as a single, nameless author; the newspaper was rooted in collective authorship and an attempt at professionalism, following the late-Victorian family magazine's requirements for success. They were influenced by their parents as writers and as readers, and absorbed the humour and developmentalism inherent in popular culture. They were children and would-be adults, and they wrote in both guises, anxious to appeal to their audience. The "Hyde Park Gate News," like other periodicals discussed above, showed a distinct concern with adult life. Grown-up finances were always considered; the Stephens' characters, for example, were forever receiving windfalls from conveniently dead aunts (another *Punch* take-off). The ludicrousness of adult goings-on such as marriage and sex were also sent up. The children were satirical

and anti-emotional; when sentiment was displayed, it was usually playing on the adult audience's nostalgia surrounding childhood. Their writing included fantastic flights in the realms of money, food, and materiality (the Stephens had their visions of eggs "with plenty of frizzling" and gold under their neighbours' floor). In a practical manner, the child journalists were all imaginative. But they were concerned with the practicalities of adult life and how to achieve adulthood. They tried out the roles of everyday life rather than those of fairyland; children in their works are transformed into adults instead of princesses and monsters. Most of the stories about children in the Stephens' and other late-Victorian children's manuscript magazines end in some kind of maturity, demonstrating that the roles that child writers were expected to try out were those of grown-ups. Evolutionist theory ensured that these roles were heroic ones that would improve the human race as a whole. These child authors wrote about what they knew, "what [they] would not otherwise be able to do"[121] because of their age, and the patterns they believed their future lives might spin, mainly for their parental readers' benefit. They wrote within the consciousness and genre of what Carolyn Steedman calls "a community of cognition," within which they were free to look at themselves, but of which parents were a large part. Although they wanted their children to write "naturally," the Stephen parents, like others, observed the children's progress through their writing, encouraging them to consider their future possibilities and to record their own development.

We can discuss the contents of late-nineteenth-century children's writings and what is common to them: they are often collectively authored, attempt to be professional to a degree, and take the form of a family newspaper, designed to appeal to adults and to fit developmentalist standards. But defining them as an overall genre is difficult. First, juvenilia must necessarily define itself in terms of age. What, then, is the upper age limit of so-called juvenilia? The University of Alberta's Juvenilia Press cutoff is 20. J. A. Cuddon appears to see juvenilia as finished at 19,[122] while anthologizers of young

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[121]Steedman, 78.
[122]See above.

people's writing limit the genre at the various ages of 16, 17, 20, and 22.[123] Any delineation is obviously arbitrary. My own limit of 16 in this thesis has admittedly been so, although I have found very few examples of children writing in manuscript magazines past this age for the period in question. Individual differences, periods, and circumstances mark any writer's style, as we know; so do they mark their childhood writing. The legal definitions of childhood shifted during the late-Victorian period, and class had a definite impact on popular perceptions of what a child was. Middle- and upper-class children, especially girls, were "childlike" far longer than their lower-class counterparts, often until they had children of their own. Childhood writing of the period (and indeed, of most periods) cannot neatly be slotted into an age frame.

In the Stephen case, I would put an end to "juvenilia writing" near the end of the "Hyde Park Gate News." Julia Stephen died in May of 1895, and the world changed. The "Hyde Park Gate News" reported on her final illness, and ceased production a few weeks before her death. At that point, Virginia Stephen was 13; afterwards, her mentality and her writing changed. She may have been a child in many ways, but her voice had, in effect, broken. In the last issues of the newspaper, the handwriting appears primarily to be hers. The style is more autobiographical than in the early numbers, with first-person references that were not there before; also, the fiction is more frequently personalized, descriptive, and literary, in the forms of personal diaries and letters rather than purely farcical stories and reports. Remembering has become an imperative, instead of something simply entertaining. The last extant article of the "Hyde Park Gate News" (April 8, 1895) describes an Author and Editor--Virginia and Vanessa's titles throughout the paper--as curiously "elderly." The sulking Author's face is lined, and the Editor is "about 50." "Let us hope the author thinks of her childhood" is the most arresting sentence in this last article (as a "certain" result, she is put into a bad temper). Virginia Stephen now consciously saw herself as outside of childhood, with a different voice. Her work here begins a transition. Describing the Author's verses, written after the cheerful

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[123]Respectively, Neville Braybrooke, Harry Randall, Jon Stallworthy, and Tuli Kupferberg and Sylvia Topp, in their collections.

Editor inspires her to come out of her melancholy, the narrator ends the article with the sentence, "We have decided not to reproduce them here." Is it because they number over 100, and were written "with the help of the rhyming dictionary"? It is possible that they are left out because they symbolically represent "childish" writing, and the proverbial time to put away childish things has come into Virginia Stephen's consciousness. The passage can be read as a typical interchange between the young Virginia and Vanessa Stephen. The adult Vanessa wrote in her *Notes on Virginia's Childhood* that she "could not remember a time when Virginia did not mean to be a writer and I a painter."[124] This article, then, is Virginia's half-teasing construction of their future, in which she is still a stubborn "Goat" and Vanessa an encouraging "Saint" (their family nicknames). In keeping with the newspaper's tradition, Virginia satirized her own obstinate fits of gloom, Vanessa's bustling cheer, and the sisters' close relationship. The assumption of a sardonic adult voice allowed her to picture and record herself and her family from outside, as an adult. She would retain the desire to do so all her life; in her 1919 diary, she imagined "Virginia Woolf at the age of 50" sitting down to read the journal to "say how near to the truth I come."[125] In the final "Hyde Park Gate News" passage, the sisters both exist in a dual adult / child state. Virginia Stephen is both the grown-up hack writer, and the child fearful of the "indelicate exhibition of [her] innards," that is, appearing silly before her family audience. Even as a child, Virginia Stephen's ideas on childhood were equivocal, but she saw it as an unchanging part of life and writing. The "Author" piece represents a somewhat apprehensive look forward to a literary adulthood, and new, as yet unexplored, more personal forms of writing that would be the outgrowth of the "Hyde Park Gate News."

