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**Children's
Literature**
BETWEEN THE COVERS

Professor Kimberley Reynolds
Newcastle University

Children's Literature

Between the Covers

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Newcastle University



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Children's Literature Between the Covers

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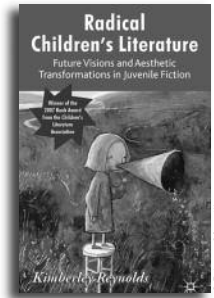
About Your Professor

Kimberley Reynolds

Kimberley Reynolds is Professor of Children's Literature at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom. She has BA degrees from both C.W. Post College in Long Island and Sussex University in the United Kingdom, where she was also awarded her master's and Ph.D in nineteenth-century literature.

Professor Reynolds has specialized in children's literature studies since the 1980s and helped to establish the discipline as an academic subject in the United Kingdom and internationally, particularly through her work for the International Research Society for Children's Literature (as well as serving on the board she served two terms as president). She has also served on the trustees' committee of the Victoria and Albert's Museum of Childhood in London for more than a decade, and she was a founding member of the steering committees for both the United Kingdom Children's Laureate and Seven Stories: The Centre for Children's Books.

Professor Reynolds has lectured extensively in the United Kingdom and internationally and published several significant monographs as well as contributing to journals and edited collections. *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) was awarded the Book Award by the Children's Literature Association in 2009. It considers the contribution children's literature has made to cultural thought and looks at the impact of new technologies on writing and illustration for children. Her current research focuses on progressive and left-wing children's literature published in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century and its relationship with the modernist movement.



Introduction

As long as there have been children there have been stories for children and strategies for using stories both to teach and to entertain the young. The fact that every kind of story ever produced for or read by children is encompassed by the term “children's literature” makes this the largest single area of literary study. When you consider that this includes story forms such as folk and fairy tales and nursery rhymes that have their roots in preliterate epochs, those developing in tandem with today's new technologies, including electronic texts, fan fiction, and computer games, and everything in between, something of the magnitude of the discipline begins to emerge.

There are also children's versions of every genre, medium, and format, and writing for children often includes illustrations and novelty features such as cut outs, pop-ups, and movable devices such as flaps, pull-tabs, and volvelles (rotating disks) that enable scenes to be transformed. It is, in other words, a vast and varied area of study.

How is it studied? Where "adult" literature is usually broken into specialist areas such as individual periods, genres, critical approaches, and authors, children's literature courses and histories are usually expected to give a sense of the origins and development of the field, paying attention to all of these aspects as well as issues specific to the history of childhood and children as readers. This is demanding, because it requires wide-ranging knowledge of literary traditions and techniques, critical approaches, and historical contexts. But it is also exciting, not least because so few areas of children's literature have been studied in any depth, meaning that even those new to the field have the opportunity to contribute to debates and scholarship.

An additional reward of studying children's literature is that it illuminates aspects of ourselves, our children, and the cultures we inhabit. Because we were all once children and the children we were continue to exist within us, encountering as an adult books or other materials read as a child often provides insights into the children we were. This knowledge is not just of personal interest; stories are key sources of the images, vocabularies, attitudes, structures, and explanations we need to contemplate experience, and they are used to teach values, manners, attitudes, and ideologies as well as information. Studying examples of writing for children from different periods makes it possible to compare ideas about and aspirations for children, education, and society through time.

Identifying change and continuity in cultural attitudes is one of the organizing principles for the fourteen topics that make up this course. Each uses a particular topic or theme to track significant developments in children's literature. Together the topics also cover the many different kinds of materials published for children, from picture books and poems through Young Adult (YA) novels and online fictions. To gain the most from the course you will want to read a good number of these primary texts as well as the secondary reading recommended at the start of each set of course materials. Because the course covers a wide historical span and many different aspects of publishing there is no one critical work that can serve as a textbook. You may, however, find it helpful to purchase a general reference work such as Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Pritchard's *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (1984) or *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English*, edited by Victor Watson (2001). Free digital versions of many of the older primary materials can be found online. Although some of the secondary reading is out of print, it is all readily available secondhand through online suppliers, and most libraries will be able to order copies for you as well.

Lecture 1

Puritan Beginnings and Legacies: Paragons, Prophets, and Perdition

The Suggested Readings for this lecture are Patricia Demers's *From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850*, chapters 2 and 3, and Seth Lerer's *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*, chapter 4.



There is much debate about what children's literature is and when it began. Outside of academia, a commonsense understanding of children's literature prevails: children's literature is literature created to be read by children. The problems begin when you start to ask questions such as "Which children?" and "When?" and "What about books that were not written for children but were read by them?" or "Where does that leave books that were once read by children but are now only read by adults, usually as part of academic courses?" These are all important questions that will be explored at different points in the lectures, but ultimately this course takes a pragmatic approach to defining children's literature. The books and materials discussed all feature in histories of children's literature because even if they were not originally intended for children, at some point they were read by and published for children.

Being published is the second criterion for a work to be considered in this course. With the exception of lecture 2, which looks at materials made by eighteenth-century mothers, all the texts discussed were printed and distributed professionally. This means that the handwritten materials produced by schoolmasters and parents and others involved in teaching children from antiquity through the Renaissance are not considered here, though there is increasing scholarly activity to show that they do constitute a significant aspect of the history of what children in the past read. For our purposes, however, it is important to look not at one-off, possibly idiosyncratic items produced for individual children or groups, but at the kinds of materials intended to be read by large numbers of children. It is from these that deductions can be made about the way children's literature is written and what it reveals about prevailing attitudes to children, uses of literature, theories about education, and ideological agendas.

Although the first printed book cited in histories of English-language children's literature is usually *Aesop's Fables*, translated and published by Caxton in 1484, the history of the children's publishing industry is generally agreed to begin in the seventeenth century under the aegis of the religious groups that disagreed with the elaborate religious trappings and power structures of the established church. Although there were several

distinct religious breakaway groups and many ways of referring to them, in children’s literature criticism these “Dissenters,” “Nonconformists,” and “Protestants” tend to be referred to as “Puritans.” The Puritans were particularly active in using print to distribute the Bible (in English) and other forms of writing that would help laypeople understand the word of God and live according to the Bible’s teachings. Their publications included works for children, who were understood to be conceived in sin and so were regarded as urgently in need of the kind of instruction and guidance that would help them attain a state of divine grace. While Puritans held that grace was a gift from and at the discretion of God, they taught that it was likely to be granted to those who lived thoughtful, dutiful, sober lives focused around regular religious observance of the kind they advocated. Failure to be granted grace meant an eternity of torment. These are the messages contained in the books mentioned in the lecture by John Foxe (1516–1587), Hugh Peters (1598–1660), Richard Baxter (1615–1691), John Bunyan (1628–1688), Michael Wigglesworth (1631–1705), James Janeway (1636?–1674), Cotton Mather (1663–1728), Isaac Watts (1674–1748), and, though much later, Mary Martha Sherwood (1775–1851).

The Puritan desire to save children’s souls by using stories to help them understand their conditions and impress upon them the consequences of failing to learn how to live well establishes a use of children’s literature that persists to the present. Throughout history most writers for children have attempted to find ways of combining a degree of instruction with entertaining stories told in a way that young readers find engaging. Looking back to these early examples shows how far ideas about what is entertaining to children, expectations about what children can be expected to understand conceptually and linguistically, and how attitudes to what is considered suitable for children in terms of frightening or disturbing stories have changed over time. Today children learn the alphabet, phonetics, and grammar through a variety of colorful, regularly updated books, workbooks, supportive games, and toys that are likely to make associations between words and concrete objects, often from daily life: “A is for Apple,” for instance. The teaching tools of the Puritan era were quite different. Instead of producing relatively temporary materials for specific age groups and redesigning them regularly so that they remain fresh and appealing, seventeenth-century educators looked for durability and the ability to use the same items with different groups of children over prolonged periods. A hornbook, for instance, would carry an alphabet, but also usually some information about phonetic sounds and some religious verse or a passage of scripture, all on a single sheet of paper, mounted on wood and protected by a thin layer of horn. Children were to graduate



A modern replica of an eighteenth-century colonial Virginia hornbook.

© Courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

from one section to another, with a single hornbook being used for much of a child's early education before being passed on.

Although there was little novelty or embellishment to these early materials, they are perhaps not as removed from everyday life as they may seem to twenty-first-century eyes, nor would the concepts and vocabulary of sin, salvation, and scripture then have seemed abstruse in the way they would to most children today. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century the majority of children would have grown up with knowledge of the Bible and would have found educators' use of phrases, aphorisms, and passages based on scripture familiar and relevant in much the same way that the generations who have grown up with *Sesame Street* relate to its use of techniques derived from advertisements. There is much evidence to show that the teaching techniques worked, for the print runs of the kind of inexpensive and widely available booklets known as chapbooks that began to be printed in the sixteenth century show that most households would have owned at least some, and there is now considerable evidence to show that literacy rates in the Early Modern period (roughly 1500 to 1800) were much higher than was once thought. Parental memoirs too suggest that many children learned to read younger than they do today and advanced rapidly to reading quite long and complex books. John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), for instance, now tends to be read, and then with some difficulty, by college students, but it was enormously popular with child readers from the time it first appeared and for long after. In 1862 (so nearly two hundred years after it was published), the British writer George Crabbe wrote to a friend that his six-year-old daughter was so caught up in Bunyan's tale that she was



“The Dreadful Story of Harriet and the Matches” appears in a collection of ten illustrated rhymed stories by Heinrich Hoffmann in *Der Struwwelpeter* (Or, Shaggy Peter), 1845. Each has a moral that demonstrates the disastrous consequences of misbehavior in an exaggerated manner. The extracted verses below provide the focus of the story.

Verse 4:

But Harriet would not take advice:
She lit a match, it was so nice!
It crackled so, it burned so clear—
Exactly like the picture here.
She jumped for joy and ran about
And was too pleased to put it out.

Verse 10:

So she was burnt, with all her clothes,
And arms, and hands, and eyes, and nose;
Till she had nothing more to lose
Except her little scarlet shoes;
And nothing else but these was found
Among her ashes on the ground.

found by her maid reading at five o'clock in the morning because she could wait no longer to find out what happened.

It is important to recognize the pleasure available to the original readers of children's books (and books, like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, that children adopted). Many histories of children's literature describe a development from writing that was primarily intended to instruct to that which is mainly concerned with entertaining young readers, but early writers were well aware of the need to convey their lessons in enjoyable ways. The role literature could play in children's religious education if it succeeded in captivating its audience was increasingly recognized and defended. The verse from John Bunyan's *Country Rhymes for Children* (1886), for instance, specifically criticizes those who shoot "thunder-bolts" at boys and girls and in doing so, so misjudge their audience that their efforts are wasted and the children receive no benefit from them.

In tracing the rapid evolution of children's literature during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is found that writers began to experiment with different ways of appealing to young readers; using verse and riddles, child heroes, dramatic plots, simpler syntax, and a range of narrative techniques that continue to be characteristics of children's literature today. By the beginning of the nineteenth century even a die-hard Puritan such as Mary Martha Sherwood is using an impressive number of storytelling devices to put across her message. The story about quarrelling siblings included in *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818), for instance, uses dramatic gothic overtones, sensational dialogue, and a satisfying return to the comfort of the family circle and routine to create a masterful piece of writing for children. Nevertheless, the kind of overt religiosity associated with writers such as Sherwood fell into disrepute during the nineteenth century. This was not because religion had become less important to society or to children's literature, but because attitudes to religion and images of childhood were being transformed and so demanded new forms of writing.

Three forces were particularly important in this transformation: the Romantic movement, the pedagogic theories of John Locke (1632–1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), and the rise of commercial publishing for children. The third lecture looks at the Romantics, Locke, and Rousseau, but before turning to the public faces that were affecting writing for children, it is worth looking in some detail at what was happening on the domestic front. Since it was often mothers who were responsible for teaching children the rudiments of reading, it is not surprising that they were instrumental in developing more specifically child-centered ways of helping children learn to read and producing stories that they found enjoyable. The role of mothers in shaping publishing for children and the images of childhood associated with children's literature is the subject of the next lecture.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. In his preface, James Janeway uses the words quoted below to exhort children to live good lives. Look at his choice of vocabulary and phrasing. How would you describe his view of childhood? What strategies does he use to appeal to child readers?

Children, if you love me, if you love
your Parents, if you love your Souls,
if you would 'scape Hell fire, and if you
would live in Heaven when you dye,
do you go and do as these good children.

2. Look at the extract and illustrations from Heinrich Hoffmann's *Der Struwwelpeter* (1845) on page 8. What makes Hoffmann's treatment of the death of a child comic rather than tragic? Does it have any religious resonance? What does this suggest about the changing attitude to the relationship between childhood, education, religion, and children's literature?

Suggested Reading

- Demers, Patricia, ed. *From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850*. 3rd ed. Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Lerer, Seth. *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Other Books of Interest

- Alderson, Brian, and Felix de Marez Oyens. *Be Merry and Wise: Origins of Children's Book Publishing in England, 1650–1850*. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2006.
- Avery, Gillian. *Behold the Child: American Children and Their Books 1621–1922*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Darton, F.J. Harvey. *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*. 3rd ed. Ed. Brian Alderson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Hunt, Peter, ed. *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1995.

Websites of Interest

1. The Hockliffe Collection at De Montfort University provides digitized versions of many early texts and essays. —
<http://www.cts.dmu.ac.uk/hockliffe>
2. Project Gutenberg features digital versions of early books. —
<http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog>

Lecture 2

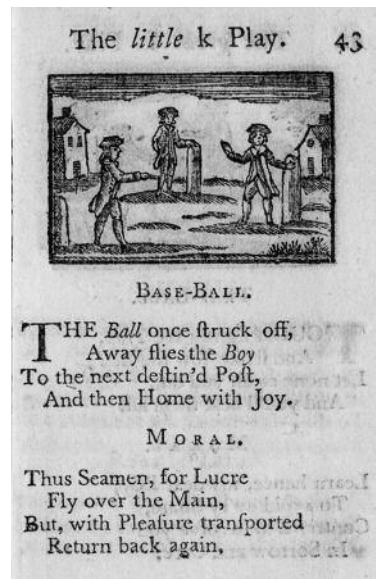
Inventing the Fictional Child

The Suggested Readings for this lecture are Hugh Cunningham's *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500*, chapter 3, and Patricia Demers's *From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850*, chapter 5.



For many years, histories of publishing for children credited a handful of men with bringing children's literature into being. Notable among these are the philosophers John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the educationalist, John Amos Comenius (1592–1670), and the printer-publisher John Newbery (1713–1767). While each unquestionably made a contribution to the emergence of publishing for children, focus on their achievements obscured the extent to which women played an important role both in creating and testing the kinds of materials on which publishers based their books and other print publications. There are two principal reasons why women's efforts were overlooked in early histories. The first is that prior to 1744, the year that saw the first commercial publications for children, most of what was produced for children to read has not survived and so there was little evidence of what it was like. Reading materials tend to be fragile at the best of times, but since the items produced for children were usually regarded primarily as stepping stones to reading, they were often not valued in themselves. This meant they were often made cheaply and from whatever materials were readily at hand rather than those specially designed for the purpose. The discovery of the items made by Jane Johnson (1706–1759) is the first substantial evidence to verify the conjecture that many children were taught to read using materials created for them at home, usually by their mothers. The homemade nature of the materials separated them from “real” publications, disguising the extent to which they represent important experiments in finding out how to appeal to children and create a set of conventions for writing for children.

A woodcut from John Newbery's *A Pretty Little Pocket Book* (1744), England, showing the first known reference to baseball.