In the search for a critical definition of the late-Victorian juvenilia discussed here, we must necessarily involve their own Author. If a writer takes on a self-reflexive editing role, he or she may decide that early works "don't count," or that a piece is not good until it is somehow recognizably "mature," and that only he or she can know when that

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[124]Vanessa Bell, *Notes on Virginia's Childhood*, [n. p.].
[125]Woolf, 20 January 1919, *Diary* 1, 234.

moment arrives. The author is psychologically involved in his or her oeuvre, and life events may influence his or her opinion of the age limit for juvenilia, as they did Virginia Stephen's. In various periods, Lord Byron, Leigh Hunt, and Alan Seeger, among others, have titled their adolescent poems *Juvenilia*. The term, however, is inexact, as we have seen, and brings up the pejorative sense of "juvenile." Further, it is still too much an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century definition to use in any new sense. Perhaps "early writing" is better, as it avoids a pejorative meaning (though it is still based in categorization). In *Under My Skin: Volume One of My Autobiography, to 1949*, Doris Lessing reflects on the slippery nature of autobiography even as she writes her own. Less directly, she looks at her own early writings. Her term for them is "apprentice texts." This term functions well as a replacement for "juvenilia," especially for the late-nineteenth-century children's writing discussed here. In an analysis of James Barrie and *Peter Pan*, Jacqueline Rose states, "Writing is discovery, document, and also apprenticeship."[126] Much of the children's writing we have is that of children who grew up to be authors, whether of fiction or non-fiction. Even if they did not write as adults, virtually all of the young writers discussed believed that they would do so, Daisy Ashford being a clear example.[127] Some grew up to write autobiographies and memoirs if nothing else, reflecting the drive to self-record that had been instilled by writing in childhood (Ashford, who gave up writing fiction when she was 14, wrote an autobiography late in life, but burned the typescript in a fit of zealous housekeeping).[128] If we look at children's writing from the perspective of the children who wrote it, rather than the adults they grew up to

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[126]Jacqueline Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan; Or, The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, 80. Margaret Anne Doody argues of Jane Austen that it is not useful "to imagine--unconsciously to imagine--that she always aspired to write the three volume novels, and that the early writings were mere apprenticeship or practice until she could arrive at that happier capacity for sustained work" ("A Regency Walking Dress and Other Disguises: Jane Austen and the Big Novel," *Persuasions* 19 (1994), 74-5), and Leslie Robertson, offering a "play"-based model of juvenilia, states that "the model of apprenticeship is inadequate to describe fully just what it is that young writers are doing, for it implies a continuity between the juvenile work and the mature that may not really exist" ("Changing Models of Juvenilia: Apprenticeship or Play?", *English Studies in Canada* 24 (September 1998), 291). It is not my contention that the children's works I discuss are always continuous with adult work (if adult work exists), or that the young writers somehow foresaw *what* they would write as adults. Rather, I propose that the opinions and works of the child authors should be considered in themselves, separately from any adult work they may have produced.

[127]See Chapter 4.

[128]See R. M. Malcomson, *Daisy Ashford: Her Life*, 109-10.

be, apprenticeship is an exact term, for their early efforts represent the working out of the skills they believed they would use as adults. "Apprenticeship" need not be seen as a pejorative designation, especially if it is looked at from the child's viewpoint. Many late-nineteenth-century middle-class child writers believed themselves to be learning to write, or even already writing, as adults did. They wanted to follow (and sometimes subvert) the patterns laid out for them. They clearly were affected by literary (and other) developmentalism, and saw their own work as getting better all the time.

Virginia Stephen was one of these young writers who did grow up to write. Mitchell A. Leaska titled his edition of Woolf's early journals *A Passionate Apprentice*: "These are the pages of an apprentice learning her craft."[129] Writing does involve learning, as Woolf and her family would have been the first to admit (her father referred to the young Vanessa Stephen's "apprenticeship to letter-writing").[130] We might, then, define for the first time these late-nineteenth-century juvenilia as apprentice writing, by children who saw themselves as writers already, and who believed they would continue to develop their writing as they grew up. These texts are an interplay between young writers and their adult audience; moreover, the definition reflects the fact that parents and other designated grown-up readers continually searched children of the period for signs of self-development. We can further qualify the "public" late-Victorian children's writing that we have: it is an exercise in collective authorship, generally in the form of a newspaper or magazine; it frequently mocks standard educational methods and developmentalism while revealing its writers' assimilation of their precepts; it disparages romantic emotionalism with a generally parodic tone, but reveals a semi-anxious concern with the practicalities of adult life, including economics and sex; and most importantly, it exists as a function of its adult audience, even when purported to be "spontaneous." After their childhoods as writers, Thoby and Adrian Stephen retained a deep interest in literature, and Virginia and Vanessa Stephen grew up to be artistic adults, as they had known they would. Their apprentice texts survive as a consequence of the Stephen family's valuing of history and

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[129]Mitchell A. Leaska, Preface to Woolf, *A Passionate Apprentice*, x.
[130]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 31 May 1887, Berg Collection.

literature, and because they are documents of the development process.

Conclusion:
"Explorers and revolutionists": Virginia Woolf and the Writing of Childhood

> *Where the tune is familiar and the end emphatic--lovers united, villains discomfited, intrigues exposed--as it is in most Victorian fiction, we can scarcely go wrong, but where the tune is unfamiliar and the end a note of interrogation or merely the information that they went on talking, as it is in Chekhov, we need a very daring and alert sense of literature to make us hear the tune, and in particular those last notes which complete the harmony.*
>
> *-Virginia Woolf,*
> *"The Russian Point of View," 1925*

This thesis has explored the "familiar" and familial late-Victorian middle-class story of early life. It is the story of parents and children observing each other. From the 1870s onwards, middle-class parents began to adapt what they saw as the historical view of children as little adults. The "emphatic end" of this earlier conception was ushered in by developmental psychology. Developmental theory, rooted in Rousseau and expanded by Darwin, filtered into popular middle-class understanding and opened up possibilities for the late-Victorian child. Children were no longer to be seen as miniature grown-ups, but instead, as beings on the road to adulthood. The child's adult-self was still a part of him or her, but a part that existed as potentiality. These ideas were practised among the middle classes with redesigned nurseries for children, more individualistic names, and some recognition of the child's need for privacy. The popular toys, games, children's books, and juvenile magazines of the late nineteenth century were often specifically designed and marketed as developmental aids. Children were encouraged to think of their lives as narratives, whose climax was adult experience. Echoing evolutionary theory, late-Victorian parents' concept of childhood allowed them to believe that life was continually improving, and that each child embodied in miniature the promise of the human race.

In attempting to map the child's mind, late-Victorian adults turned to linguistics.

New theories in language acquisition, and in reading and writing education, made pleasure in language a requirement for successful learning. Many experts and middle-class parents saw word-by-word scrutiny of children's verbal and written output as the key to understanding the child, and, by association, the future. This observation of linguistic development provided a model of general human improvement for middle-class adults, who also basked in sentimental conceptions of baby talk as a means to feeling that they understood the child's language. Interest in children's language demonstrated that late-Victorian boys and girls had achieved a private mental space in adult eyes. The fact that the child was the subject of so much scrutiny necessitated his or her subjectivity; his or her thoughts, expressed through language, were seen as individual. Children's language learning and expression were the first areas for pre-Freudian psychoanalytic forays, because they were perceived to come from a secret place in the mind. Language also provided a perceptible connection between the late-Victorian child and his or her adult self, as learning proper speech and writing became fundamental to growing up. Young children's verbal development was also seen to embody the linguistic history of the human race, and, as such, should progress "naturally."