The second reason for women's contributions being overlooked relates to early attacks on the women whose work did find its way into print in the decades when publishing for children was becoming established. There were quite a few such women, many of whom had evidently learned how to write for children by teaching their own children and by creating materials for those they taught locally, usually in Sunday schools. While these women writers were often the mainstay of children's publishers, they found little favor with critics and it became habitual to disparage them. Percy Muir's 1954 history of *English Children's Books* includes a chapter about what he calls this "monstrous regiment of women"—the phrase first used by the Scottish Protestant reformer John Knox in 1558 about the Roman Catholic queens of his day and the need to prevent them, and women generally, from ruling over men. Muir propounds the view that like those queens, women in the early days of publishing for children had been given too much influence and generally produced work of inferior quality. His views echo those repeatedly expressed by those who wrote about children's literature from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most famous outburst against early women writers for children came from Charles Lamb, author with his sister Mary of the long-lived *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807). Lamb was furious to discover that what he regarded as the "classics" of children's literature, typified by *Goody Two-Shoes*, had been superseded by books written by what he calls, in a letter of 1802 to his friend, the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "the cursed Barbauld Crew." Lamb is referring to the prevalence of books by Mrs. Trimmer (1741–1810), Mrs. Barbauld (1743–1825), and the other women writers whom he regarded as "Blights and Blasts of all that is human in man and child."

Lamb was writing in the transition from rationalist to Romantic thinking about children; he is one of the first to object to the highly didactic nature of much writing for children and to value works that privilege entertainment over instruction. The extent to which his views came to dominate thinking about the earlier writers is evident in the tendency to tell the history of children's literature as one that moves from instruction to delight, with delight representing the moment when children's literature comes of age, leaving behind the teacherly writing of women and embracing fantasies by men such as Charles Kingsley (1819–1875), Lewis Carroll (1832–1898), and George MacDonald (1824–1905). Lamb was writing before this transition, however, and it may be that he objected as much to the women's ability to write speedily and their willingness to accept small fees as to their effects on writing for children. In any case, the "instruction-to-delight" account of the development of writing for children kept Lamb's hostile views of women writers alive well into the twentieth century. Percy Muir, for instance, refers to their "modest efforts" and describes them as "offensively addicted to moralizing," while John Rowe Townsend dismisses Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life* (1788) as "repellent."

Tastes have certainly changed over time, and to modern eyes many of the books produced by writers of both sexes at the turn of the nineteenth century may seem unexciting, but both the extent to which women alone were culpable in this and women's failure to produce engaging works were significantly exaggerated for most of the last century. Condemnation seems to have become a habit of thought that was not scrutinized until the 1980s, when ideas about feminism and new ways of thinking about history and evaluating the original reception of books came together to stimulate a reappraisal of women writers of children's books.

Percy Muir identifies his monstrous regiment by name and numbers among them Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Trimmer, the Kilner sisters (Dorothy [1755–1836] and Mary Ann [1753–1831]), Lady Eleanor Fenn (1743–1813), and Mary Martha Sherwood (1775–1851). Although he recognizes that these women had a “special turn for writing stories for children,” Muir finds little to admire in their efforts. He describes their work as “nauseatingly thin,” “arch and insipid,” and “all very much of a piece,” the piece being made up of “persuasive didacticisms of the sort that publishers could sell.” He can't account for the “obstinate success” of Mrs. Trimmer's *Fabulous Histories* (she herself he contemptuously describes as “preposterous”) and dismisses Mrs. Sherwood's even longer-lived *The History of the Fairchild Family* as “truly appalling.” While he does praise the writing of Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849) and Ann (1782–1866) and Jane (1783–1824) Taylor, authors of some of the most celebrated original poems for children of the nineteenth century, including “The Star” (“Twinkle, twinkle, little star . . .”), Muir stands by his description of women writers generally as a monstrous regiment.

Muir's attack typifies what is often referred to as “presentism,” or the tendency to judge the past from the perspective of the present. It is impossible to re-create the attitudes, values, and mindsets of the past—to read texts as they would have been read when they were first published—but by consciously putting preconceived attitudes to one side when reading, and also by looking for evidence such as reviews, sales figures, and notes in diaries, journals, and texts themselves, it is possible to get a sense of whether or not books were popular with readers and why. Since the 1980s feminists in particular have concentrated on rereading the children's books of women

“The next morning, when mother Trusty got up to her daily labour, she kissed her grand-children, and told them to go to school early, and not to stay and play afterwards; but to return back again, for she would probably come home to dinner.”

~Mary Ann Kilner,
Adventures of a Pin Cushion, 1815



writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This has proved to be more than an exercise in recovering women's voices, since the short stories, novels, and criticism they produced offer insights into pedagogical theory, political ideas, attitudes to gender, female experiences, household management, and relationships between mothers and children. The Jane Johnson materials are particularly good at offering glimpses behind the formality often present in commercial publications, revealing intimacy, affection, and humor in mother-child relationships. These qualities would have encouraged mothers to explore ways to help their children learn, and since the men who became the professional faces of children's literature were themselves initially taught by women and often collaborated with wives and daughters in producing children's books, it is not surprising that their techniques found their way into mainstream publishing activities.

As well as developing effective strategies for helping children learn, however, many of these women were good storytellers. They used innovative devices such as having animals and everyday objects to narrate stories from unusual perspectives, or telling stories within stories or stories about the things parents got in trouble for when they were young. They also experimented with different genres, tones, and moods, as we saw in Mrs. Sherwood's story about quarrelling children. Undoubtedly the texts have dated, but many continue to have an appeal, and their influence can be detected across the history of children's publishing to the present day. One of the most persistent influences relates to the kind of child being written about and for. The women who were early on the children's publishing scene were not all as comfortably off as Jane Johnson; nevertheless, they wrote almost exclusively for children of the middle and upper-middle classes—children like their own and children of the kind they had been. Even when their work centered on children of the poor, it was addressed to better-off children. Indeed, children's literature played an important role in helping to shape and disseminate the ideal of the middle-class family.

The image of childhood associated with children's literature from its commercial beginnings, then, was white and middle-class. Women were not alone in creating this white, middle-class image of childhood. Many of the men who wrote for children assumed exactly the same kind of implied child reader. It was largely male writers, however, who added another important ingredient to the emerging image of childhood that was being constructed by children's books: the association between children and nature. It was not until halfway through the twentieth century that the image of the white middle-class child in a rural setting began to be questioned and revised in the pages of children's books.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. If mothers traditionally taught children to read and were important in developing techniques for writing for children, why do you think there was so much hostility to women writing professionally for children by established figures such as Charles Lamb?
2. Look at the reproduction from *A Pretty Little Pocket Book* on page 11. What evidence do you find that it assumes a middle-class child reader? Compare it to the images of materials made by Jane Johnson available on the website of the Lilly Library, Indiana University:
<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?docId=InU-Li-VAA1275&doc.view=items>.
What differences do you observe between material made for particular children and those produced commercially?

Suggested Reading

Cunningham, Hugh. *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 2005 (1995).

Demers, Patricia, ed. *From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850*. 3rd ed. Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Other Books of Interest

Hilton, Mary, Morag Styles, and Victor Watson, eds. *Opening the Nursery Door: Reading, Writing and Childhood 1600–1900*. London: Routledge, 1997.

Muir, Percy. *English Children's Books 1600–1900*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1954.

O'Malley, Andrew. *The Making of the Modern Child: Children's Literature and Childhood in the Late Eighteenth Century*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Ruwe, Donelle, ed. *Culturing the Child 1690–1914: Essays in Memory of Mitzi Myers*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005.

Townsend, John Rowe. *Written for Children: An Outline of English-language Children's Literature*. 4th rev. ed. HarperCollins Children's Books, 1992 (1974).

Websites of Interest

Students with access to large public libraries or those attached to academic institutions may be able to access ECCO (Eighteenth-Century Collections Online). Information about this program is available from Gale/Cengage Learning. —
<http://mlr.com/DigitalCollections/products/ecco/about.htm>

Lecture 3

The Child in Nature

The Suggested Readings for this lecture are Seth Lerer's *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*, chapter 5, and Roni Natov's *The Poetics of Childhood*, chapter 1.



Catherine Sinclair's (1800–1864) complaint in her preface to *Holiday House*, that “books written for young persons are generally a mere dry record of facts” that ignore “the natural vigour of feelings, the glow of natural genius, and the ardor of natural enthusiasm,” encapsulates the view of childhood that dominated children’s literature in the nineteenth century and which is still present in much of what is published for children today. Looked at in one way this can be understood as merely a variation on the strategy of placing exemplary children at the center of writing for child readers used by James Janeway and the rationalist writers. It assumes that children like to read about other children, and that being the case, that the children in fiction ought to offer good role models. From this perspective, the primary difference between the earlier writers and Sinclair is the view of good behavior that their exemplary child characters represent. In early children’s literature childhood is secondary to adulthood and good children learn from and model themselves on adults in order to find God or become useful members of society. Child characters focus on the future, whether in this world or the next. For those writing under the influence of Rousseau and the Romantics, however, childhood is valued in its own right and privileged over adulthood for what are perceived as its innate qualities—the natural vigor, genius, and ardor prized by Sinclair. When this elevation of childhood is focused upon, a different understanding of the meaning and function of the children at the center of children’s literature comes to the fore.

For many years the study of children’s literature acknowledged what is often referred to as the Victorian and Edwardian “cult of the child”: the tendency in the arts and letters of the time to construct images of beautiful, innocent children who unself-consciously represent goodness. This image is summed up in John Everett Millais’s painting *Bubbles* (1886), which features a tousle-haired boy sitting in a garden and gazing upwards at a



An illustration from an 1879 edition of *Holiday House* by Catherine Sinclair.

perfect bubble he has just blown. Every facet of Romantic childhood is contained in this heavily symbolic image. The child is pretty and perfect; although in a natural setting and free from adult supervision, his clothes and skin are spotless and as perfect as the iridescent bubble. The picture is allegorical, with the bubble representing the fragile and fugitive nature of childhood, the inevitable end of which is symbolized by the broken pot beside him. *Bubbles* quickly became both a bestselling print and an advertisement for soap, exemplifying the selling power of idealized childhood. Since in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries children did not have the access to money or the “pester power” they have today, the image is a useful reminder that the appeal of such perfect children is not to other children but to adults.

While the cult of the beautiful child was identified and its roots in Romantic constructions of childhood recognized in writing about Victorian and Edwardian children’s literature, for most of the twentieth century little thought was given to the contradictory fact that the image was the invention of adults and appealed primarily to adult tastes and interests, but it was elaborated and perpetuated primarily in children’s books. Not all children’s books subscribed to the most extreme versions of the ideal; much of the humor in E. Nesbit’s (1858–1924) *The Wouldbegoods*, for instance, comes from the disparity between real children and such fictional paragons—for whom they express utter disdain. When the children decide to make up for the trouble they have caused earlier by forming a society for doing good deeds, they specifically outlaw the kind of behavior associated with the Romantic children in earlier children’s books. As Oswald puts it: “. . . being good is so much like being a muff, generally. Anyhow I’m not going to smooth the pillows of the sick, or read to the aged poor, or any rot out of *Ministering Children*.” Although they make mistakes and get into trouble, in many

Bubbles

by John Everett Millais, 1886

The Romantic image of Millais’s painting was used with great success by the Pears Soap Company in their advertising. Along with their logo, they added a bar of their soap near the boy’s feet.



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ways Nesbit's child characters are created by casting a veneer of realism over what is essentially the Romantic child, since the stories in which they feature are all centered on imaginative play and the different ways adults and children interpret people and events.

The critic who has done most to raise questions about the role and function of Romantic childhood in children's literature is Jacqueline Rose, whose *The Case of Peter Pan, or, The Impossibility of Children's Literature* (1984) questions why the Romantic view of childhood came to dominate writing for children. Rose argues that the "child" in children's literature is a phantasm based on adults' view of what children and childhood should be like, "should" here signifying what they want it to be like. In her reading, the ideal of childhood found in children's books functions like the story of the Fall in Christian culture: it reassures adults that once there was a time when they were perfect and the world had a coherence and authenticity that is lost with experience. The resulting elevation of childhood resulted in a hostility to growing up, which is why Rose regards *Peter Pan* as the paradigm of children's literature.

As Millais's painting shows, children's literature is not the only place where Romantic constructions of childhood are found, but for Rose it is a particularly potent vehicle for them. This view stems from her interest in the theories of the French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Jacques Lacan (1901–1981). In Lacanian theory, the idea of the self is regarded as entirely a product of language on the grounds that the only way we can think about ourselves is by using words. Since language is the medium of fiction and young readers are actively involved in learning and experimenting with language, Rose regards fictional constructions of childhood for children as supremely important. They position child readers alongside the fantasy children in the texts and pass on the myth that this is what childhood is like. The result is a contradiction in children and culture between what real children are like and what it is assumed they should be like. Real children know they are not perfect, that they harbor feelings such as anger and jealousy that are far from the ideal, and most long not to stay children perpetually but to experience the powers and pleasures that they anticipate will come with maturity. In a post-Freudian era, culture too understands real children as complex, conflicted, and in some ways sexualized beings in ways the Romantic image of the "beautiful child" is not. As later lectures will show, this awareness has gradually altered the idealized image of childhood in children's books. For now, it is important to focus on some of the effects and legacies of the Romantic image of childhood.

Rose's recognition that works for children in the Romantic tradition include an image of childhood that is more appealing to adults than children helps explain a sense of doubleness in the narrative voice found in writing for children. In *The Narrator's Voice: The Dilemma of Children's Fiction* (1991), Barbara Wall traces the way particular strategies for addressing child readers

developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and their relationship to changing images of childhood. She concludes that very few books display what she calls “single address,” meaning that they are written to appeal exclusively to child readers; instead, most children’s books address both children and adults, though to different degrees and with different effects. Those books that use “double address” assume an unsophisticated, uninformed child reader who will not understand the implications of everything the narrator says. In this case the narrator establishes a collusive relationship with an adult reader who is assumed to be reading a book to a child. The additional content creates interest for the adult, but in a way that patronizes children. Instead of the child’s innocent eye offering a superior understanding, child readers are in fact exposed as deficient.

A more democratic doubleness takes the form of what Wall calls “dual address,” in which adult and child readers are addressed as equals, though because they have different levels of understanding of the world and of literature they will read texts differently. Dual address sees the worlds of adults and children not as separate in the way Romantic texts are inclined to do, but as part of a continuum. Crossover novels such as Mark Haddon’s *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* or Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* employ dual address. In many ways the attitudes to child readers of dual address texts are very close to those put forward by Rousseau, in that they assume children are in the process of learning about the world and they eschew the tendency to cram children’s heads with facts in the way he found so damaging.

Another legacy of Romantic childhood is to see the outdoors generally and rural life in particular as the “natural” domain of childhood, making urban childhoods unhealthy and potentially damaging. The tradition of sending sick children to the country to regain their health started off as a convention of nineteenth-century children’s literature that evolved to form two connected subgenres: adventure stories and holiday stories in which small groups of children explore the countryside, often setting up camps in isolated places for prolonged periods. Particularly in Britain this was a popular form that featured everything from stories about organized scouting movements to Alison Uttley’s *The Country Child* and Arthur Ransome’s *Swallows and Amazons* series.

A final effect of placing child characters in natural settings tends to be to remove them from adult supervision, so creating a space for imaginative play that allows children to satisfy their curiosity about how things work while learning the consequences of their actions through trial and error. This was exactly what Rousseau was aiming for when he cast Émile in the role of Robinson Crusoe, and children’s books continued and developed the tradition of having child characters create or discover alternative worlds where they have experiences that help them work out problems and adjust to the changes attendant on growing up.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Read the extract from Edith Nesbit's *The Five Children and It* (1902) below. What kind of address does she employ? What evidence do you have to support your decision?
2. In this extract, does Nesbit draw on or subvert Romantic conventions about the child's relationship with nature? (If you have access to a copy of this text you will find the first chapter has much to say about urban and rural childhoods.)

It was not really a pretty house at all; it was quite ordinary, and mother thought it rather inconvenient, and was quite annoyed at there being no shelves, to speak of, and hardly a cupboard in the place. Father used to say that the ironwork on the roof and coping was like an architect's nightmare. But the house was deep in the country, with no other house in sight, and the children had been in London for two years, without so much as once going to the seaside [. . .] Now that I have begun to tell you about the place, I feel that I could go on and make this into a most interesting story about all the ordinary things that the children did—just the kind of thing you do yourself, you know—and you would believe every word of it; and when I told you about the children's being tiresome, as you are sometimes, your aunts would perhaps write in the margin of the story with a pencil, "How true!" or "How like life!" and you would see it and very likely be annoyed. (E. Nesbit, *The Five Children and It*. Chapter 1, "Beautiful as the Day")

Suggested Readings

Lerer, Seth. *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Natov, Roni. *The Poetics of Childhood*. London: Routledge, 2006.