Growing up, of course, involves physical and sexual growth as well as mental. Despite their reputation for prudery, bourgeois late-Victorians did not shy away from sex. Rather, sex was recognized as a fundamental part of love--at least, of married love--and was sanitized and legitimized by it. Late in the nineteenth century, middle-class parents began to question whether children should know nothing or something about physical love, partly as a result of perceived sexual dangers on the streets. Pioneers in sexual education began to introduce the issue, primarily with careful Christian-Darwinist descriptions of reproduction in anthropomorphic fish, birds, and cows. Proto-eugenicists used sexual education for their own means, creating a conscience for children in the form of their future, grown-up incarnations who would need to be healthy, perfect parents themselves. Educators and parents squarely allied sex with love in their discussions with,

and books for, children in order to cope with the emerging possibility of a pre-Freudian infantile sexuality, and to discourage children's self-love in all its forms. The existence of childhood sexuality was a sign to grown-ups that the child did indeed contain the adult self, but it was a potentially dangerous signal. If sex education was to be offered, middle-class parents wanted it to be couched in what they saw as childlike language, and in descriptions of childlike, universal love. Middle-class children, nevertheless, frequently saw through the banalities offered them. Sex naturally interested many of them, and they retaliated against the showers of romantic sentimentality around them by parodying the triteness and absurdity they saw in adult romance. But at the same time, pre-pubescent children revealed a genuine interest in the practicalities of marriage and how to achieve it, which parents sanctioned as appropriate for their developmental stage. Adults and children engaged in mutual, interested surveillance of loving and sexual behaviour in order to categorize each other almost as separate races, while revealing a belief in the connection of the child and adult selves.

Late-Victorian parents encouraged their children to connect with their future selves through the act of writing. The children's home manuscript magazine was an extremely popular production in middle- and upper-class families during the late nineteenth century. Earlier child writers, such as Jane Austen and the Brontës, often used their more private works to attack the piecemeal education in classics and history that was foisted upon them. By the latter half of the century, however, adults had less interest in making children learn selected facts by rote, and were more concerned with the "spontaneous" and "natural" effusions of the child's private mind. With the rise in popularity of very young writers, and a debate on the hereditary transmissibility of artistic qualities, literary and aesthetic development became a parental focus in many families. The short-lived "Pet Marjorie" Fleming became the prototype of the young late-Victorian writer, with her seeming ingenuousness and artless style. The late-nineteenth-century manuscript journals frequently became an operation completely run by child writers and

child editors. These magazines, however, were written for a parental audience, much like Marjory Fleming's poems, and would not have existed without adult readers. They were not simply "natural" outputs of fun and wonder, nor pages of ritualized learning repeated, but rather, for the adult audience, records of personal development. Composition became an act of self-recording, and children were encouraged to write about their daily lives and about the good or heroic adults they would become. The parental reader helped to create the texts by encouraging children to write about their lives and even project their adult selves. Since young people were seen to contain their adulthoods, writing about future life was a means to improve and shape it, in an accelerated Darwinian process, before it actually came into existence.

Most late-Victorian child-writers believed they would continue to write as adults, and many did. In this light, it is appropriate to re-define the juvenilia discussed as apprentice writing, by a child who sees himself or herself as a writer already. Late-nineteenth-century "public" apprentice texts can be characterized further: they frequently had a newspaper or magazine format; they were collectively authored and attempted to be professional; they mocked standard educational methods and romantic sentimentalism in a parodic voice, but revealed a concern with the practicalities of adult life; and its authors almost always had an adult audience in mind. The Stephen children, members of an in many ways typical upper-middle class, literary family, produced a prime example of the genre. The "Hyde Park Gate News" was frequently satirical, with sardonic assessments of education and adult love and sex. It was written as a weekly newspaper, under "anonymous" authorship. It continually appealed to the parental reader. Indeed, the Stephen journal existed as a function of its adult audience. Its grown-up readers searched the texts, like the children themselves, for signs of development towards adulthood, and the child writers duly recorded their own progress within their newspaper stories. The young Stephen writers had defined their futures in their early works. This was especially true of Virginia Stephen, who saw herself as a writer from an early age. In her case, as in

others of the late-Victorian period, the apprentice text was, in a sense, parent of the literary adult.

All her life, Virginia Woolf remained fascinated with her own and other people's early lives. In her novels, diaries, and autobiographical writings, she developed a new historian's eye, one that viewed and recalled childhood with a child's vision. She constructed her childhood as a somewhat distant and mystical period, yet she plaited a thick cord of writing and memory in order to keep the younger self fastened to the adult. Writing about childhood was Woolf's key to the modern puzzle of human motivation, and what she saw to be the anchor of her own adult existence. In her adult vision, life was collective and continual, as it had been in her childhood, and turning back to the language of infancy and childhood was a means by which she hoped to restore what she saw as "true" communication with her child-self and with others. Childhood was certainly not an ideal period in Woolf's experience and imagination, but the perceived perfection of infantile communication allowed her to construct a vital link between the adult-self and the child-self--the reverse of the late-Victorian progressivist conception--and between all humans generally. With her sister and brothers in the "Hyde Park Gate News," Virginia Stephen rebelled against adults by parodying their voices, and creating secret languages and jokes. Yet in parodying them, she also had to inhabit their language, and even to see herself as an adult. The children's subversions, then, could not work entirely as such. Nonetheless, the adult Woolf continued to attempt to undermine the "grown-ups"--that is, her Victorian evolutionist and developmentalist forebears. Darwin helped to form Virginia Woolf's interest in origins, and he held a lifelong fascination for her. To the end of her life, she considered writing a piece about him.[1] But she focused on life's continuity rather than its progressive development, turning to childhood and even infancy as a

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[1]See Woolf, 24 March and 10 June 1940, *Diary* 5, 274 and 295. For a discussion of Darwin's influence on Woolf, see, for example, Gillian Beer, "Virginia Woolf and Prehistory," in *Virginia Woolf, The Common Ground*, 6-28; and Elizabeth G. Lambert, "'and Darwin says they are nearer the cow:' Evolutionary Discourse in *Melymbrosia* and *The Voyage Out*," *Twentieth Century Literature* 37 (Spring 1992), 127-46.

requisite source for her adult writing. She was not the only writer of the early twentieth century to do so. May Sinclair, Katherine Mansfield, James Joyce, and D. H. Lawrence drew on their late-Victorian experiences of early childhood as well.[2] Woolf could not escape this evolutionist-developmentalist framework entirely, but sought to revise and build on her nineteenth-century intellectual past. In *Night and Day*, she quickly makes clear that she will do so; one of Ralph Denham's first remarks to Katharine Hilbery is a mocking accusation of "belonging to one of the most distinguished families in England, and if anyone will take the trouble to consult Mr Galton's *Hereditary Genius*, he will find that this assertion is not far from the truth."[3] But Katherine does not follow in the footsteps of her literary forebears, breaking the hereditary progression. Woolf's revolt from her own Galtonian family line, in a similar spirit, came in privileging continuity over progressive development; she turned backwards, to infancy and childhood, instead of looking forward to the future. She constructed a "philosophy" that "behind the cotton wool" of day-to-day living "is hidden a pattern; that we--I mean all human beings--are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are the parts of the

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[2]May Sinclair (1863-1946), for example, made her eponymous Harriett Frean's turning to the past a negative, regressive movement, because her memories are too connected to her parents' ideologies. Where Sinclair's Mary Olivier finds timeless happiness in her memories when she ceases to attach the emotion "to certain things and certain people . . . to going back to Mamma" (378), the elderly Harriett's child-self cannot communicate because it has only ever been trained to relate to adults and adulthood. Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923) also relentlessly refuted late-Victorian parents' desire for young children to think continually about their impending adulthoods. She wrote about childhood from children's perspective, asserting its importance and demonstrating the damage that middle-class parents' aspirations could do. Her story "Prelude" (published 1918) does not follow the unfolding of a conventional plot, but meanders among the characters' perceptions over a few days, as if to show that developmentalist ideas are far less important than retaining impressions, especially those of childhood. Unlike Woolf, D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) did not entirely contradict Victorian beliefs in progress and development, but both writers made childhood--even earliest infancy--the source of true communication. Paul's infantile "whimper" of "'Mother! . . . mother!'" (422) is the end of *Sons and Lovers* (1913), but the beginning of the story; like Woolf's pre-verbal languages, the cry is symbolic of universal experience that must be told. For James Joyce (1882-1941) also, the late-Victorian parent could not be killed off completely, but the child-self could triumph by relating the "reality of experience" (196)--childhood experience--to others. Though Woolf may have disagreed with the seeming ease with which this breakaway was possible for Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1914-5), she would have found an echo in Joyce of her own insistence on the necessity of sharing childhood. She was excited and perturbed by Joyce's re-shaping of language here and in *Ulysses* (1922), and his personalization of language's communicative possibilities may have helped enlarge her own somewhat retaliatory theory of pre-verbal communication in such novels as *Mrs. Dalloway*, published three years after Joyce's work.

[3]Woolf, *Night and Day*, 32.

work of art."[4] She set out to explore this connecting pattern through the shared human experience of infancy and childhood, and its continuing effect on adult life.

In Woolf's writing, the child-self's forms of communication are of paramount importance. The language and silence of early life fascinated her, as they did her contemporary Melanie Klein (1882-1960). Rather than taking up Klein's focus on the child's interaction with the mother, however, Woolf explored infancy as the genesis of all human communication, with the self and with others. She displayed her Victorianness in her preoccupation with origins. As Charles Darwin had, she sought the source of human language. Darwin, however, looked at the animal pre-history of human life as a base from which human communication had progressed,[5] where Woolf sought to understand the infant's language as the apex of all communication. She would adapt the late-Victorian concept of ontogeny repeating phylogeny to connect adult life to the obscure history of the human infant. While maintaining the Victorian concept of infancy as the "pure" and ungendered first five or six years of life, she made genderlessness an ideal state rather than simply a waiting period, and radically foregrounded the young child's ability to communicate in various ways. This is already clear in her first novel. When Rachel and Terence become engaged in *The Voyage Out* (1915), the scene is one of child-selves communicating with each other. They repeat each other's sentences in an attempt at closeness:

> 'We sat upon the ground,' he recollected.
>
> 'We sat upon the ground,' she confirmed him.
>
> The recollection of sitting upon the ground, such as it was, seemed to unite them again, and they walked on in silence . . . Long silences came between their words, which were no longer silences of struggle and confusion but refreshing silences, in which trivial things moved easily.[6]

Ellen Bayuk Rosenman sees these silences as "part of a larger movement back to the

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[4]Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, 72.
[5]See Charles Darwin, *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals* (1872), especially 84.
[6]Woolf, *The Voyage Out*, 286-7.

womb, to dissolution and death."[7] They may also be, however, part of the desire for a perfect communication--that of the child-selves within them. The repetitiveness of their speech is like that of children learning to talk; a pre-literate silence is ultimately preferable as a means of communication. In Rachel's final illness, she is at first frightened by her feverish inability to recite Milton to herself: "[T]he adjectives persisted in getting into the wrong places."[8] As she becomes progressively more ill, nonetheless, she becomes more childlike, and less dependent on the words she has learned: "She was completely cut off, and unable to communicate with the rest of the world, isolated alone with her body."[9] Infantile sensation and communication with herself now preoccupy Rachel. The outside world and its language begin to vanish. In her last hour of life, when Terence visits her, she is silent after her initial greeting. Terence holds her hand and listens to her breathing: "[F]or some time; they seemed to be thinking together; he seemed to be Rachel as well as himself; and then he listened again; no, she had ceased to breathe."[10] It is in silent communion that Terence at last feels they have achieved "the union which had been impossible while they lived."[11] In this moment, their child-selves connect in a quiet rapture. At the novel's end, the narrator describes St. John Hirst, "content to sit silently watching the pattern build itself up, looking at what he hardly saw."[12] Even the articulate St. John becomes as an infant with no words in the face of the continuous pattern of human life, which he perceives in the silence. *Night and Day* (1919) ends similarly, with Ralph Denham and Katharine Hilbery accepting "the unfinished, the unfulfilled, the unwritten, the unreturned,"[13] which are the previously obscure communications of early childhood. Woolf does not give them words when they

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[7]Ellen Bayuk Rosenman, *The Invisible Presence: Virginia Woolf and the Mother-Daughter Relationship*, 28.
[8]Woolf, *The Voyage Out*, 334.
[9]Ibid., 335.
[10]Ibid., 358.
[11]Ibid., 359.
[12]Ibid., 379.
[13]Woolf, *Night and Day*, 534.

speak to each other here: Ralph rather communicates "from the heart of his darkness," and Katharine "from a region just as far, as hidden."[14] A "true" language--halting, half-silent, but effective--is uncovered because the child-self's presence has been recognized as essential and eternal.