Other Books of Interest

Gubar, Marah. *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2010.

Higonnet, Anne. *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1998.

Plotz, Judith. *Romanticism and the Vocation of Childhood*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2001.

Rose, Jacqueline. *The Case of Peter Pan, or, The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992 (1984).

Wall, Barbara. *The Narrator's Voice: The Dilemma of Children's Fiction*. London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 1991.

Lecture 4

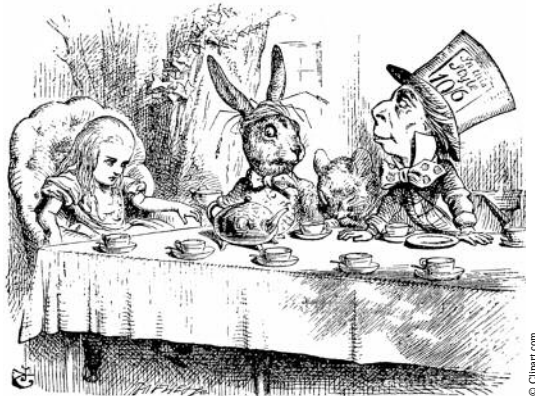
New Worlds in Childhood I: The World of Imagination

The Suggested Readings for this lecture are Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*, introduction, and Peter Hunt and Millicent Lenz's *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*, introduction.



Riddles are regularly found in children's literature, probably the most famous of them being the one put to Alice during the Mad Hatter's tea party in chapter 7 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?," which no one has ever succeeded in solving. Where the rest of the so-called nonsense in Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books is carefully constructed to conceal meaning using a variety of codes and providing clues in the form of, for example, illustrations and references to topical debates (Martin Gardner's *The Annotated Alice* gives the background to many of these), the Hatter's riddle is in fact merely a question made up of arbitrary elements and a trap for readers who, like his young girl friends, have become accustomed to seeking for concealed meanings (Carroll trained his friends in problem solving, often requiring them to decode invitations and other messages in letters designed as pictograms or similar puzzles). As he no doubt anticipated, readers have expended many fruitless hours trying to find a solution to it.

The appeal of riddles to Lewis Carroll can be understood as having two roots: one for the two aspects of himself. The first taps into the real-life Charles Lutwidge Dodgson's (1832–1898) fascination with mathematics and



A Tea Party
by Sir John Tenniel, 1866

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?"

"Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles.—I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

"Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

"Exactly so," said Alice.

—Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865

patterns, the subject of his professional life and publications. The second relates to his private life and invented persona, Lewis Carroll. Carroll is one of a number of well-known Victorian and Edwardian men who struggled both with the necessity to grow up and, as part of doing so, to assume the dominant forms of masculinity in circulation at the time. The shy, stammering, slender Carroll was far from the commanding figure of the ideal Victorian patriarch. In *Men in Wonderland* (2003), a study of some of these men, Catherine Robson proposes that men such as Lewis Carroll and John Ruskin (1819–1900) were attracted to young girls not, as today tends to be assumed, for sexual reasons, but because they wanted to return to a childhood state epitomized by the girl child and so avoid the demands associated with being a man in a patriarchal culture. Since this was not something that could comfortably be talked about or perhaps even acknowledged privately, these men found ways of expressing their feelings through the arts. In the case of Carroll, fantasy and nonsense offered creative ways of simultaneously expressing and concealing anxiety about adult masculinity.

The attractions of childhood appealed to a wider group than Robson suggests, however; by the start of the twentieth century Anglo-American culture, and particularly the arts, had become infatuated with childhood. This infatuation took many forms, from the intellectual to the infantile. Those caught up in the modernist movement, for instance, turned a forensic gaze on childhood, seeking to revitalize artistic traditions they felt had become habitualized and enfeebled. There is nothing childish about the use of images, colors, and artifacts associated with childhood in, say, the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky or Virginia Woolf's novel *The Waves* (1931). By contrast, others sought to demonstrate their connection with the spirit of childhood in more regressive ways by, for instance, dressing like children and playing children's games. The vogue for being childish among adults reached its peak in Edwardian England, when it became fashionable for adults to invite each other to events such as fairy teas drunk from cups fashioned like acorns. In her biography of Kenneth Grahame, Alison Prince notes that he attended such a party, in this case called a "Fairy-Tale Dinner" for which all present dressed up and attempted to create "a world of magical innocence." Whimsy is short-lived, however, and by 1914 society had put away childish things and got down to the serious business of total war, leaving an assortment of children's books as evidence of that curious moment when the boundaries between children and adults became confused. Such books and stories by definition do not carry the kind of enduring information associated with memes; their ethos and behavioral codes did not survive. They do, however, suggest a riddle about children's literature itself: "When is a children's book not a book for children?"

The Children's Book is the title of a recent novel by A.S. Byatt (Antonia Susan Duffy, b. 1936) about members of the aesthetic movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A central figure in the

interleaved stories of two generations of artists and writers is Olive Wellwood, a woman writer of children's books based loosely on E[dith] Nesbit. Byatt's title refers to the books Olive writes for each of the children she is raising (as in the case of Nesbit, some are her husband's illegitimate children) and those for publication, specifically the one she is writing at the start of the novel and which makes her reputation. Like Olive's earlier work, the new book makes use of motifs and characters from fairy stories, but this time she also draws on the character of her son Tom, who, partly in reaction to his realization that she has made their private world public, becomes depressed. Tom's inability to reconcile himself with family and society culminates in his suicide. This is not the place to explore Byatt's novel in detail, but the meticulous research into the place and attributes of children's books in *fin de siècle* culture that underpins it makes *The Children's Book* a useful source of information about the status of children's writers and writing at the start of the twentieth century and of ideas about how to answer the riddle of how a children's book can be a book that is not for children.

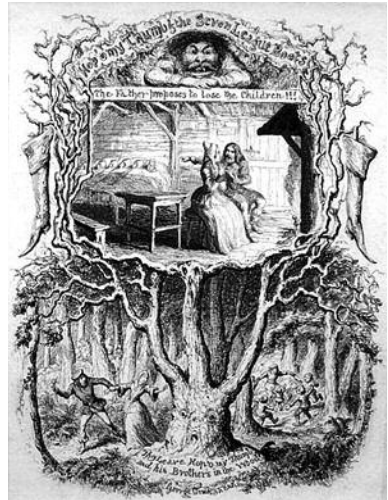
Like Kenneth Grahame's (1859–1932) *The Golden Age* and *Dream Days*, Olive's book is admired and enjoyed by adults. It too presents a view of childhood recollected from an Olympian perspective rather than one that speaks directly to children. As Daisy Ashford's (1881–1972) *The Young Visitors* shows, however, children tend to be preoccupied with growing up and so study the adult world carefully, trying to understand its intricacies and preparing themselves for the time when they will be (as it seems from the perspective of childhood) in charge. Books genuinely for children tend to be preoccupied with helping children prepare for the transition by teaching them about how the world works and giving them some of the information and skills they will need as they mature. The real E. Nesbit's books do precisely this: the adventures her children experience all teach moral lessons that are subtly designed to help children grow beyond the solipsistic subjectivity of childhood into empathetic recognition of other people's feelings and needs. The kinds of books written by Grahame and Byatt's Olive Wellwood, by contrast, are primarily about discrediting maturity and imagining an ideal of childhood in a kind of literary amber.

Before the cult of childhood degenerated into a fashion, children's books often offered a space that adults and children



Mr. Salteena models a superb new top hat as the latest object of his affections, as Ethel Monticue looks on. The illustration by William Pène du Bois is from a 1952 edition of *The Young Visitors* (1919) by Daisy Ashford.

shared unself-consciously. This was particularly true of the collections of folk and fairy tales that were compiled and illustrated for children, beginning with the translation of the Grimm brothers' fairy tales in 1823. There was nothing whimsical about the project designed by the Grimm brothers to collect and write down tales from the oral tradition. Their intention was to document, preserve, and study the German national character and language, and the original audience they had in mind was adults rather than children. When it became apparent that the tales were being used as children's stories, the brothers adjusted them, usually by making the content less earthy and more Christian. The fact that it was the later, sanitized versions of the tales that were so robustly defended by Charles Dickens makes his anger against George Cruikshank's (1792–1878) changes to the fairy tales he retold somewhat ironic. Nevertheless, Dickens's comments show how central such tales were to the battle to allow children access to imaginative fiction that was finally resolved in 1865 in favor of fantastic stories with the publication of Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.



Father Proposes to Lose the Children
 An illustration from the story
 “Hop ’o My Thumb” (1695) written
 by Charles Perrault (1628–1703)
 from George Cruikshank’s *Fairy-Tales
 Library* (1885).

The scientific and nationalistic dimensions to the Grimms' work provided a justification for bringing children and stories with fantastical elements together. The distrust of stories about fairies and fantasy shared by Puritan and rationalist children's writers gave way to the combined forces of anthropological and sociological enquiry, the Romantics' defense of the imagination, and the veneration of the past associated with such prominent figures as John Ruskin and William Morris (1834–1896). The highly illustrated volumes of fairy tales and legends produced by illustrators such as Howard Pyle (1853–1911), Edmund Dulac (1882–1953), and Arthur Rackham (1867–1939), for instance, clearly show the influence of what became known as the Arts and Crafts Movement. The new enthusiasm for gathering and studying folk and fairy tales identified many commonalities in stories told around the world that first supported theories about relationships between peoples and later came to be seen as evidence for similarities in psychological makeup. For the first writers of children's fantasy, however, supernatural elements tended to be used for personal reasons, whether these were primarily concerned with working through issues to do

with gender or, as in the case of Charles Kingsley (1819–1875) and George MacDonald (1824–1905), the place of spirituality in a world increasingly explained by and dependent on science.

For both men, the desire to write about religion for children would have been genuine, but before the beginning of the twentieth century there was little formal understanding of the way the psyche works or a vocabulary to refer to it and so these early fantasies can also be understood as a form of writing that is classified as children's literature but that served equally to explore adult concerns. As a consequence, much early fantasy has always had an enthusiastic adult following and now books such as *The Water-Babies* and *The Princess and the Goblin* are more likely to be read and studied by adults than by children. While arguably not in fact books for children, these key works in the juvenile canon were important to the development of children's literature since they showed that fantasy can be as truthful as realism, though its truths are likely to be more abstract and enduring than those based on the realities of quotidian existence. In a post-Freudian world, fantasy tends to be written more self-consciously, and in children's literature it is now almost always deliberately directed to child readers and their concerns rather than used to give expression to adult writers' anxieties. The riddles in more recent fantasies are, then, riddles of the self, and they are always intended to be solved.



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North Wind Holding Diamond

George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind* was serialized in the children's magazine *Good Words for the Young* beginning in 1868 and was published in book form in 1871. The fantasy story centers on a boy named Diamond who travels with the mysterious Lady North Wind on several adventures.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Max Beerbohm's praise for J.M. Barrie as "a child absolutely" identifies *Peter Pan* as part of the "cult of childhood." How, then, do you understand the closing line of the novelized version of Barrie's text: ". . . and thus it will go on, as long as children are gay and innocent and heartless"?
2. Can fantasy fiction for children be as didactic as realistic fiction?

Suggested Readings

- Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Vintage, 2010 (1978).
- Hunt, Peter, and Millicent Lenz. *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

- Byatt, A.S. *The Children's Book*. New York: Vintage, 2009.
- Carroll, Lewis. *The Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition*. Notes: Martin Gardner. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999 (1960).
- Gubar, Marah. *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2010.
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. New York: Routledge, 1981.
- Prince, Alison. *Kenneth Grahame: An Innocent in the Wild Wood*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2009 (1994).
- Robson, Catherine. *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Rose, Jacqueline. *The Case of Peter Pan, or, The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992 (1984).
- Stephens, John, and Robyn McCallum. *Retelling Stories, Framing Culture: Traditional Stories and Metanarratives in Children's Literature*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Websites of Interest

- The Victorian Web* provides a transcript of "Frauds on the Fairies" by Charles Dickens, which initially appeared in Dickens's weekly journal *Household Words* in 1853. —
<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/dickens/pva/pva239.html>

Lecture 5

New Worlds in Childhood II: The Nursery and the School

The Suggested Readings for this lecture are Pat Pinsent's "Theories of Genre and Gender: Change and Continuity in the School Story" in Kimberley Reynolds's *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction* and "The Hidden Self" and "The Woman Known as Brenda" in Bridget Carrington, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel's *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*.



A much neglected aspect of studying children's literature is the extent to which it provides windows into the worlds of childhood, past and present, and particularly the two worlds children know best: home and school. Tracing the evolution of genres such as the domestic story and the school story not only shows how conventions are established and perpetuated, but also how much these worlds have changed over time. So, for instance, domestic stories such as *Little Women* or *What Katy Did* reveal a great deal about the everyday life and organization of nineteenth-century American families: how big they were, differences in the way boys and girls were treated, what families ate, who prepared the food and cleaned up after meals, how children were raised and disciplined, the games that were played, how homes were furnished, what kind of clothes they wore, and issues to do with health and education. The kind of information contained in such texts (including their illustrations) becomes evident when looking at the first two chapters of *What Katy Did*. These establish that Katy's family has six children (presented as unremarkable for the time), that they own a large house and some land (again, presented as normal), and that, because their mother has died, the Carr children are being raised by their father with the help of a maiden aunt.

The text makes it clear that Aunt Izzie does not always enjoy raising her brother's children and as a consequence that "the children didn't exactly love her." Although she is a relatively minor character, the portrait of Aunt Izzie is another indicator of the range of information about the times in which they are written contained in children's books, in this case offering a glimpse of the lives of the many unmarried women who in the mid-nineteenth century had few opportunities to support themselves and so were commandeered into the service of their families and relations.

Like everyone around her, the children take Aunt Izzie for granted. Child readers, too, may regard her as controlling and severe, but adult readers of Coolidge's book will be aware that the Carr children's clothes are washed and mended by Aunt Izzie just as the picnic baskets they take to their favorite hideaway have been prepared by her. Like their neat appearance at

the start of every day, these baskets offer silent testimony to the efforts of their hardworking aunt, for in the 1870s most of the contents would have been home-made. She packs pretty baskets containing the following:

A great many ginger cakes [. . .] buttered biscuit came next—three apiece, with slices of cold lamb laid in between; and last of all were a dozen hardboiled eggs, and a layer of thick bread and butter sandwiched with corned-beef.

~Susan Coolidge, *What Katy Did* (1872), Chapter II, “Paradise”

In the text the range and quantity of the items are evidence of Aunt Izzie’s thoughtfulness and competence, but they also give a sense (even if the picnic is enhanced for literary effect) of what middle-class American children would have eaten at the time and the kinds of freedoms they enjoyed. Later chapters refer to the children’s games, the fact that they go to local schools, and, following Katy’s fall from a swing, how invalids were treated. The death of Aunt Izzie sees Katy taking over the management of the house, and the lists she makes and things on which she is consulted constitute a miniature volume on household management. The fact that one of the jobs she takes on is telling Debbie, one of the servants, what to prepare for the family also reveals that households like the Carrs take it for granted that there will be domestic help. All of this information is conveyed from a child’s perspective, creating a much more intimate and uninterrupted picture of daily life than is found in most adult novels, where the focus generally tends to be on interaction with the outside world.

While there are many similarities between British and American stories set in homes, comparison across the category of domestic/family stories also highlights some notable differences. The most striking of these is in the geography of the home and what this reveals about family power structures and relationships. Nineteenth-century domestic stories set in Britain generally assume that young children will spend most of their time in the nursery and with servants, and that their interactions with parents will usually be planned and reasonably formal. Given that in real life it must have been a momentous occasion, curiously few children’s books are concerned with the transition from the nursery, with its child-sized furniture,



Entering Paradise

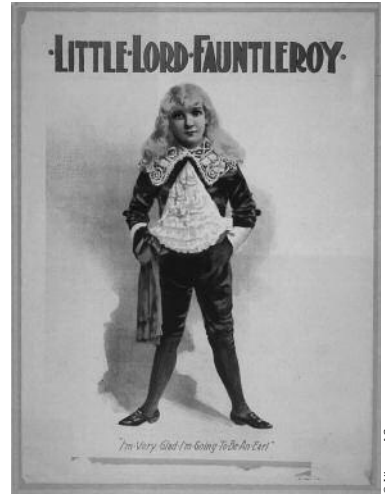
“So in they marched, Katy and Cecy heading the procession, and Dorry, with his great trailing bunch of boughs, bringing up the rear.”