Woolf sought to explore and describe this language, to go even further back than had late-Victorian speech scientists. The language of earliest childhood is intensely investigated in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), her most autobiographical novel, reflecting her search to regain the "private code . . . secret language"[15] that Mrs. Ramsay perceives in her young son. Like James, the "wild" and secretive child Cam must learn to speak as an adult, but for her it is repetitive and meaningless; she conveys a message from the cook to her mother "quite accurately" but "in a colourless singsong."[16] Mrs. Ramsay recognizes that a private language exists in a "pattern on the floor of the child's mind,"[17] and later begins to see the presence of the child-self's communication within herself. She sinks into quiet joy in reading, and words lose their meaning, instead "washing from side to side of her mind rhythmically." What she is reading is a poem about embryo lives: "*And all the lives we ever lived / And all the lives to be / Are full of trees and changing leaves*[.]" Thinking about childhood, she loses her hold on adult language, and feels that she "was climbing backwards, upwards,"[18] rather than forwards, in the late-Victorian progression of humanity. Sitting with Mrs. Ramsay later, Lily Briscoe desires to achieve this deeper form of communication: "[F]or it was not knowledge but unity that she desired, not inscriptions written on tablets, nothing that could be written in any language known to men, but intimacy itself, which is knowledge, she had thought, leaning her head on Mrs. Ramsay's knee."[19] She longs to connect with the woman, to communicate in a

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[14]Ibid., 535.
[15]Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 4.
[16]Ibid., 55.
[17]Ibid., 54.
[18]Ibid., 119.
[19]Ibid., 51.

way that cannot be expressed "in any language known to men," but through the half-silent communications of earliest life. Lily's task in the novel is to find a way to get through to Mrs. Ramsay without words. In the end, it is silence that provides her with a connection. A moment of silent unity with Augustus Carmichael triggers Lily to complete her painting, to think, "I have had my vision."[20] Her success is in communicating this vision, through the non-verbal medium of paint. In a refutation of the late-Victorian privileging of the adult within the child, the adult must here learn to speak for the inherent child-self, in the child-self's own language, in order that the individual's "obscure," pre-conscious history may be preserved and shared.

Woolf wished to provide a blueprint for how infants communicated, with themselves and with the world. In her fiction, she investigated human language, with all its incapabilities and gaps, and frequently had her characters use non-verbal communication and silence instead. Critics such as Clare Hanson have seen Woolf's use of language as a forerunner of Hélène Cixous's *écriture féminine*, or even of Luce Irigaray's radical "feminine morphology."[21] Yet she did not only look to the future or only to the feminine in the hope of finding a new form of communication; characteristically, she turned to the past, to the pre-verbal. In some ways, her ideas were derived from Rousseauesque thought on "natural language,"[22] and from the late-nineteenth-century interest in the development of human speech. Woolf's linguistic experimentation also prefigures Julia Kristeva's Lacanian *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1974), which posits the existence of a pre-Oedipal, pre-verbal "language," associated with the *chora* (womb) and therefore the mother. This is the realm of the fluid, irrational

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[20]Ibid., 209.

[21]Hanson, Preface, ix-x.

[22]In *Emile*, Rousseau wrote, "All our languages are the result of art. It has long been a subject of inquiry whether there ever was a natural language common to all; no doubt there is, and it is the language of children before they begin to speak. This language is inarticulate, but it has tone, stress, and meaning. The use of our own language has led us to neglect it so far as to forget it altogether. Let us study children and we shall soon learn it afresh from them" (36). His exhortation had obvious appeal to late-Victorian parents. Woolf took on the study of children, but her concern is not so much with the verbalization of the infant as with what she saw as a kind of emotional language common to all early in life.

"semiotic" element in language, as opposed to the more fixed and logical syntax of the post-Oedipal "symbolic" phase. Although the pre-Oedipal phase is seen as genderless, Kristeva has a tendency to equate the semiotic with the feminine, and the symbolic with the masculine.[23] Woolf, however, maintained the androgynous nature of infancy and its language. For her, infantile language was not simply a linguistic developmental stage, as in late-Victorian theory, but the ideal means of human communication, untouched by the strictures of traditional sexual, educational, and class categorization. At the beginning of *The Waves* (1931), the child characters communicate by describing the world around them. Although they must use adult language, they describe infantile visions and sensations. Bernard begins by saying "'I see a ring . . . hanging above me. It quivers and hangs in a loop of light.'" Susan goes on: "'I see a slab of pale yellow . . . spreading away until it meets a purple stripe.'"[24] This is the only point at which the characters seem truly to connect with themselves, with each other, and with the outside world. Each statement builds on the previous one, and the infantile perceptions and images recur throughout the novel as the children grow up. Once more Woolf radically adapted the ideas of her late-Victorian past, focusing not on how children learn to speak, but on how adults might re-learn the communication of childhood. The alternative forms of speech in her work are often those of infants and very young children, whatever the age of the character. The infants in Woolf's novels exist on the fringes of the stories, but they communicate significantly with the adults around them. Maggie's baby in *The Years* (1937) is a sleeping presence when she and Martin talk in the park about their youth. When Maggie wonders aloud about the relationship between her mother and Martin's father, the baby wakes up: "He began to cry. Maggie had to soothe him. Their privacy was over."[25] The baby boy is clearly a notable presence, who, though he cannot talk, has an effect on the

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[23]See Julia Kristeva, selections from "Revolution in Poetic Language," in *A Kristeva Reader*, ed. Moi, 89-136.
[24]Woolf, *The Waves*, 6.
[25]Ibid, *The Years*, 189.

adults' conversation. The infant's cry makes the adults' words about their past seem superfluous and ineffective; as the awakening Sara observes, their talk has been "[v]oices . . . Only voices."[26] In *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), a baby "reads" the skywriting plane's toffee advertisement with the adults around him, "lying stiff and white" in his mother's arms, "gaz[ing] straight up."[27] None of the adults can properly read the message; they each spell it out as children would, learning to read, with varying degrees of success. Septimus Warren Smith is the only one who receives any meaning from it: "So, thought Septimus, looking up, they are signalling to me. Not indeed in actual words; that is, he could not read the language yet; but it was plain enough, this beauty. . .."[28] He becomes an infant-self who cannot understand adult language "yet," but who longs to achieve a more perfect communication. The infants in Woolf's novels are catalysts for the adults around them to think about their own childhoods, and to perceive and communicate as infants themselves.