~ Susan Coolidge, *What Katy Did*

emphasis on learning and games, and simple fare, to the formality of the drawing-room and the occasion of a child's first meal in adult company. One book that does feature a child's first adult dinner is Frances Hodgson Burnett's (1849–1924) *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885). The circumstances are atypical since young Cedric has moved not just from the nursery to the drawing-room but from America to England and from poverty to extreme wealth. Burnett carefully describes the scene to emphasize the semiotics of dining, itemizing "the great stately room, the big liveried servants, the bright lights, the glittering silver and glass, the fierce-looking old nobleman at the head of the table and the very small boy at the foot" (chapter V). Although the formality is intended to signal the Earl's wealth and status, it is wasted on Cedric, who has not been raised to anticipate this moment and is entirely unfamiliar with its rituals. Because they are meaningless to him he is unintimidated by the occasion and so it is the little boy whose conversation and attitudes dominate the meal. Readers are never told if he knows how to manage a knife and fork politely or what is eaten since the scene is about showing the old world, as represented by the Earl, to be moribund.

Burnett's dinner is a rarity, however. In most nineteenth-century British children's fiction the enlargement of children's horizons is associated with education, and in the case of boys, with being sent away to school. Inevitably this meant leaving a largely female world of servants, governesses, sisters, and mothers to join the first of a succession of all-male environments: the school, the club, the civil service, the military, and so on. British girls began to be sent away to school later and never in such large numbers as boys, so where boys' school stories tend to be one-off, highly autobiographical books designed to tell boys about the real world of school, girls' school stories have tended to create a fantasy ideal of school. The element of wish fulfillment in such stories is evident in the conventions associated with British girls' school stories: midnight feasts, intimate friendships, and often some kind of adventure, mystery, or crisis that is resolved.

Although some of the best-known and most enduring family stories of all time were written in nineteenth-century America, neither nursery nor school features to the extent they do in British fiction. In the case of the nursery, American homes and parenting tended to be portrayed as less rigorously zoned, with adults and children occupying the same spaces and



A poster advertising an 1888 American theatrical production of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.

children having relatively free and informal access to their parents. Parents in American children's books may be paragons, but they are rarely Olympians. Similarly, the private boarding school is less institutionalized as part of middle-class life than it is in Britain, and so for most of its history the school story in America is a less well-defined genre. Interestingly, however, during the second half of the twentieth century writers from the United States took the school story in new directions, introducing both dark themes, typified by the bullying and power struggles found in Robert Cormier's (1925–2000) *The Chocolate War*, and the romance and intrigues of series such as *Sweet Valley High*. Both are associated with the physical organization of schools, in fiction and reality.

Just as British nineteenth-century domestic architecture worked to separate adults and children, so schools, past and present, are designed to enable a small number of teachers (adults) to organize and manage large numbers of pupils (children) and to signal that teachers are in authority. As with any large institution, the efficacy of management systems largely depend on the illusion of authority and this is partly maintained by creating spaces and using technology in ways that signal privilege and power for teachers: large desks, staff rooms, stages, address systems. Throughout its history these strategies have tended to produce the kinds of separate worlds of adults and pupils that allow each to become strange to the other. In fiction this can be used to comic effect and to the benefit of pupils: the boys in Rudyard Kipling's (1865–1936) *Stalky & Co.*, for instance, take an inverted Olympian view of their teachers, constructing most as unintelligent, unaware, and inadequate. The result is that the boys largely work the system to get things the way they want them, though since this is precisely the kind of training they need to run an empire, the school in fact provides the right kind of education for them. An alternative way of using the separation between teachers and pupils is to expose how the illusion of control, authority, and fair systems in schools creates conditions in which the abuse of power, whether by teacher or students—or both—may occur. Bullying, including new forms facilitated by cell



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“Stalky, in an upper form-room, had gathered himself allies against vengeance. . . The juniors hurried out like bees aswarm, asking no questions, clattered up the staircase and added themselves to the embroilment.”

–Rudyard Kipling, *Stalky & Co.*, 1899.

phones and the Internet, has become a prominent theme in both American and British school stories.

But the separate worlds also facilitate romance. Because the majority of those found in a school are roughly the same age, romances between pupils are not uncommon, and this is reflected in school stories, including David Levithan's (b. 1972) gay utopian fantasy, *Boy Meets Boy*. The centrality of school in young people's lives is reflected in the way Levithan's characters have their sexualities assessed and confirmed in school, base their emotional lives around schoolmates and school events, and largely conduct their love lives in the corridors of their high school. The prominence of school and the mystique that may come from separation mean that not all romantic attachments are between peers, however; a persistent theme in contemporary teenage fiction involves sexual relationships between teachers and pupils. Sometimes, as in *Falling into Glory* by Robert Westall (1929–1993), these are presented as positive; sometimes, as in Barry Lyga's (b. 1971) *Boy Toy*, as abusive, but because relationships between pupils and teachers are always transgressive, they generally take place out of school, making this a paradoxical strand of the school story in which the school itself ceases to be the main setting.

The marginalization of school as a setting is a significant departure from the traditional school story, but it reflects the fact that whether written in the eighteenth or the twenty-first century, in Britain or the United States, school stories tend to be more concerned with teaching children about how the world works and how best to negotiate it than with educational achievement. Although the two primary worlds of childhood, home and school, have given rise to two enduring juvenile genres, their relationship with the real world varies considerably.



Stark contrasts between educational settings in nineteenth-century Britain and twenty-first-century America have dramatically changed how literature for children has been written.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How far do the *Harry Potter* books conform to the convention that school stories are more concerned with educating children socially than in their academic development?
2. Why is the effect of creating separate spheres for adults and children different in stories set at home and stories set in schools?
3. Does the world of the day school have the same potential to function as a microcosm as a boarding school?
4. Why might attitudes to gender differ in stories set in the nursery and those set in the school?

Suggested Readings

- Pinsent, Pat. "Theories of Genre and Gender: Change and Continuity in the School Story." *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction*. Kimberley Reynolds, ed. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2005.
- Carrington, Bridget, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel. *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*. Lichfield, UK: Pied Piper, Ltd., 2008.

Other Books of Interest

- Flanders, Judith. *The Victorian House*. London: Harper Perennial, 2004.
- Gargano, Elizabeth. *Reading Victorian Schoolrooms: Childhood and Education in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Grenby, Matthew Orville. "The School Story." *Children's Literature*. Chapter 4. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.
- Miall, Antony, and Peter Miall. *The Victorian Nursery Book*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1990 (1988).
- Musgrave, Peter W. *From Brown to Bunter: The Life and Death of the School Story*. London: Routledge, 1985.

Websites of Interest

1. *OpenFlix* provides the 1936 feature film *Little Lord Fauntleroy* directed by David O. Selznick and starring Dolores Costello, Freddie Bartholomew, and Mickey Rooney on *YouTube*. —
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKDRSIFXiG4>
2. Pennsylvania State University provides a pdf of Rudyard Kipling's *Stalky & Co*. — www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/kipling/Stalky.pdf

Lecture 6

The Child in the City: Respectable Urchins

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Claudia Nelson's "The Unheimlich Maneuver: Uncannily Domesticity in the Urban Waif Tale," chapter 8 in *Youth Cultures: Texts, Images, and Identities* edited by Kerry Mallan and Sharyn Pearce.



There are few better ways to show the differences between fictional and real children than examining the representations of urban childhood found in nineteenth-century Evangelical publications for children. The books, stories, and periodicals published by organizations such as the Religious Tract Society (RTS), the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), and their American counterpart the American Tract Society (ATS) invented a version of childhood designed to advance the beliefs and causes they championed. In children's books, the focus tended to be on bringing nonbelievers to religion, often at the same time turning them away from behavior that was regarded as sinful, such as drinking, swearing, and popular pastimes such as gambling and going to (or, like the mother in *Jessica's First Prayer*, acting in) the theatre. Since these activities were often associated with poverty and crime, the books were addressing important social problems, particularly as they affected the children of the poor.



Cover of *Jessica's First Prayer* by Hesba Stretton, 1866.

Although they were often based on firsthand research, the branch of writing that culminated in street arab stories in Britain and rags-to-riches stories in America developed a set of fictional conventions around the image of virtuous and noble children growing up amidst the degradations and temptations of cities that is far from realistic. All of these works are broadly Evangelical in outlook, and they all draw on and exaggerate ideas about childhood associated with the Romantic movement, so in them poor child protagonists are endowed with beauty, spirituality, and the ability to heal. They also seem to be impervious to the corrupting influences around them. In fact, as reformers like Lord Shaftesbury (Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 7th Earl of Shaftesbury, 1801–1885) discovered, the squalid and degrading conditions of the urban poor were a powerful impediment to virtue. The lecture quotes Shaftesbury's description of the foul and filthy parts of the city in which they live and the lack of clean water and clothing that made it difficult to appear decent—or even human—to those who lived more comfortably. The stereotypical virtuous victims found in street arab and other kinds of Evangelical children's stories are designed to represent the reality and

work on the hearts and minds of readers, for Evangelical children's publishing began as a form of propaganda. In order to understand how an exercise in religious propaganda turned into a large and influential aspect of the development of children's literature, it is necessary to know something about the Evangelical publishing houses and the important role children's literature played in them.

The Rise of Evangelical Publishing for Children

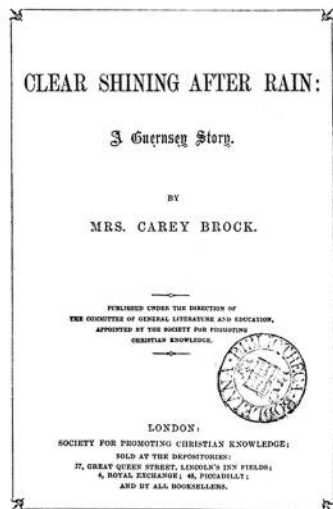
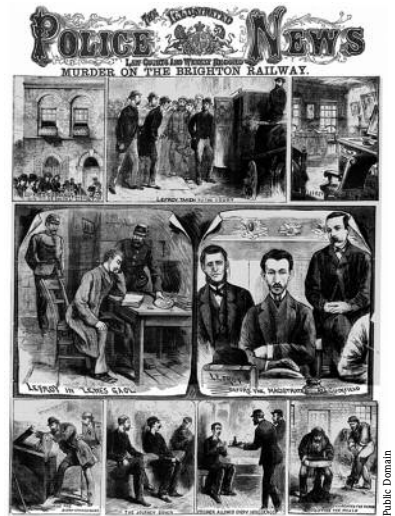
The oldest of the societies is the SPCK, founded in 1698; the RTS followed in 1799, and the ATS came into being in 1825 as a result of the merger of two earlier, more local organizations. The dates are significant, for they show how closely the history of the religious publishing organizations maps onto the developments in early publishing for children discussed in previous lectures, starting with James Janeway's *A Token for Children* in 1671–72, moving on to the beginnings of commercial publishing for children in 1744, and building toward the many rapid and revolutionary changes in publishing for children that took place in the nineteenth century, including the rise of fantasy writing, school stories, and tales for and about home and family.

All three organizations grew from the Evangelical side of the Protestant groups discussed in lecture 1. "Evangelical" means "of or pertaining to the Gospels," and the emphasis on the teachings contained in the Bible is one reason why these organizations saw the printing and distribution of religious books and tracts (pamphlets on religious topics) as an important part of their missionary and conversion work. By distributing "the word," they hoped to teach sinners the error of their ways and encourage them to repent and turn to Christ. To this end, each society began by publishing the kind of materials distributed on Francis Carty's First Fleet convict ship, the *Alexander*. The nature of their contents is evident from their titles. *A Dissuasive from Profane Swearing and Cursing offered to such unhappy persons as are guilty of those horrid sins and are not past counsel*, for instance, clearly established the voice of the writer and the writer's sense of superiority over those being addressed.

Just as the SPCK provisioned the First Fleet with its publications, so all of the societies mobilized members of congregations and paid representatives to distribute their books and tracts at every opportunity. The ATS was particularly energetic and ambitious, aiming to reach every part of the American population. From 1825 its salesmen, who were often also missionaries, traveled to pioneer settlements on the furthest frontiers, greeted immigrants as they arrived in the country, visited prisons, hospitals, orphanages, and other institutions, and sought to ensure that even those who were prevented from reading by conditions such as blindness could have access to their publications (Gillian Avery writes about their work in *Behold the Child: American Children and Their Books, 1621–1922*).

Personal encounters between those distributing the tracts and their intended readers established that they were not always gratefully received or, more importantly, read. Meanwhile, readers *were* being attracted to cheap and often sensational books, periodicals and chapbooks, whose values were anathema to the Evangelical world view. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the religious publishing houses decided it was necessary to fight fire with fire by attempting to produce lively and attractive publications of their own. They sought both to broaden their appeal and to teach lessons more suited to the urbanized, industrialized world. At the same time, the organizations behind the publishing houses continued to be deeply concerned with forging an alliance between literacy and morality. Although they accepted that entertainment was a necessary sauce to aid the digestion of religious and social teachings, theoretically at least these remained the principal ingredients of their publications, and particularly in writing for the young. Soon the combination of handsomely bound, illustrated books that concentrated on plot rather than biblical exegesis resulted in sales so large that this branch of the societies' work was financing many other core activities. The annual report of the SPCK's Committee of General Literature and Education for 1871 celebrates this fact, and reveals the Committee's determination to learn from commercial competitors:

The "get-up" of the books has been made as attractive as possible without increasing the price. . . . Boys and girls will turn eagerly to such capital stories as "Esperance," "Nobody's Child," "Silent Jim," "Sunshine Bill," "Big Bruce," "Five Pounds' Reward," "Life in the Walls," Mrs Carey Brock's "Clear Shining After Rain," and "Hattie and Nellie," "Ruth Lee," and "Marion."



The *Illustrated Police News* tabloid began publishing in 1864 and was abhorred by the SPCK and other religious social organizations. The SPCK countered this sensationalism with the publication of books such as Mrs. Carey Brock's (1827–1905) *Clear Shining After Rain* (1871).

Similar activities were undertaken by both the RTS and the ATS, leading to charges that the religious message was being diluted. The societies held firm, however, on the grounds that making their publications more obviously religious would defeat the purpose for which they were intended by alienating young readers and making them susceptible to the charms of less scrupulous publishers. Evangelical publishing activities continued to move away from evangelizing and to concentrate on providing wholesome and instructional publications.

The sales of Evangelical children's books were enhanced by direct selling to schools and Sunday schools for use as rewards, prizes, and library stock. As a consequence, whether or not children liked or read everything that was published for them had little bearing on the economic success of the publishing houses. The financial rewards were such that commercial publishers began to produce similarly attractive novels in the Evangelical mould. The success of *Jessica's First Prayer* and *Froggy's Littler Brother* was matched by many other best-selling religious stories, including Elizabeth Wetherell's (1819–1895) *The Wide, Wide World*, which became one of the best-loved American novels of the nineteenth century, Maria Susan Cummins's (1827–1866) *The Lamplighter*, and the *Elsie Dinsmore* books of Martha Finley (1828–1909). All are sentimental, tear-jerking tales about pious children who improve the lives of those around them. They laid the ground for tales that have become enduring features of the children's literature landscape, including *Pollyanna* (1913), and a few are themselves still in print, often under the aegis of new kinds of religious publishing houses. For instance, a visit to the website of "A Life of Faith" (www.alof.com) offers the chance to read the Elsie Dinsmore books and buy associated dolls and accessories.

Despite the longevity of a small number of titles, the majority of the vast number of books that were produced by the Evangelical publishing houses are no longer remembered, and often for good reason. Writers such as Hesba Stretton and Martha Finley may have been good storytellers, but many of the societies' books were not well crafted, and some were as sanctimonious as the tracts Francis Carty found so reprehensible. But though they disappeared from the shelves of libraries and bookshops, their legacy lingers on in, for instance, the image of childhood



The chapter 1 heading in a 1892 edition of *The Wide, Wide World* by Elizabeth Wetherell (Susan Bogert Warner) (1819–1885).

they cultivated, and their marketing strategies, from elaborate covers to the identification of target audiences distinguished by age, class, and sex.

Romanticizing Working-class Childhood

Although the goal of the Evangelical publishing movement was to reach as many people as possible and to target those they deemed to be most in need—usually the uneducated and the poor—their children’s books and periodicals were largely aimed at middle-class readers and clearly reflected middle-class values. This accounts for the sanitizing of the lives and living conditions of the poor: the working-class characters readers get to know well inevitably belong to the “respectable” working class. In Victorian middle-class usage, “respectability” stood for a bundle of qualities such as honesty, hard work, steadiness, temperance, self-discipline, and cleanliness. These were values that publishers wanted to cultivate in their readers and so were necessary features of protagonists in children’s books, whatever their background. More importantly, if readers were to be inspired to help those from poor backgrounds, they needed to feel sympathetically toward them and to recognize the challenges of their situations. The key to this was making poor protagonists respectable. As explained, the rewards of respectability play out differently in British and American fiction. The restrictions on class mobility in Britain are overturned in American stories, where industrious poor children regularly ascend the social ladder. The opportunities afforded by the new worlds of North America and Australia were greater than those in Britain, where land was at a premium and social hierarchies and ideologies were deeply entrenched; nonetheless, the image of the deserving child in Evangelical fiction is similar in Britain and its former colonies. Although the taste for sentimental and pious texts was relatively short-lived, this image of deserving, ennobled, and restorative childhood in Evangelical fiction was probably the most enduring legacy of this stage in the development of writing for children.

Horatio Alger Jr.’s stories of Ragged Dick’s rise from poor bootblack to middle-class respectability in 1860s New York (top) gave only a hint of the terrible realities faced by orphaned street children in the same city (bottom).



FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why did nineteenth-century Evangelical publishers draw on a Romantic model of innocent childhood when earlier religious writing for children emphasized original sin?
2. Why might readers who rejected the messages in Evangelical children's books keep and display them?
3. What actions are expected of readers of British stories about the responsibility to help the poor? How does this compare to the messages in American texts about young characters who rise through their own efforts?

Suggested Readings

Nelson, Claudia. "The Unheimlich Maneuver: Uncanny Domesticity in the Urban Waif Tale." Chapter 8. *Youth Cultures: Texts, Images, and Identities*. Eds. Kerry Mallan and Sharyn Pearce. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003.

Other Books of Interest

Avery, Gillian. *Behold the Child: American Children and Their Books 1621–1922*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Cunningham, Hugh. *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500*. 2nd ed. Chapters 4–6. New York: Longman, 2005 (1995).

Davin, Anna. *Growing Up Poor: Home, School and Street in London 1870–1914*. London: Rivers Oram Press, 1996.

Lomax, Elaine. "Writing Other Lives: The Outcast Narratives of Hesba Stretton." Pp. 1–80. Bridget Carrington, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel. *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*. Lichfield, UK: Pied Piper, Ltd., 2008.

Thiel, Liz. "The Woman Known as Brenda." Pp. 147–208. Bridget Carrington, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel. *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*. Lichfield, UK: Pied Piper, Ltd., 2008.

Reynolds, Kimberley. *Girls Only? Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880–1910*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Websites of Interest

The Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia provides the text of Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (1861). —
<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/MayLond.html>

Lecture 7

Childhood and Modernity: The Early Twentieth Century

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Kimberley Reynolds's *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*, chapters 1 and 2.



Modernism as it was expressed in literature is associated with a specific set of preoccupations and innovations in writing:

- A movement away from realism—the attempt to create the impression that the world of the book represents real life.
- Rejection of large-scale stories about important issues (often referred to as “grand narratives”) in favor of stories about everyday life.
- Use of stream of consciousness and other ways of representing the workings and idiosyncrasies of an individual mind, including the interaction of current and remembered experience and the acknowledgement of bodily urges and sensations.
- Attempts to convey the experience of time passing.

Their combined effect was writing that replaced the emphasis on coherence and organic development that had previously dominated the novel, in particular with works that called attention to the fragmented and mundane nature of experience. Although modernist fiction often stressed the repetitious nature of adult life, childhood tended to be shown as vigorous and original in ways not unlike the Romantic constructions of childhood of the late eighteenth century. This privileging of childhood consciousness raises questions about why it became standard for writers and critics to regard modernism and children's literature as incompatible.

To understand how this view came about it is necessary to look back to the culture wars that were waged in the first half of the twentieth century. On one side were those—the modernists—who wanted to turn their back on tradition and embrace the new and increasingly mechanized and industrialized world and the opportunities it offered for reshaping society. On the other were those—the traditionalists—who wanted to return to the customs, values, and lifestyles of a preindustrial time, which they regarded as more civilized,

Ede und Unku is the story of working-class German boy Eddie, who makes friends with a German Sinti (gypsy) girl Unku. First published in 1931 by the socialist publishing firm Malik-Verlag, the work was banned by Hitler, and author Grete Weiskopf (1905–1966) left Berlin in 1933. The English translation of the story *Eddie and the Gipsy* was published in 1935 and was later made into a feature film.



more in tune with nature, and more aesthetically pleasing. Although our concern is with how these opposing views were manifested in literature for children, this can only be understood against the larger background.

The modernists were far from a unified group; often its members made strange bedfellows since the reasons why they were enthusiastic about developments in science and technology could be radically different politically. On the Left there were those who shared the views of Naomi Mitchison's (1897–1999) edited volume, *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents* (1932). This group wanted to use science and technology to improve the conditions for the masses and to facilitate communication between people in ways that would minimize nationalism and promote a sense of connection and collective responsibility. They believed in sharing resources and avoiding conflict. This group was antiwar and actively supported change at all levels in society. They were, for instance, in favor of reforms that would increase civil liberties for all, and so they were keen supporters of the Socialist programs in countries such as the Soviet Union. Those who aligned themselves with this world view believed that science and technology could help manage population growth, increase crop yields, devise systems for managing the global economy, and improve health and working conditions. They imagined a utopian future in which machines did the tedious, backbreaking work traditionally undertaken by peasants and laborers, in the process creating leisure time that could be used constructively. When liberated from mind-numbing jobs and wretched living conditions, the workers, they imagined, would be free to become educated and to enjoy high culture, thus breaking down any residual social divisions.



An iconic image of a steamfitter at work photographed by Lewis Hine for a series on labor, ca. 1920s.

Science and machinery were just as keenly supported by those at the opposite end of the political spectrum, though for different reasons. The most extreme voice on this side of the argument was that of the Futurists, Fascist sympathizers whose views, and particularly their antipathy for the past, were summed up in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto* of 1909, which asked, "What is the use of looking behind at the moment [referring to the contemporary moment in history enabled by science and technology] when we must open the mysterious shutters of the impossible [meaning the future promised by science and technology]?" Those on this side of the argument saw science and technology as offering ways to sanitize the population, eliminating, and suppressing the weak, including women. This was to be achieved largely through war ("the only cure for the world" according to

Marinetti's manifesto) and strong, nationalistic, patriarchal governments.

Opposing both liberal and Fascist enthusiasm for the scientific and technological developments that were associated with modernity at the end of the last century was the conservative view that modernity in all its forms, not least that of literary modernism, was an abomination that was destroying all that was beautiful and admirable in culture. The views of this camp were summed up in what constitutes an unofficial manifesto, F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson's *Culture and Environment* (1933). The book charges the mentality associated with modernity, and particularly mechanization, both with destroying "the old ways of life" and, because of the rapid change engendered by mechanization, "preventing the growth of the new." Instead of seeing machines and technology as liberating humans from hard, uncomfortable, and monotonous work, Leavis and Thompson saw them as creating an environment in which humans would be enfeebled. Using arguments derived from Darwin's theories about the evolution of species, they maintained that as humans adapted to jobs that required them to do repetitive work in the service of machines as, for instance, many were doing on factory assembly lines, the race would degenerate. Leavis and Thompson saw symptoms of incipient degeneration in the ugliness of the suburbs and the effects of industrialization on the landscape. Since they admitted that the genie of mechanization could not be put back in the bottle of tradition, however, they sought ways to preserve the values, attitudes, and skills of the past. Literature was their preservative of choice.

The views of Leavis and Thompson are clearly reflected in the writing of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, both of whose fantasies draw on ancient literary traditions and valorize old forms of knowledge, connection to the land, and craftsmanship. Instead of imagining dystopian alternatives to the utopianism of the Left, they applied their minds to constructing alternative worlds in which aspects of the past they valued survived against increasingly menacing odds. In doing so they can be seen as symptomatic of the divisions that were caught up in the next stage in the twentieth-century culture wars, which was set in motion in 1959 when C.P. Snow, who was both a novelist and a scientist, gave his influential lecture on what he called "The Two Cultures." Snow argued that during the first half of the twentieth century the arts and sciences had become separated in ways they had never been in the past, and that this worked against solving the problems that faced the world. Although he does not name them, Tolkien and

Workers attach tires to General Motors vehicles in a Detroit assembly plant, 1922.



© Frank August papers/Bensky Historical Library/University of Michigan.

Lewis typified the trend he was denouncing, since in the past, intellectuals of their magnitude would have seen it as vital to stay abreast of—and be interested in—developments in science and technology. They, by contrast, viewed science with suspicion and hostility.

The consequences of the arts-science separation on recent writing for the young is discussed in more detail in lecture 13; now it is necessary to think about how this background affected attitudes to the relationship between modernism and children's literature during the last century. The word "modernism" is not only cognate with modernity, but at the start of the twentieth century it was inextricably associated in the public consciousness with the movement against the past that Leavis, Thompson, Tolkien, and Lewis found so damaging. Writer Isaac Bashevis Singer once said, "I came to the child because I see in him the last refuge from a literature gone berserk and ready for suicide." As the quote makes clear, those who sought to retreat from modernism were often attracted to children's literature, with its strong emphasis on such traditional elements as plot and character. As literary modernism increasingly dominated high culture and came to be identified with writers who were regarded as intellectually demanding and inclined to write openly about such "adult" topics as sex and sexuality, a perception grew up that children's literature consciously resisted modernism. This in turn led to a tendency for children's writers to construct children as the repositories of the literary tradition that some regarded as under threat, and to identify children's literature as the link back to earlier ways of writing.

This false history is in the process of being contested and corrected as children's literature studies develops and more scholars begin to work through archives and read beyond the books that have for long dominated histories of children's literature. Juliet Dusinberre's *Alice to the Lighthouse* (1987) was among the first studies to show that far from being isolated from modernism, children's literature was deeply implicated in bringing it into being. The chapters in *Radical Children's Literature* that are recommended as preparatory reading for this lecture develop Dusinberre's argument and brings it up to date by looking at the specific interaction between modernist writers and children's literature. Modernism was, however, more than a series of experiments in writing designed to show that the novel could, for instance, convey a sense of the individual mind as well as the great panoramas typical of its eighteenth and nineteenth-century manifestations. As this topic shows, modernism was also a political response to the past and an attitude toward the future that took a variety of forms, almost all of which can be found in writing for children. Collections such as Julia Mickenberg and Phil Nel's *Tales for Little Rebels* (2008) are helping to recover the modernist politics and aesthetics of writing for children in the twentieth century and encouraging scholars to rethink assumptions to provide a broader and more accurate history of twentieth-century children's literature.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How can a picturebook display modernist concerns?
2. Are telling a good story and experimenting with how a story is told mutually exclusive?
3. What is the relationship between the Romantic and the modernist images of childhood?

Suggested Readings

Reynolds, Kimberley. *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Other Books of Interest

Dusinberre, Juliet. *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999 (1987).

Leavis, Frank R., and Denys Thompson. *Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1964 (1933).

Mickenberg, Julia L. *Learning from the Left: Children's Literature, the Cold War, and Radical Politics in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2006.

Mickenberg, Julia L., and Phil Nel, eds. *Tales for Little Rebels: A Collection of Radical Children's Literature*. New York: New York University Press, 2010.

Rose, Jacqueline. *The Case of Peter Pan, or, The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992 (1984).

Websites of Interest

The *Art and Daily Life: Modernism in the Picture Book* website exhibit (sponsored by the International Library of Children's Literature [Japan]) provides international examples of some of the many important picture books produced in the short period between the end of World War I and the outbreak of World War II. The collection includes *Men at Work* (1931) by photographer Lewis W. Hine.—

http://www.kodomo.go.jp/gallery/modernism/index_e.html

(Note: requires Adobe™ Shockwave Player software)

Lecture 8

Fantastic Childhoods I: Encounters with the Self

The Suggested Readings for this lecture are Margaret Rustin and Michael Rustin's *Narratives of Love and Loss: Studies in Modern Children's Fiction*, chapters 1, 2, and 8, and J.R.R. Tolkien's "On Fairy Stories" in *Tree and Leaf*.



Lecture 4 traced the battle waged by nineteenth-century writers and illustrators to allow children to have access to imaginative stories; particularly stories in which magical, supernatural, or otherwise impossible things happen. Although by the turn of the twentieth century a number of original fantasy stories and several collections of folk and fairy tales had been published to some acclaim, suspicion of fantasy as a mode continued. Over time the attack of the antifantasy lobby shifted from complaints that such stories were confusing for children who, having read them, might expect to find such things as giants and fairies in the real world, to the charge that they were escapist—a means of running away from reality associated with an indolent or cowardly shirking of responsibility. These are prejudices that in 1939 J.R.R. Tolkien (1892–1973), then Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford University, robustly refuted in a lecture (subsequently published) called “On Fairy Stories.”

Tolkien's sustained defense of those who write and read what he called fairy stories begins by looking at fairies and elves and the other kinds of characters and associated plots likely to be found in folk and fairy tales, but he quickly broadens his argument to encompass the kinds of tales that it is now more usual to refer to as fantasy. These tales are set in what Tolkien terms the Secondary World of the story as distinct from the Primary World of readers' everyday reality. Although he identifies a special kind of happy ending particular to fantasy: what he calls the “eucatastrophe” or joyous turn of events at the end of the story, the power of fantasy endings comes from the real possibility of failure and disappointment. The conviction that both triumph and catastrophe are possible arises from the completeness with which the Secondary World is realized. One sign of writers' efforts to imagine new worlds in detail is the frequency with which illustrated maps are included in fantasy fictions, including Tolkien's.



J.R.R. Tolkien, ca. 1950s.

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Since the Secondary World is the creation of the writer, Tolkien argued, the feat of conjuring it into being makes writing fantasy more difficult than writing works that are based in reality. By Tolkien's measure, fantasy is "the most nearly pure form of Art," and far from being escapist for either writer or reader, it is highly demanding. He regarded the demands made on writers as particularly challenging; like a good craftsman, he maintained, the storyteller must make something beautiful and new from the raw materials of story. As both a committed writer of fantasy stories, including *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* sequence, and an academic who studied romances, myths, sagas, and legends in which fantastic events regularly occur, Tolkien had personal and professional reasons for wanting fantasy to be taken seriously. He and fellow members of the group of Oxford dons who called themselves the Inklings were interested in the merits and attributes of fantasy as set out in "On Fairy Stories." Their members included another highly regarded writer of juvenile fantasy, C.S. Lewis (1898–1963).