Alternative languages are a facet of Woolf's experimentation with human modes of communication. In her writing, many instances of ostensibly incomprehensible speech occur. Rather than being impenetrable, however, these utterances represent "true" communication: that of the infant or young child. The caretaker's children's song at the end of *The Years* is an instance that has provoked some speculation. They stand at the centre of a group of adults, and "burst into song":

> Etho passo tanno hai,
> Fai donk to tu do,
> Mai to, kai to, lai to see
> Toh dom to tuh do--
>
> That was what it sounded like. Not a word was recognizable . . . It was so shrill, so discordant, and so meaningless.[29]

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[26]Ibid., 190.
[27]Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 20.
[28]Ibid., 21.
[29]Woolf, *The Years*, 327. Jane Marcus sees the children as "speak[ing] in tongues with the hard 'ks' of Greek chorus, a prophecy of the British mother tongue's responsibility for the exploitation of her colonial children" ("'Taking the Bull by the Udders': Sexual Difference in Virginia Woolf--a Conspiracy Theory," in *Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury: A Centennial Celebration*, ed. Marcus, 149). Hanson notes that the

None of the adults can find any meaning in the words. When, before their song, the children sit silent in the face of Martin's questions, Peggy remarks, "The younger generation . . . don't mean to speak,"[30] perhaps unconsciously noting that adults do not understand the silences that are part of children's communication. Only Eleanor, the eldest Pargiter, perceives something in the performance. She thinks, "As they stood there they had looked so dignified; yet they had made this hideous noise. The contrast between their faces and their voices was astonishing; it was impossible to find one word for the whole."[31] Her questioning appraisal, "Beautiful?",[32] suggests that she sees the joy in the child-self's attempts to communicate, despite her inability to comprehend them in "one (adult) word." Eleanor is the one who notices the dawn spreading over the house after the singing; looking outside, she asks "And now?",[33] as if wondering what the future of the children and their song will be. The late-Victorian adults of *The Years*, bound by their progressivist beliefs and educations, cannot yet understand the half-silent communications of infancy, but some attempt to listen. Eleanor, who cannot avoid thinking of her own childhood throughout the novel, dimly apprehends that the underlying beauty and consequence of the children's song may be deciphered someday; she is the one who has briefly seen the "gigantic pattern"[34] of human connectedness and continuity. When the *Evening Standard*'s reviewer wrote in 1931 that the novel contained

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words "sound like verbs being conjugated or substituted one for the other," and asks, "Does the rudimentary song suggest then that the ground of meaning lies not in substantives, but in processes and relations, thus presenting us in miniature with a thesis which has driven the whole book?" (166).

[30]Woolf, *The Years*, 326.

[31]Ibid., 328. The scene plainly delineates class difference: the middle-class adults find the working-class children's speech incomprehensible, while foreseeing that the lower class may rule the future (see also *Three Guineas*, 167-8, for Woolf's vision of the working class of the future). But Woolf was clearly also interested in the infantile power of the song.

[32]Woolf, *The Years*, 328.

[33]Ibid., 331. Woolf wrote to Stephen Spender that Eleanor was the only character to overcome the constraints of Victorianism: "I dont think I agree with you though that *all* the characters felt the unreality, the invalidity of their experience. Eleanor's experience though limited partly by sex and the cramp of the Victorian upbringing was meant to be all right; sound and rooted; the others were crippled in one way or another--though I meant Maggie and Sara to be outside that particular prison" (30 April 1937, *Letters* 6, 122).

[34]Woolf, *The Years*, 282.

"the blood and marrow of history--the thing itself, not an effigy for children,"[35] he could have been speaking of the children's song, which contained the child-self's "true" language and history, which had yet to be re-grasped by most adults.

Woolf was confident that infantile communication could be comprehended by some, however. A similar song in *Mrs. Dalloway* provides a case in point. This time, the singer is an ancient woman, heard by Peter Walsh as he passes Regent's Park Tube station:

> A sound interrupted him; a frail quivering sound, a voice bubbling up without direction, vigour, beginning or end, running weakly and shrilly and with an absence of all human meaning into
> *ee um fah um so*
> *foo swee too eem oo*--[36]

The voice is "of no age or sex," singing of "love which has lasted a million years."[37] Woolf emphasizes the ancient quality of the "primeval"[38] message, but also its infantile nature. When Woolf describes the voice as "of no age," she inscribes both its ancientness and its extreme youth; it comes from the pre-history of the race and the individual. The old woman's song is monosyllabic, much like that of the caretaker's children, and is at first meaningless to her hearers. Like the late-Victorian infant, the speaker has no immediately obvious gender. Her voice is "frail" and "quivering" like a baby's cry, and her language is without "human meaning." But in Woolf's vision, genderlessness is something to which to aspire, rather than out of which to develop; "cheerfully, almost gaily," her song lifts into the sky with the joy of expression. And here, the voice is understood, at least momentarily. Peter Walsh passes her, and she speaks to him "now quite clearly."[39] Rezia Warren Smith also hears the voice coming as if out of the dark,

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[35]Howard Spring, in *Virginia Woolf: the Critical Heritage*, ed. Majumdar and McLaurin, 376-7.
[36]Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 80.
[37]Ibid., 80-1.
[38]Ibid., 82. See Sandra M. Gilbert, "Woman's Sentence, Man's Sentencing: Linguistic Fantasies in Woolf and Joyce," in *Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury: A Centenary Celebration*, ed. Marcus, 218, for a feminist reading of the old woman's song.
[39]Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 82.

which becomes one of the occurrences she "had given meaning to" and fills her with new contentment.[40] They are able to hear her message because they have been thinking of their own childhoods. Before encountering the aged singer, Peter has been thinking that he has "gained--at last! . . . the power of taking hold of experience, of turning it round, slowly, in the light."[41] He is an adult who can speak for his child-self's experiences. The pure, genderless, ageless song is universal; for the moment, the child-selves of Peter and Rezia respond to its language instinctively. The voice of childhood is the key to unity, and the teller of forgotten history.

How does communication fail in Woolf's novels? In many cases, loss of true communication occurs when parents and other adults begin to teach a language. At the end of the caretaker's children's recital, the uncomprehending Patrick remarks that the song must be "[w]hat they teach 'em at school."[42] We have seen Cam's direct repetition of the cook's words in a "colourless singsong" while her own private language exists in her mind. Such a moment occurs in other texts. The child Sara in *The Years*, for example, echoes her father's "lame and rather pompous" statement: "Sara looked at her father as if she were considering him. 'To--er--to--er--reform one's habits,' she repeated. Emptied of all meaning, she had got the rhythm of his words exactly. The effect was somehow comic."[43] The adult Sara's words are often a pastiche of nonsensical quotations; she has learned grown-up, standardized language from her father, and its frequent meaninglessness jars against the communicative silences the Pargiters had employed as children. Lady Harpy Harraden of Miss La Trobe's pageant in *Between the Acts* (1941) is perhaps the best symbol of the traditional educating adult who quashes children's communication. When her young niece elopes, she shouts, "*O! Didn't the Horn Book teach you Honour thy Great Aunt? How have you misread it and misspelt it, learnt*

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[40]Ibid., 83.
[41]Ibid., 79.
[42]Woolf, *The Years*, 328.
[43]Ibid., 98.

thieving and cheating and reading of wills in old boxes. . .."[44] The subsequent scene has the Lady arguing and Sir Spaniel Lilyliver arguing about meaning, unable to understand one another's highflown, allusive language. In contrast to this pair are the niece, Flavinda, and her lover, who, like Terence and Rachel, and the lovers in the Stephen children's "Hyde Park Gate News," utter infantile declarations ("O, Flavinda, O!"),[45] and then fall silent in union. They "misread" and ignore the Horn Book of standard adult speech. In *Night and Day*, Katharine, as an unmarried "child," similarly is expected to learn from the "book of wisdom":

> Like all people brought up in a tradition, Katharine was able, within ten minutes or so, to reduce any moral difficulty to its traditional shape and solve it by the traditional answers. The book of wisdom lay open, if not upon her mother's knee, upon the knees of many uncles and aunts . . . the questions became phantoms directly she tried seriously to find an answer, which proved that the traditional answer would be of no use to her individually.[46]

The traditional late-Victorian book of standardized learning teaches children to miscommunicate. It is "of no use to [them] individually," and they must reach back to the language of infancy in order to achieve communal understanding.