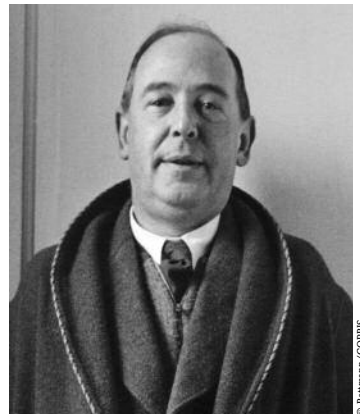
For students of children's literature, Tolkien's essay is of interest as the first sustained attempt to define and defend fantasy writing and its relationship to child readers, for fantasy is a significant genre within children's writing that, despite periodic attempts to discredit it, has resulted in some indisputably fine books and picture books. "On Fairy Stories" is also interesting because, as part of his defense, Tolkien rejects both the assumption that fantasy and childhood naturally go together, and the cult of childhood. "Children," he writes, "are meant to grow up, and not to become Peter Pans. Not to lose innocence and wonder, but to proceed on the appointed journey." For Tolkien, those who, like himself, enjoy well-crafted fantasy as adults show that they have retained innocence and the capacity to wonder without becoming infantilized, while child readers of fantasy encounter profound truths told in ways that they can understand and which will stay with them for life.

C.S. Lewis, ca. 1950s.



A map of Middle-earth from J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, which he began writing in 1937 and was published in 1954–55.

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Fantasy, then, provides a meeting point for child and adult intellects, making it the quintessence of children's literature. As C.S. Lewis put it in "On Three Ways of Writing for Children" (1966), "a children's story that is only enjoyed by children is a bad children's story."

Although Lewis does not mention fantasy specifically, that is what he wrote for children and his reasons for writing were very like those of George MacDonald (1824–1905): to wake up and refresh aspects of the mind (particularly those associated with religion) stifled by the habits and regimes of daily life. Like MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950–56) offers Christian allegories designed to help children understand key events and ideas contained in the Bible, but Lewis's work shares with Tolkien's a use of fantasy disguise to talk about the war years and to express his concerns about modern culture. Tolkien had served in the trenches in the First World War and was the sole survivor

of a close circle of friends. He associated many of the traumas of the First World War with the fact that it was the first highly mechanized war that saw the introduction of machine guns, tanks, and bomber aircraft. There is a strong sense in *The Hobbit*, published between World Wars I and II, of turning away from the present to an earlier, preindustrial time.

The Shires of Hobbiton are an "olde worlde" version of England where ordinary men (there are some female hobbits but the action concentrates almost entirely

around the doings of males) value simple comforts while also showing themselves capable of great courage, both moral and physical. The later *Lord of the Rings* cycle makes less subtle references to the horrors of mechanized war and the ugliness caused by industrialization. It also anticipates the Second World War and, as indicated by the map of Middle-earth Tolkien provides and which resembles modern Europe (without Italy), points to a threat from the East (Germany) where a regimented and industrialized force is being prepared for battle on an industrial scale.

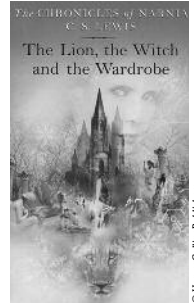
The Hobbit was well received critically, but it was not until the 1960s, when fantasy became both more respected and an area of academic scrutiny, that Tolkien's work achieved popular recognition. By contrast, C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, the first book in the Narnia chronicles, was enthusiastically received from the start. Its use of fantasy to convey both religious instruction and psychological insight spoke to the interests and tastes of post-World War II society. Lewis's Christian allegory is obvious to most adult readers, though many children fail to notice even the similarities between the familiar story of Christ's passion and the death and resurrection



Stretcher bearers on Thiepval Ridge, in 1916; a battle in which J.R.R. Tolkien participated.

of Aslan, never mind the more esoteric references to Revelations in *The Last Battle*. Lewis's understanding of children's psyches is more subtly embedded than his theology; this becomes obvious when examining the setting that initiates the *Chronicles*. Although writing for children growing up after World War II, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* clearly references the war, for the story is set during the London blitz.

The four Pevensie children, Lucy, Edmund, Susan, and Peter, discover Narnia when they have been evacuated to a large house in the country to escape the bombing. The book makes little of this fact, perhaps because in the 1950s memories of the war were sufficiently recent for it to be understood (the 2005 film, directed by Andrew Adamson, by contrast, spends considerable time and money establishing this context). The fact that they have been evacuated means that the young Pevensies are not only separated from their parents and having to adjust to an unfamiliar environment that is unaccustomed to children, but they have also left their parents in a world they know to be dangerous. Separation, anxiety, and disruption of routine all suggest why the children might need the comfort and opportunities for growth and resolution provided by the collective fantasy of Narnia. There they enact everything from the need to triumph over evil to Oedipal and sibling rivalries, and they prepare for growing up by assuming roles as kings and queens in Narnia. In this way the *Chronicles of Narnia* offers all the aspects of fairy stories that Tolkien identifies in "On Fairy Stories": fantasy, recovery, escape, and consolation.



The way both Tolkien and Lewis use the atmosphere and conflicts of war in their fantasies illustrates well Tolkien's point that fantasy is not about escaping the world but about dealing with its challenges in new ways. No matter how strange they may at first seem, fantasy worlds are always dependent upon consensus reality: the period of "time out" in the fantasy world and the disguises it employs provide both characters and readers with new ways of thinking about and resolving problems. Although fantasy is designed to stimulate new ways of thinking and usually critiques some aspects of reality and speculates about possible alternatives, its parasitical relationship with reality inevitably results in its reproducing many areas of daily life that are taken for granted and so go unremarked. *The Chronicles of Narnia*, for instance, is one of many twentieth-century fantasies that have been criticized for their tendency to reproduce traditional gender relations, privileging males and demonizing females. On the whole, however, the quality of the writing, the classical frame of reference, and its psychological insights allowed Lewis's series to help establish fantasy as a leading genre for children and adolescents.

Children's literature in the middle twentieth century clearly aligned itself with child psychology, and fantasy fiction became committed to teaching

children about themselves. In some ways it could be seen as just as didactic as earlier writing for children, though the lessons were about the self rather than grounded in facts about world trade, geography, the natural sciences, and so on. A particular benefit of juvenile fantasy was that it allowed characters and readers to deal with issues and ideas outside of the known world, and so some subjects that have generally been held as too disturbing for young readers (among them death, sex, and ambiguity) could be explored. The conscious use of children's literature as vicarious experience and emotional education is evident in Catherine Storr's (1913–2001) *Marianne Dreams* (1958). This tendency continues as seen in the work of Neil Gaiman (b. 1960), whose novel *Coraline* (2002) systematically references Sigmund Freud's essay "The Uncanny." The relationship between the two texts is characteristic of an ongoing interest by children's writers in the internal worlds of children. Gaiman adds a gothic twist to an aspect of the uncanny that is commonly found in children's literature: the double or doppelgänger. The lecture discusses the positive Jungian interpretation of the double: that a mirror image of the self who is the opposite sex is completing and balancing. Gaiman, however, aligns himself with Freud and a tradition in children's literature that goes back at least as far as Carroll's *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* to show the double as threatening and problematic.



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The *Other Mother*
by Dave McKean
from Neil Gaiman's
Coraline (2002).

Like Alice, Coraline finds herself in a Secondary World that is a mirror image of her own. There the doubles are hostile and life-threatening, which reveals Gaiman's adult preoccupations, for Freud interprets the double differently for children. In the young, he says, the double is equivalent to an insurance policy: if one of you is lost, there is another to fill the gap. For adults, however, Freud saw the double as the "uncanny harbinger of death," and in *Coraline*, as in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, death and death jokes hover around the action of the text. Coraline is a survivor, but the story explores not only her anger at her parents for uprooting her before she starts at a new school but also as having to come to terms with the fact that they will eventually die. Her sense of responsibility is dramatized in her rescue of her parents from their confinement by the Other Mother. Its concerns with child-parent relationships and its recognition that theoretical understanding does not obviate the necessity of going through the traumas of separation make *Coraline* a paradigm of twenty-first-century fantasy fiction. Its roots, however, lie in traditional stories that were equally dependent on fantasy settings and disguises, equally addressed to adults and children, and equally concerned with strategies for personal growth.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How is the relationship between Primary and Secondary Worlds resolved in any two post-1950 children's fantasies? Does the ending imply that the child characters successfully move closer to maturity?
2. Who are the protagonists of these two fantasies? What sex are they? Do the fantasies challenge or confirm traditional ideas about active, independent masculinity and passive, dependent femininity?

Suggested Readings

Rustin, Margaret, and Michael Rustin. *Narratives of Love and Loss: Studies in Modern Children's Fiction*. Rev. ed. London: Karnac Books, 2002 (1988).

Tolkien, J.R.R. "On Fairy Stories." *Tree and Leaf*. Oxford: Tolkien Estate Ltd./HarperCollinsPublishers, 2001 (1964).

Other Books of Interest

Garth, John. *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth*. Orlando: Harcourt/Mariner Books, 2005.

Hunt, Peter, and Millicent Lenz. *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Lewis, C.S. "On Three Ways of Writing for Children." *On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature*. Ed. Walter Hooper. Orlando: Harcourt/Mariner Books, 2002 (1966).

Walsh, Jill Paton. "The Rainbow Surface." Eds. Margaret Meek, Aidan Warlow, and Griselda Barton. *The Cool Web: The Pattern of Children's Reading*. Pp. 192–95. London: The Bodley Head, 1977.

Articles of Interest

Gooding, Richard. "'Something Very Old and Very Slow': *Coraline*, Uncanniness and Narrative Form." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*. Vol. 33, no. 4, Winter 2008, pp. 390–407.

Parsons, Elizabeth, Naarah Sawers, and Kate McNally. "The Other Mother: Neil Gaiman's Postfeminist Fairytale." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*. Vol. 33, no. 4, Winter 2008, pp. 371–89.

Websites of Interest

1. The University of Michigan features Sigmund Freud's essay "The Uncanny" (1919) in three parts. — <http://people.emich.edu/acoykenda/uncanny1.htm>
2. Film footage taken during the Battle of the Somme in 1916. — <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Tv5gBa9DQs3>

Lecture 9

Fantastic Childhoods II: Children Save the World

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is *Children's Literature: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*, edited by Heather Montgomery and Nicola J. Watson, sections 7, 9, and 10, pp. 203–226 and 254–310.



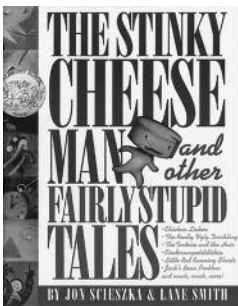
From time to time critics experiment with ways of breaking down stories to their basic elements in an attempt to understand how narrative works. Vladimir Propp's *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), for instance, concludes that all fairy tales are created from thirty-one core functions. Just as letters in the alphabet can be combined to make millions of words, so, Propp argues, the different functions can be put together in new ways to make different stories. Ultimately, however, the functions are constant. More recently, Christopher Booker's *The Seven Basic Plots* (2004) claims that the whole of Western literature can be reduced to seven plots: overcoming the monster, rags to riches, the quest, voyage and return, comedy, tragedy, and rebirth. The most useful understanding to emerge from such studies is that all writing is related; writers inevitably draw on the stories they have read, heard, and seen. At different times in history this recognition has been understood differently. In the Middle Ages, for instance, emphasis was not on originality, and building stories from pieces of other stories was an accepted, unproblematic part of storytelling. The development of mechanical print both fixed stories and established a sense of authorship that was to some degree ownership, even though many of the earliest books were also retellings of traditional tales. Over the centuries increasing attention has been given to the importance of individual voices and new stories: one meaning of the word “novel,” for instance, is “new and unusual.” By the end of the nineteenth century writers began to feel oppressed by the weight of tradition: there was a perception that modern writing was producing less powerful versions of the same old stories and that all writers were doing was recycling words and repositioning the components of stories. Everything, it seemed, had already been written. In 1966, however, the Bulgarian-born philosopher, writer, and critic Julia Kristeva (b. 1941) put forward the theory of intertextuality to describe the way texts are connected and interrelated. Instead of thinking of literary tradition as having strong roots but weak growth, she compared writing to weaving, in which every thread depends on all the others in a relationship between equals.

Intertextuality recognizes many different kinds of texts, including, for example, films, advertisements, music, political speeches, and legal documents, and holds that each can be woven into other texts. Thinking intertextually changed assumptions about the relationship between texts from the past,

present, and future, primarily by adjusting thinking about the way earlier works function when they are incorporated in new texts. Established critical terms such as “quotation,” “allusion,” “borrowing,” and “parody” tend to privilege earlier texts by treating them as touchstones. They also overlook the extent to which texts may share elements unconsciously as well as through deliberate references and do not acknowledge what readers bring to texts from their own reading histories.

Intertextuality generated a vocabulary that reflected its understanding of textual interdependence. For instance, the term “pre-text” refers to existing texts and genres that are retold in new texts. *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is a pre-text for *Little Women*, since Louisa May Alcott (1832–1888) structures her book around John Bunyan’s, replaying its themes and re-creating its settings to make them more immediately relevant to her own day. Alcott tried to maintain the same tone as Bunyan, but in *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* (1992), Jon Scieszka (b. 1954) and Lane Smith (b. 1959) inject a new tone in both words and images as they retell a selection of fairy tales. In their picturebook, the Little Red Hen is a harridan, while the princess sleeps on a bowling ball rather than a pea, which changes the meaning of the tale despite the fact that what Propp would have called its functions are still in place.

The term “intertext” refers to the wide range of works that can be recognized as having contributed to the composition of a new text through the use of such elements as genre conventions, character types, stylistic devices, and direct quotation. Much of the intertextuality in J.K. Rowling’s (b. 1965) *Harry Potter* books comes from her use of genre conventions, including battles between good and evil wizards associated with high fantasy, the lessons and games familiar from school stories, and the idea of a child chosen to save the world found in every Messiah story. “Meta-textual” is the term used when a text refers to itself, perhaps by referring to criticism that has been written about it or by acknowledging other kinds of responses to a text or its author’s work. As well as making use of pre-texts,



Well, as it turned out, he was just a really ugly duckling. And he grew up to be just a really ugly duck. The End.



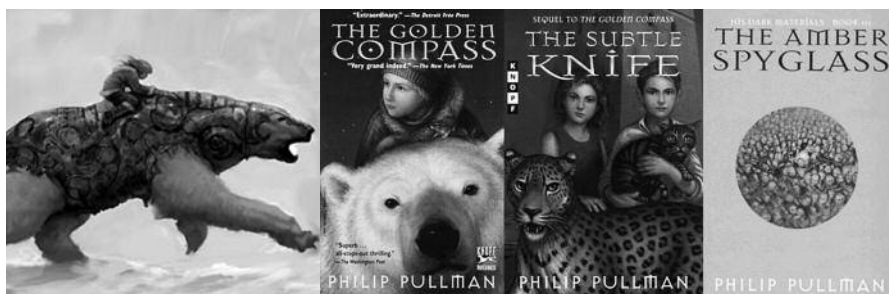
For those familiar with the classic fairy tale “The Ugly Duckling” the story takes an unexpected turn at the end, as told by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith in *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*.

The Stinky Cheese Man is meta-textual since it both refers to the original tales and to its own status as a book. “Intra-textual” refers to connections between a single writer’s work. Diana Wynne Jones (1934–2011) often made intra-textual links between her books as part of her energetically intertextual approach to writing. In *The Magicians of Caprona*, for example, she uses *Romeo and Juliet* as a pre-text and makes intra-textual references to her own books about a character known as the Chrestomanci.

Although all the examples given above come from children’s books, when she was developing her ideas about intertextuality, Julia Kristeva did not take children’s literature into account. Doing so adds an interesting new dimension to the theory since children are at an early stage in their reading careers and so are likely to be familiar with fewer literary texts than most adults. Additionally, changes in culture mean that it cannot be taken for granted that children encounter a range of traditional texts—folk and fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and legends—in their early years. Many will meet Disney’s versions of fairy tales or classic texts such as *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan* before they read Carroll’s and Barrie’s texts. This overturns the chronological relationship between the texts, but in terms of the intertextual dynamic it is unimportant which text is read first.

Intertextuality in *His Dark Materials*

The examples in this lecture show that many contemporary children’s writers are deliberately intertextual in their approach to writing. In the acknowledgements to *The Amber Spyglass* (2000), Philip Pullman (b. 1946) writes, “I have stolen ideas from every book I have ever read.” The very sentence “I have stolen ideas . . .” sets up an intertextual relationship between *His Dark Materials* trilogy and the Prometheus legend (in which the god Prometheus steals fire, representing forbidden knowledge, from Zeus and gives it to humans), encouraging readers to think of Lyra, Will, and Lord Asriel as similar self-sacrificing champions of mankind. As his acknowledgements suggest, Pullman wants readers to realize that the trilogy depends on a series of intertextual relationships; looking at how these contribute to *His Dark Materials* demonstrates how intertextuality may enrich writing for children.



The fighting bear (left) and covers of the U.S. releases of Pullman’s *His Dark Materials*.

Pullman uses a vast number of earlier works as building blocks for the three novels so, for instance, when in *The Amber Spyglass* Will and Lyra descend to the Land of the Dead to release the souls that are trapped there, he is referencing the genre of katabasis stories from ancient literature in which hero figures (including Christ) descend to the underworld. Less obviously, the names that he gives some of Lyra's companions are based on those of famous British explorers, opening up the genre of exploration-adventure tale. In addition to general story types, Pullman specifically acknowledges three works that are woven into the textual fabric of *His Dark Materials*: the German writer, Heinrich von Kleist's (1777–1812) *On the Marionette Theatre* (1810), John Milton's (1608–1674) *Paradise Lost* (1667), and the works of William Blake (1757–1827). Child readers of Pullman's trilogy are likely to encounter at least the names of Milton and Blake in later life, and having read *His Dark Materials*, a set of associations will be in place and affect how they think of these poets, whether or not they are aware of this.

The intertextual relationships with these three sources are linked to Pullman's exploration of the meaning of the Fall. In recasting this from an event that cursed humankind to an act of liberation, he starts from *Paradise Lost* and the recognition that Satan the rebel angel is the most attractive and interesting figure in Milton's epic. The relationship between his books and *Paradise Lost* is explicitly signalled in various ways, not least in the title, which comes from Book II, lines 910–919:

Into this wilde Abyss,
 The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,
 Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mixt
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th'Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more Worlds,
 Into this wild Abyss the warie fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
 Pondering his Voyage. . . .



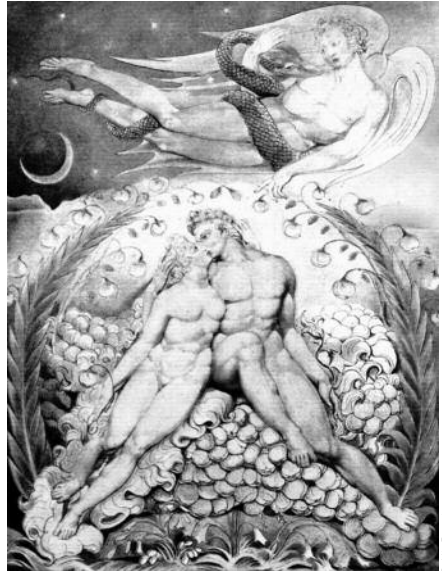
The Fall of Lucifer
 by Gustave Doré, 1866
 Illustration for John
 Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Here it is also possible both to see the inspiration for such central ideas in the trilogy as journeys between multiple worlds and the questioning of the "Almighty" (who in Pullman becomes the Authority), whose creation is defined by conflict.

Although Pullman says he set out to retell *Paradise Lost*, he primarily does so at the level of themes and genre (for instance, his trilogy, like Milton's poem, is an epic). His use of von Kleist's short piece is more direct, since that story features a fighting bear whose skill comes from a lack of self-consciousness that is a product of innocence, and in Iorek Byrnison, Pullman

makes a similar bear one of his central characters. Significantly, however, *On the Marionette Theatre* ends by explaining that in order for humans to acquire the bear's lack of self-consciousness, "We must eat again of the tree of knowledge." In its emphasis on humans' need for knowledge to progress, von Kleist's story feeds into Pullman's revised version of the Fall.

Intertextual references to the work of William Blake are particularly important to understanding the trilogy. Blake's emphasis on the importance of moving from innocence to experience underpins Pullman's emphasis on the fact that acquiring experience is a necessary and valuable part of growing up. Where many of the best-known children's books—including *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, and *The Chronicles of Narnia*—depict growing up as the loss of innocence and so the end of the golden age of childhood, *His Dark Materials* proclaims that to survive and become a moral, responsible adult, capable of functioning in the world and looking after others is the ultimate goal of being human. This is the task set for Will and Lyra, who as the main child characters serve as role models for younger readers. Like William Blake, Pullman shows readers that life can't tolerate perpetual innocence and that experience need not be diminution. The trilogy encourages readers to embrace the challenges that lie ahead and be excited by the opportunities they have to make an impact on the world. To do this it builds on ideas and ways of expressing them found in key intertexts; in time, for some readers, *His Dark Materials* will in turn become an intertext for future readings of Milton, Blake, and many other major works from our literary heritage.



Satan with Adam and Eve (Book IV)
by William Blake, 1808

*Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches*

Illustration for John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. If a reader of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* has never read *Paradise Lost*, is there still an intertextual relationship between the two texts?
2. What does a child messiah character bring to a story that an adult superhero does not?
3. How can a text have an intertextual relationship with a work that has not yet been written?
4. What is the difference between intertextuality and plagiarism?

Suggested Readings

Montgomery, Heather, and Nicola J. Watson, eds. *Children's Literature: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Other Books of Interest

Blake, Andrew. *The Irresistible Rise of Harry Potter*. New York: Verso, 2002.

Hunt, Peter, and Millicent Lenz. *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Lenz, Millicent, and Carole Scott, eds. *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005.

Stephens, John. *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*. Chapter 3. London: Longman Publishing Group, 1995.

Articles of Interest

Chowdhury, Radhiah. "A Chosen Sacrifice: The Doomed Destiny of the Child Messiah in Late Twentieth-century Children's Fantasy." *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature*. Vol. 16, issue 2, December 2006, pp. 107–11.

Websites of Interest

1. The *Southern Cross Review* website features Heinrich von Kleist's short story, "On the Marionette Theatre," translated by Idris Parry. — <http://southerncrossreview.org/9/kleist.htm>
2. The University of Milan provides a pdf of excerpts from Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), translation ©1968 by The American Folklore Society and Indiana University. — <http://homes.dico.unimi.it/~alberti/Mm10/doc/propp.pdf>

Lecture 10

The Changing Child in the Changing Family

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nicholas Tucker and Nikki Gamble's *Family Fictions*.



Books about families constitute one of the largest areas of publishing for children. Although the family story is one of the most well-developed genres of children's literature, many of the children's books in which families and individual family members play important roles are not family stories. For example, in Maurice Sendak's (b. 1928) *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963), the mother is a significant figure, but she is never seen and no other family members are mentioned. Similarly, E.B. White's (1899–1985) *Charlotte's Web* (1952) begins in Fern's home, and Fern's family life punctuates the action, but the real focus is on events in the barn. To be classified as a family story, a book will take family life as its focus, usually looking at what happens to different children in a family, and often showing how the central family is made stronger by managing a time of upheaval or crisis together. Beyond the literary conventions of family stories, however, considerable attention has been given to studying how children's books represent children's lives and roles as members of families. This interest reflects the fact that children's literature became a recognized part of academic study in the 1960s and 1970s, when ideas about the family put forward by the French historian, Philippe Ariès (1914–1984), were particularly influential.

Ariès specialized in the history of the family and childhood. In his best-known work, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (1960), he argued that before the seventeenth century there was no concept of childhood as we know it. Instead, children were regarded as miniature adults—no thought, he claimed, was given to their different abilities, interests, needs, or understandings. Ariès's work was based on a variety of sources, visual and textual, not all of which should have been taken as documentary evidence. For instance, he draws general conclusions about childhood based on evidence that is almost entirely about exceptional children—usually the Christ child and children of the aristocracy. The fact that they are often shown in the dress and posture of adults says more about their



A Little Pretty Pocket-Book (John Newbery, 1744) was the type of family book cited by Philippe Ariès in explaining how early children's literature regarded children as "miniature adults."

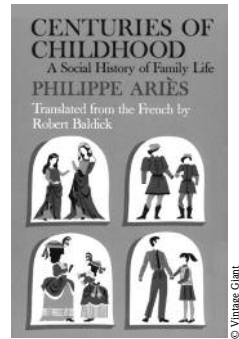
symbolic status than it does about childhood. But a more important reason why Ariès misinterprets the images is because he is looking for the same ways of expressing love between parents and children that were used in the twentieth century.

As the first impact of Ariès's theories wore off, scholars began to ask more questions about the childhoods represented in children's books. They also looked at evidence beyond the printed text—the tears and stains, the coloring-in, and writing on pages, accounts about what children were reading in their own and their parents' diaries and journals, sales ledgers detailing which books children were buying for themselves, and paintings showing children using their books (not only reading them but standing on them or playing with them or tossing them under the furniture). A vast array of material is now used in an attempt to understand what children in the past thought about the books they owned.

Ariès's recognition that childhood is not regarded in the same way in all cultures and that ideas about children and childhood have changed over time in line with changing cultural attitudes and expectations stimulated children's literature scholars to ask new questions about the information provided in children's texts and the images they contain. Instead of regarding children's books as sources of information about the real lives of children, images of childhood in children's books began to be considered as constructions: created images that were both shaped by and attempting to shape thinking about children, childhood, and, in this case, the families that provided one of their customary contexts. This aspect of Ariès's work continues to inspire research and thinking, but some of his conclusions had a less enduring and useful effect; especially with regard to how early writing for children was read. Two of his theories in particular had a less beneficial effect on how children's texts of the past were understood. The first was his belief that the differences between children and adults were not well understood or acknowledged before the seventeenth century, meaning that, as he saw it, children were treated as miniature adults. The second was that when families were large and infant mortality high there was little emotional investment in parent-child relationships.

The Problem of Presentism

As children's literature studies were developing in the 1960s and 1970s, Ariès's assumptions about childhood and families colored how works such as John Newbery's books, Maria Edgeworth's *The Parent's Assistant* (1796), and Mrs. Sherwood's *The Fairchild Family* (1818) were read. So, for instance, scholars emphasized the differences between how children in the twentieth century and those in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries



were addressed and represented in children's literature, suggesting that earlier writers display little that could be recognized as an understanding of childhood. As well as pointing to what they regarded as overly complex and ornate use of language, which was assumed to be unlikely to appeal to children, they also highlighted aspects of early texts that to modern eyes may seem strange and even repugnant, such as their religiosity, detailed descriptions of the deaths of martyrs, and elaborate descriptions of children's punishments. Such "presentist" assumptions (the tendency to make unexamined assumptions about the past on the basis of current ways of thinking) about what is suitable for and enjoyed by children resulted in virtually everything published before what has come to be called the first "Golden Age" of children's literature (usually defined as starting with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and ending with *The House at Pooh Corner*) being dismissed as dull, didactic, and sometimes disturbing for young readers.

Ariès's influence held sway for a quarter of a century, but in the 1980s new ways of thinking about history led to a reappraisal of the earlier material. Historians of childhood had found considerable evidence in the kind of personal documents that Ariès had not considered (such as letters, diaries, and journals) to show that there have always been loving parents and childish children. As this lecture suggests—and as we saw in the lectures that began this course—reading texts without the assumptions put forward by Ariès often reveals earlier texts to be more child-friendly than was previously thought. The books themselves are in fact working hard to promote loving and interested parenting, precisely because they recognize that this is what children need.

Fantasies of Family

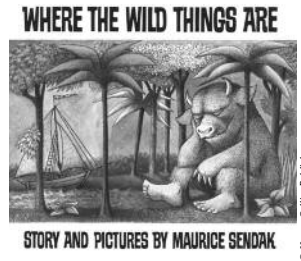
Ideas about what children need change as regularly as ideas about childhood, but at least since the eighteenth century, one of the things children's literature has suggested is that children need families. The extent to which the idea of the family in children's literature was limited to an unrepresentative white, middle-class, and patriarchal "ideal" came to prominence in the 1970s, a time when many questions about the representation of different groups in society were being asked. The normative model of the family reflected the views of the dominant groups in society and is a good example of how children's literature is implicated in disseminating ideologies. In this case, the unexamined assumption of writers, illustrators, and publishers that was being perpetuated was that an important function of children's books is to explain to children how the world *ought* to work, not how it *does* work. Instead of showing a range of different kinds of families, then, children's literature offered a fictional ideal designed to teach young children what families are, how they should function, how family members ought to treat each other, and where children fit in them. According

to the majority of the children's books published before the 1970s, the ideal family was not only heterosexual, white, and middle-class, it was also happy, loving, and composed of parents and children who liked each other and enjoyed spending time together. This image of the family was very much at odds with thinking about the family being developed by figures such as the social anthropologist Edmund Leach (1910–1989) and the psychiatrist R.D. Laing (1927–1989).

Rethinking the family

From their different perspectives, both Leach and Laing were highly critical of the nuclear family, seeing it as inward looking, emotionally stressful, alienated from community, and consequently damaging to family members. Leach blamed the family for many of the ills of society, including increases in violent behavior, while Laing suggested that families prevent individuals from using their talents and being fulfilled, sometimes resulting in mental illness. These new ways of thinking about the family were quickly reflected in children's literature, principally in the new area of writing for teenagers that is the subject of the next two lectures. Even picture books such as *Where the Wild Things Are*, Janet and Allan Ahlberg's *Bye Bye Baby* (1989), and, more recently, Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean's *The Wolves in the Walls* (2003), however, acknowledge the tensions and ambivalences that often lurk beneath the surface of even strong and successful families. While the majority of books continue to tell children happy stories about traditional nuclear families, there are also many that acknowledge that attitudes to the family are changing again, and that these changes are not just present in writing for children but also learned from them.

One of the most popular creators of picturebooks about changing families is Lauren Child. Her books about brother and sister Charlie and Lola and those about Clarice Bean explore relationships between members of families in ways that show the everyday stresses and strains on families of modern life. In Child's books, parents are not solely dedicated to raising their children but are shown to be busy with careers, hobbies and their own lives. Siblings do not always get on; teenagers are moody and houses can seem overcrowded. The colorful, multilayered and multimedia nature of Child's illustrations creates a sense of dynamism and movement that also blurs reality and fantasy in ways that reflect children's imaginations and play. Importantly, Child's picturebooks end with families coming together again and enjoying each other's company. These families may be busy and



Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* has been adapted into other media several times, including an animated short in 1973 (with an updated version in 1988 on its 25th anniversary), a 1980 opera, and, in 2009, a live-action feature film adaptation. Sales topped nineteen million copies worldwide in 2008.

prone to expressing their feelings in unchecked ways, but they are ultimately happy, creative, and secure in their relationships.

Perhaps the most obvious change from family life in the picturebooks of Lauren Child as compared with earlier children's books is the extent to which children are confined to the home and recreation takes place in front of a screen. When Clarice does go outside, it is usually to school or into a small walled garden where she can be easily observed. The sense of freedom experienced when children venture into new territories and play at being Swallows and Amazons has, for most children, been curtailed by fears of "stranger danger." "Adventures" now tend to take place in purpose-built environments such as theme parks or activity centers. The fact that these need to be organized and paid for combined with the dependence on screened narratives and virtual experiences may be encouraging children to equate fun, excitement, and exploration with consumption. This is an idea explored by Jack Zipes in *Sticks and Stones: The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter* (2001).

Zipes, who has spent a long career studying children's literature, expresses the concern that at the start of the twenty-first century, children identify more as consumers than as family members. There is some evidence of this in children's books: Francesca Lia Block's (b. 1962) hugely successful series of books about Weetzie Bat, for instance, constitute a homage to consumer culture. Part of the mystique of Weetzie and her circle is that they are inveterate and expert shoppers who instinctively know what to eat, what to wear, and where to buy it—and money is never an issue. However, the emotional center of *Weetzie Bat* (2004) is the family she and her friends help to create. This family is shown as better for both parents and children than the traditional nuclear family in which Weetzie began her life. The idea that a family can be made up of friends rather than relations has gained such legitimacy in culture that the coinage "framily—friends who are as close as family" is being considered for the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Part of this legitimacy has come through new stories about families being told to the rising generation, not least in the form of children's literature.



Author and illustrator Lauren Child (b. 1965) and her award-winning children's book creation Clarice Bean.