Simultaneously with Freud, who was one of the first psychologists to discuss sex-typed behaviour acquisition, Woolf gendered the learning of language, and studied its problems for each sex. In her novels, communication fails in different ways for boys and girls learning adult modes of speech. The Greek language was a particular bugbear for Woolf; her essay "On Not Knowing Greek" is an appreciation of ancient drama and epic, but its title also refers to her own difficulties in learning the language as a girl at home while her brothers were taught it at school. In Woolf's novels, when boys learn Greek and Latin, they depart from their female counterparts, and patriarchy re-roots itself. "[I]t is the governesses who start the Greek myth," she writes in *Jacob's Room* (1922): "First you read Xenophon; then Euripides. One day--that was an occasion, by God--what people

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[44]Woolf, *Between the Acts*, 107.
[45]Ibid., 104.
[46]Woolf, *Night and Day*, 327.

have said appears to have sense in it . . . The point is, however, that we have been brought up in an illusion."[47] Jacob himself "thought something in this fashion,"[48] half-recognizing that his language education has not really allowed him to communicate with others, for universal meaning is "an illusion." Immediately after this passage, however, we are informed that "he had grown to be a man."[49] He is part of the patriarchy now. "He was fond of using Latin words. Magnanimity, virtue--such words when Jacob used them in talk with Bonamy meant that he took control of the situation. . .."[50] Jacob and Bonamy wrestle like children when they are silent, but he and his young male friends can only talk in an awkward adult's language. He and Timothy Durrant discuss the Greeks continually, but they cannot communicate: "Durrant quoted Aeschylus--Jacob Sophocles. It is true that no Greek could have understood or professor refrained from pointing out--Never mind. . .."[51] Woolf's choppy sentence structure suggests that Jacob and Timothy are making little sense: they are simply imitating the "grown-up" Greek and Latin languages in which they have been educated. The languages are dead ones, and therefore leave the boys who learn it no room for innovation or expansion. The danger for the young men is in their feeling that by knowing these languages, they have acquired a universal understanding: "Probably," Jacob remarks, "we are the only people in the world who know what the Greeks meant."[52] In comparison, the lower-class, uneducated prostitute Florinda knows nothing. Yet she has "the lips of a child,"[53] and the words of a child, which enable her to communicate more fully and originally than Jacob can. She will write about anything from chocolate creams to God. Though her spelling is "abominable . . . her sentiments infantile,"[54] her emotion is communicated in her letters. Jacob writes about

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[47]Woolf, *Jacob's Room*, 121.
[48]Ibid.
[49]Ibid., 122.
[50]Ibid., 144.
[51]Ibid., 63.
[52]Ibid., 64.
[53]Ibid., 65.
[54]Ibid., 80.

"art, morality, and politics to young men at college," but his words--like those of the "masters of language"-- "have been used too often,"[55] because they are inscribed in standardized adult language. Florinda's words, in contrast, are closer to nature and childhood: "Fancy a butterfly, gnat, or other winged insect, attached to a twig which, clogged with mud, it rolls across a page."[56] Their elemental quality likens them to Miss La Trobe's vision of perfect communication: "Words of one syllable sank down into the mud. . .. The mud became fertile. Words rose above the intolerably laden dumb oxen plodding through the mud. Words without meaning--wonderful words."[57] Florinda's letters are meaningless to Jacob, but they communicate the truth of the child-self, for she "could no more pretend a feeling than swallow whiskey."[58] Through her lack of language education, Florinda is able to communicate through more childlike, and more original, means.

Clara Durrant also writes the letters "of a child,"[59] but hers are different. Clara is a middle-class young woman with more education than Florinda, although naturally not as much as her brother or Jacob. She too, nonetheless, is constrained by the limits of adult language. Undertaking the popular female Victorian activity of diary writing, she is forced to stop mid-sentence because "Mr. Letts allows little space in his shilling diaries. Clara was not one to encroach upon Wednesday."[60] Though the narrator commends her as the "[h]umblest, most candid of women,"[61] her diary entry is far from candid: it breaks off for lack of authorized space. She cannot say what she means in the language she has at her disposal, only murmuring "don't break--don't spoil,"[62] and fracturing her sentence again for lack of words. The narrator downplays her speech as "only a young woman's

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[55]Ibid.
[56]Ibid.
[57]Woolf, *Between the Acts*, 155.
[58]Ibid, *Jacob's Room*, 80.
[59]Ibid.
[60]Ibid., 59. See the young Virginia Stephen's complaint along these lines regarding her own small diary, 19 April 1897, *A Passionate Apprentice*, 73.
[61]Woolf, *Jacob's Room*, 59.
[62]Ibid.

language," and Clara is representative of the late-Victorian, middle-class young woman who has difficulty speaking for herself. Like Issy in *Finnegans Wake*, learning the intricacies of "Granma's grammar" while her brothers study patriarchal history,[63] Clara is stuck in Victorian women's modes of expression and repression. Communication fails for her not because it involves the over-standardized, patriarchal Greek and Latin of her young male counterparts, but because its limits are too circumscribed for her to express anything within them. The childish quality of her letters lies in their restricted expression. She cannot express herself fully in adult words, and Jacob can therefore find nothing whatsoever to say about the letters in return. Clara's letters exemplify the communications of the child-self whose experiences are forced into the confines of adult language, and Woolf's fight against traditional ideas on girls' education and expression, to which she herself had been subject.

As a partial solution to the problem of adult language's limits, Woolf explored in many instances the image of the child writing, derived from her own recording of her family life in the "Hyde Park Gate News." The child composes not only written words, but also creates himself or herself in the process, in a revision of the late-Victorian concept of the child being born containing his or her future. As her parents had been, Woolf was convinced of the importance of children recording their history. In a fragmentary short piece known as "English Youth," one of the last she wrote, she fictionalized an episode from the life of a typical late-Victorian English girl, based on the story of Octavia Wilberforce (1888-1963), her friend and last doctor.[64] In it, the girl's sister tells her,

> 'Say damn . . . in the middle of tea and I'll give you sixpence.'
> 'Dam' she said; and her father, the squire, put down his cup; and said 'After tea you will come to the library.'
> 'Let down your drawers,' he said.
> He raised his hand over her bare bottom.

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[63]See Gilbert, "Woman's Sentence, Man's Sentencing," 218-9.
[64]See Dick, note to Woolf, "[English Youth]," in *Complete Shorter Fiction*, 361.

> 'D' he said and struck her. A another stroke. M a third. She shrieked and tried to get down. But there was a fourth letter it seemed N.
>
> That lesson in spelling was one of the few she ever had.[65]

This scene is another example of the late-Victorian girl being forcibly--even abusively--educated in the traditional adult "book of wisdom," while receiving little other formal education. Here, not only adult speech, but also the girl's own history, is written on her body. The image of the child being written enticed Woolf to try to live the episode for herself; in her 1941 diary, she wrote, "Octavia's story. Could I englobe it somehow?"[66] What interested Woolf about Wilberforce's story was that she was physically historicized, that her body as well as her mind contained a record of her childhood. But many of Woolf's novels contain images of the child actively writing himself or herself, not simply having their history and destiny stamped on them in this late-Victorian sense. A draft of *The Waves* contains a passage describing schoolchildren writing. According to Louise DeSalvo, their writing "becomes the way in which they define themselves" and communicate their perceptions of life to each other:[67]

> They sat in rows, yawning or writing very laboriously, for already, though that might have seemed impossible, they had their minds, their characters. There was, for instance, one most solemn child. He never dipped his pen without deliberation; often hesitating half an hour perhaps. But when he wrote the letters were firm & clear. Compare him with that moody fitful little girl. She swayed at her task, as if she despaired of ever getting it done; & then suddenly made a dart & wrote something very fast. . ..[68]

The children are not only defining themselves, but also creating themselves through the act of writing. Their work personifies and drives them; the solemn boy writes slowly, the moody girl in fits and starts. The idiosyncracies of their writing formulate the children as characters just as much as the children create the writing on the page. Woolf, who loved the physical act of writing even as a child, saw it as a way of giving birth to oneself. When, in the final version of the novel, the young Neville says, "Bernard says there is

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[65]Woolf, "[English Youth]," *Complete Shorter Fiction*, 357.
[66]Ibid, 24 March 1941, *Diary* 5, 359.
[67]Louise DeSalvo, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*, 251.
[68]Woolf, *The Waves: The Two Holograph Drafts*, 1 / 3. Also discussed in DeSalvo, 250-1.

always a story. I am a story. Louis is a story,"[69] he reflects Woolf's view that children are living stories who have the ability to write themselves as they grow up. These are children, like the Stephens, who believe they will write all their lives. They already "had their minds, their characters," but this is not because they had been born containing their adult futures. Rather, the young writers have begun to create themselves at an early age. In this vision, no traditional education or late-Victorian progressivist ideals could alter the ability of the child to create himself or herself through writing.

> *From her infancy upwards Miss Smith had known that she was remarkable. She had been once upon a time the most remarkable baby ever known, and as she became older her intellect surprised her more and more. At 12 she delighted in Virgil, at 14 she wrote sonnets, at 16 she declared that life was not worth living and retired from the world.*
>
> *-Stephen family, "Miss Smith," "Hyde Park Gate News," 7 January 1895.*

The 13-year-old Virginia Stephen's Miss Smith is partly a satire on Virginia herself. When his youngest daughter was five, Leslie wrote to his wife, "'Ginia tells me a 'story' every night--it does not change much but she seems to enjoy it. She wrote to Miss Vincent today in a most lovely hand. I think that she will approach Miss Veley."[70] The proud father admired Virginia's neat Italic handwriting (which deteriorated into individuality with age) and her story-making. He commented on her own enjoyment of repetitive narrative, as if foreseeing that she would be telling her own childhood story in various forms for the rest of her life. Leslie Stephen was also more perceptive than he knew when he compared his daughter to Margaret Veley, a late-Victorian author and family friend for whose poetry collection *A Marriage of Shadows* he wrote the introduction in 1888. Of her book *For Percival*, he wrote, "[T]he end of her novel was

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[69]Ibid, *The Waves*, 31.
[70]Leslie Stephen to Julia Stephen, 15 April 1887, Berg Collection.

painful whereas most readers--and I do not say they are wrong--like things to be pleasant."[71] Woolf as a writer never conceded to the late-Victorian convention for "pleasant" or standard endings with which she had been brought up. The "Hyde Park Gate News" is full of conclusions that break off abruptly, or that are decidedly individualistic. Frequently, the apprentice writings have no conclusion at all, for which no apologies are made. The child Virginia Stephen, like the adult Woolf, was as interested in beginnings as in endings. All her life, Woolf wrote of childhood, hers and others'. In her diaries, essays, letters, and fiction, she described her desire to become a historian of childhood. In a reaction against the Victorian biographies that dispensed with their subjects' youths in a few pages, she created a new kind of history-writing--the art of making and remembering one's own childhood history with a child's vision. The sharing of childhood history is imperative in Woolf's autobiographical writings and fiction. Infancy and early childhood act as a kind of collective pre-conscious for her;[72] this period's silences and languages are seen to connect one fully with oneself and other people. These ideas have their basis in Romantic notions of childhood and its closeness to nature; they are a revision of Victorian progressivism and a re-connection to individual and general pre-history through infantile language. The conception of continuity and collectivity in human life allowed Woolf to believe in a natural echoing of response in her readers. Writing for the pre-conscious gave her an audience for which to write. If all humans start out understanding an ageless, genderless, universal language, one could hope to tunnel back to it and restore true communication. Woolf did not idealize childhood, but the belief in this pre-verbal communication gave her a sense of vital connection between the child- and adult-selves, and among humans as a whole. If experience could not provide happiness, then perhaps the sharing of it could bring some

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[71]Leslie Stephen, Preface to Margaret Veley, *A Marriage of Shadows and Other Poems*, x. *For Percival* appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, of which Stephen was then editor, from 1877-8.
[72]Although I have used this term to suggest Jung, Woolf did not read him. The two seem to have had a similar conception of collectivity, although Woolf's was not related to archetypes.

consolation. The "Hyde Park Gate News" represented for Woolf a collective pre-conscious in miniature: it was an "anonymous" collective with an inbuilt audience, and despite its appeal to the parental reader, replete with the secret languages and jokes of childhood. Underlying the mockery of adult language is a crude sense of true understanding among children. *To the Lighthouse* provides a snapshot of these young writers as represented by the Ramsay siblings:

> How odd to see them sitting there, in a row . . . Jasper, Rose, Prue, Andrew, almost silent, but with some joke of their own going on . . . It was something quite apart from everything else, something they were hoarding up to laugh over in their own room . . . they were like watchers, surveyors, a little raised or set apart from the grown-up people.[73]

Writing her own childhood, Woolf creates a lasting image of the Stephen children, composing their own lives in silent communion.

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[73]Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 109.

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