Child published two picture books in 1999, *I Want a Pet!* and *Clarice Bean, That's Me*. The *Clarice Bean* series has won several awards for writing and illustration. Child's humorous illustrations contain many different media, including magazine cuttings, collage, material, and photography as well as traditional watercolors. She has also authored several other books in addition to *Clarice Bean*.

A television series based on Child's *Charlie and Lola* books started broadcasting in 2005.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How are stories set in families different from family stories?
2. What role might children's books play in changing attitudes to what families are and how they function?
3. Families are part of most children's real-life experience. How might a traditional family story be read as a fantasy by some children?
4. What do you see as the most important differences in the way parent-child relationships are presented in the earliest examples of children's literature we have studied and those written since the year 2000?

Suggested Readings

Tucker, Nicholas, and Nikki Gamble. *Family Fictions*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Alston, Ann. *The Family in English Children's Literature*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Reynolds, Kimberley. "Changing Families in Children's Fiction." *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*. Pp. 193–208. Eds. M.O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

———. "Sociology, Politics, the Family: Children and Families in Anglo-American Children's Fiction, 1920–60." Pp. 23–41. *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction*. Ed. Kimberley Reynolds. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Thiel, Elizabeth. *The Fantasy of the Family: Nineteenth-Century Children's Literature and the Myth of the Domestic Ideal*. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Websites of Interest

1. The PBS *NOW on PBS* program website features a video interview with author Maurice Sendak, who provides rare insight into his work and inspiration for *Where the Wild Things Are*. —
<http://www.pbs.org/now/arts/sendak.html>
2. The University of Iowa Libraries provides children's diaries from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. —
<http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/diaries/index.php>

Lecture 11

Coming of Age: Fiction for Teens

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Roberta Seelinger Trites's *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*, chapters 1–3.



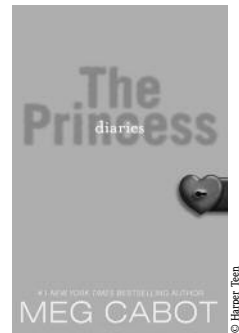
The decision by twentieth-century publishers and booksellers to categorize books written for the adolescent market as being for children has had a range of significant consequences for the development, study, and reception of children's literature. At a practical level it has proved hugely problematic since it groups together materials created for infants and those for readers who are well into their teens, despite the fact that differences arising from age are greater at this stage in life than at any other. Cognitively, physically, experientially, and intellectually a fifteen-year-old has more in common with a fifty-year-old than with an infant of fifteen weeks or months. Just as the reading needs and abilities differ dramatically across the age span encompassed by the label "children's literature," so writing, producing, marketing, and studying books for its different age groups require distinctly different sets of skills and areas of knowledge, since the books themselves serve disparate purposes and venture into very different territories. Both to acknowledge this fact and in an attempt to defuse teenagers' objections to being identified with children, there have been repeated attempts to relabel and reposition books for and about adolescence. For instance, some libraries and bookshops have special teen or young adult (YA) sections, usually positioned between adult and children's fiction or close to the film, music, and computer games in larger stores. Attention is also paid to creating distinctive paratextual elements for children's and YA books.

"Paratext" is a term devised by French literary theorist Gerard Genette (b. 1930) to describe the elements that turn pages into books. These include covers, spines, bindings, title pages, and endpapers that, together with such things as titles, blurbs, and graphic design, create expectations about texts even before reading commences. All of these elements are mobilized by publishers to help them appeal to particular audiences, and much can be learned about the nature of YA fiction by looking at its paratexts. Since YA fiction is directed at adolescents and is usually told in the voice of a particular character, the covers of YA novels will often feature a photograph of a young person who is obviously a teenager, as signalled by body shape, clothing, and in the case of boys, facial hair. Another frequently used strategy is to create covers that look "adult," perhaps by following the design features of well-known adult books associated with particular genres: thriller, gothic, and romance covers, for example, are very common. Over the last

decade a particular segment of the YA market has visually dominated bookshops: teenage chick-lit. Bright colors tending toward the pink spectrum together with elements such as sparkly inserts featuring hearts and accessories proclaim that these are not for children or boys. In the case of these books and other best-selling YA fiction there may be accompanying merchandise that takes consideration of the paratext to the next level, or what Genette refers to as the epitext. Epitextual features refer to activities outside the text that also affect how readers think about what they are reading. Websites, promotional campaigns, blogs, interviews, and book-themed merchandise all come into the domain of the epitext. Similarly, the make-up and accessories that can be bought alongside, for example, Meg Cabot's (b. 1967) series of *Princess Diaries* are epitextual because they create a context for the books, promising a reading experience filled with the things girls of that age are assumed to be interested in. On the basis of paratextual clues such as these, it seems that the majority of contemporary YA fiction features, and aims to appeal to, a predominantly female audience.

Although considerable effort goes into attempting to attract adolescent readers, such targeted marketing can alienate groups of readers who do not identify with its message. This is part of a larger failure to reach adolescent readers, for despite the fact that in terms of critical attention, prizes, and professional interest YA novels tend to dominate the sphere of children's literature, they have an uneasy relationship with their target audience. The reluctance of adolescents to read YA novels is in part a consequence of their designation as children's literature; young people are often put off exploring YA fiction because of the association, and so they never come across the many innovative and challenging books that are now published for them. Since a significant proportion of YA fiction belongs to the subgenre of the "problem novel," meaning books that take characters through some of the risks and challenges associated with growing up in the modern world, it is to be regretted that so many of their intended readers never receive the advice and information these books contain.

Other problems are also associated with including writing for adolescents in the sphere of children's literature; not least of these for our purposes is that it confuses critical analysis of the image of childhood in children's literature, the needs of readers, and what is considered suitable for "children." Given the problems YA fiction causes, it has to be asked why this decision was made. Its roots can be traced to the eighteenth century. In *The Guardian of Education* (1802–1806), the monthly magazine in which she reviewed children's books, Mrs. Sarah Trimmer (1741–1810) divided her reviews into "Books for Children," aimed at those under fourteen years of



The cover of the first of Meg Cabot's *The Princess Diaries* series (2008).

age, and “Books for Young Persons,” aged from fourteen “to at least twenty-one.” Trimmer’s interest in books suited to the tastes and status of those who were no longer children but not yet adults was based on the belief that reading inappropriate works of fiction could introduce worldly ideas and information that would corrupt developing minds. She carefully vetted all of the works she recommended on the basis of the moral and religious messages they contained. Nearly a century later, *Juvenile Literature As It Is* (1888), an overview of writing for the young by the reviewer Edward Salmon (no dates available), shows that Trimmer’s concerns were still in evidence as Salmon refers to parents’ anxiety about choosing suitable books for impressionable teenagers.

Trimmer, Salmon, and others who wrote about publishing for younger readers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries conceived fiction for adolescence as writing that would help ensure a smooth transition from youth to maturity. Although they wrote about such books in the context of children’s literature, as is true today, in terms of length, themes, frame of reference, and genres, such books tended to have more in common with books for adults than for children, and as soon as adulthood had been safely achieved, it was assumed they would be replaced by writing for adults. The operative words here are “safely achieved,” for essentially this meant that a young person has learned how to fit into adult society. Then as now, it seems, there is much truth in the argument Roberta Seelinger Trites put forward in *Disturbing the Universe* (2000): that YA fiction seeks to control the energies and ambitions of the young by warning them of the consequences of stepping outside the agreed patterns of thinking and behavior that govern society.

Rites of passage into adulthood were more clearly marked in the past than they are today, and they were less focused on age. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, adolescence was regarded primarily as a social condition; becoming an adult was marked by events such as leaving school, entering the workforce, marriage, leaving home, or a combination of these. Today adolescence is largely associated with the teenage years, but for the first readers of adolescent fiction a change in status was required to bring it about. This meant that the period during which a young person was expected to read this transitional literature varied considerably on the basis of sex and class. Children of the poor often joined the workforce well before they were teenagers, and partly as a consequence of this there is no specific body of writing designed to tide them over during adolescence. Since most of the sanctioned rites of passage were more freely available to boys than girls, upper- and middle-class girls were likely to stay in the in-between stage of adolescence much longer than boys, and so the largest body of adolescent writing was directed at them. Approved reading for such girls was typically religious writing, historical fiction, and family stories, although unsurprisingly, girls trapped at home waiting for marriage or some other

way of moving beyond adolescence were often drawn to more exciting (and less acceptable to their parents) books. Until the 1950s, then, adolescence in life and on the page was characterized as feminine: liminal, dependent, emotional. Despite changes to society that have seen girls having many more opportunities and freedoms, the similarities between prototypical YA fiction and that being written today are striking. Where some important differences have developed are in the way texts speak to readers and who speaks to them.

The lecture began with a comparison between the voice of children's literature and the voice of YA fiction; a few more examples will help to identify both some of the characteristics of YA fiction and changes to the way writing for this audience has developed over time. Today, YA fiction normally uses a first-person narrator who is also an adolescent so, for instance, Stephenie Meyer's (b. 1973) *New Moon* (2009), the second in her *Twilight* series, begins with the voice of Bella, the teenage heroine of the series, talking directly to the reader: "I felt like I was trapped in one of those terrifying nightmares, the one where you have to run, run till your lungs burst, but you can't make your body move fast enough." The exchange simulates friendship: Bella-the-narrator assumes that the reader knows her and has shared the same kind of dream. The vocabulary and syntax are simple, and though more formal than conversation, not obviously literary. The effect is to make it feel as if one adolescent is talking to another, and that they share the same opinions. Whether or not Bella can be trusted when she goes on to reveal that her wealthy, beautiful friends are vampires is something that readers need to decide as they read on.

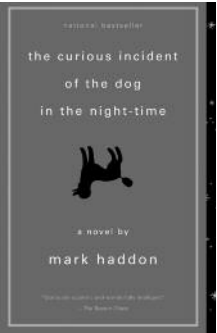
Although written in the middle of the nineteenth century, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* exhibits many characteristics of the contemporary YA novel. It features characters who are in the stage between childhood and adulthood, and it shares their concerns about growing up, falling in love, and finding a place in the world. Where contemporary YA writers such as Stephenie Meyer generally use first-person narrators who are often also focalizers, so events are seen through their eyes, Alcott writes in the third person, as was customary at the time. This places a more mature persona between readers and characters; to reduce the distance this creates, however, she makes liberal use of dialogue. The opening lines of the novel are, in fact, spoken by her characters: "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents," Jo grumbles, and Meg responds, "It's so dreadful to be poor." The fact that two characters speak is another way this early book about



The latest edition of *New Moon* from the *Twilight* series by Stephenie Myer advertises the fact that it has been made into a major motion picture and that an exclusive free poster is inside (2010).

adolescence and contemporary YA fiction differ, for today the voice of a single character usually predominates.

Voice and vocabulary have changed over time, but *Little Women* and *New Moon* have both attracted adult readers, and it seems as if they may serve as bookends to the phenomenon of YA fiction. There is growing evidence that the problems occasioned by the decision to include YA fiction in the sphere of children’s literature are diminishing as the boundaries between different areas of publishing are becoming blurred. For instance, the rise of “crossover” fiction—works such as *Harry Potter* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* that are read by audiences of mixed age—is starting to lessen the sense that audiences for books are defined by age. A flourishing of graphic novels for older readers is also mixing up the age categories, as is the fact that many versions of the same story regularly appear in different formats aimed at different audiences. The result of these developments may be to limit the attention paid to labels and promote greater reading across categories; this might just mean that adolescent readers will be more willing to explore YA fiction.



© Doubleday



Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* has enjoyed continued success since 1868. Counterclockwise from bottom: (a) a two-volume set published ca. 1870s, (b) a 1901 American edition, (c) a 1931 British edition, (d) a 1933 American edition that was published at the same time the movie (e) starring Katherine Hepburn was released by MGM, (f) a DVD of the 1994 film version starring Winona Ryder, and (g) a 1949 poster of MGM’s “silver anniversary” film release.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. If children's literature is about socializing its readers, is YA fiction necessarily a form of children's literature?
2. What is the difference between a didactic story such as *Forever* and a problem novel?
3. Is there anything about the narrative style used by J.K. Rowling in her *Harry Potter* books that identifies them as YA fiction? Is there a change in style and address across the series?

Suggested Readings

Trites, Roberta Seelinger. *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2004.

Other Books of Interest

Appleyard, J.A. *Becoming a Reader: The Experience of Fiction from Childhood to Adulthood*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Erikson, Erik H. *Childhood and Society*. New York: Vintage Books, USA, 1995.

Houriham, Margery. *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Waller, Alison. *Constructing Adolescence in Fantastic Realism*. New York: Routledge, 2011 (2008).

Websites of Interest

The American Library Association *Young Adult Library Services* website provides lists of recommended Young Adult fiction including a "Top 10" list. — <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/bestbookasya/bbya2010.cfm>

Lecture 12

Lost Children

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Kimberley Reynolds's *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*, chapter 5.



There are many kinds of texts specifically designed to help adolescent readers understand and manage the physical, emotional, and social changes they are likely to experience during this time in their lives. Those young people who do explore YA fiction discover that there are many fine and thought-provoking books that acknowledge both the problems and the potential that characterize this stage. The majority of these take the form of “problem novels” or “issue books” since they tend to focus on particular aspects of young people’s lives and interests, whether these are personal (family, love, friendship, sexuality) or social/political (bigotry, threats to the environment, victimization). Until recently, writers and publishers of YA fiction have tended to deal with such topics realistically, setting them in real-world environments such as home and school and turning away from the cheerful security associated with books for younger readers. YA novels acknowledge that family life can be fraught—even brutalizing; that school is often a place of humiliation and fear, and that popularity and status are precarious. Even books featuring romantic relationships seem duty bound to show that “the course of true love never did run smooth” so, just as happens to the lovers in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, teen romances in YA fiction generally result in confusion, broken hearts, betrayal, pregnancy, or some other disappointment or challenge. The tone, address, and plots of such books are intended to demonstrate that the readers are being taken seriously, that they are being given information and told the truth in ways designed to help them see through public façades and avoid mistakes. This apparent frankness disguises the way that realism as a literary mode manipulates readers (whatever their age) and makes it difficult for them to resist the messages in the text.

There is much to be said for YA novels that provide information and dramatize scenarios so that readers can contemplate the consequences of actions, and the assumption in the early days of YA fiction that realistic

The intensity of emotion and vivid language in a story about two close friends who deal with eating disorders and, tragically, the death of one of them, provides a realistic setting for *Wintergirls* by Laurie Halse Anderson. The text is rich with words still legible but crossed out, the judicious use of italics, and tiny font-size refrains reflecting the main character Cassie’s distorted internal logic.



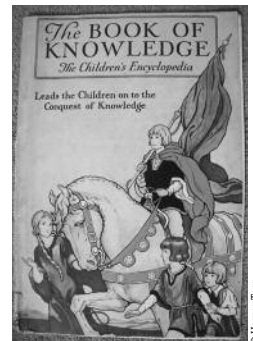
© Speak Publishers/Penguin Group

fiction was best suited to the needs and tastes of adolescent readers was closely connected to the socially progressive values of those who were concerned to equip young people with accurate information about the world so that they could negotiate it effectively and help to improve it. But when studying texts it is also important to see how they act on readers and position them to think in particular ways. In the case of YA fiction, the potential for conflict between the aim to empower through providing information and a coercive mode of writing becomes clear through looking at how realist texts work.

Realism and YA fiction

Realism is achieved through a series of conventions that evolved in the nineteenth century as a way of convincing readers that the world in the book is an analogue of the world we inhabit—it has a recognizable kind of geography and is filled with people like us who may even share our history. Readers learn, for instance, to understand that time functions in the same way for the characters in a book as it does in real life even though ten years may pass in as many pages. Central to accepting the illusion that the world in the book is real is being “interpellated,” a term used to describe the sense of entering and inhabiting the world of the book. Immersion in the book world can be so total that readers may forget that they are reading. While realistic writing can be engrossing and emotionally satisfying, it requires readers to allow the text to position them in the fictional world, to accept its norms and values. These norms and values are, of course, those of the writer and the time the book was written, but at least for the time of the reading they may become the reader’s too.

The fact that so much YA fiction uses these techniques makes its readers highly susceptible to absorbing without question—or being aware that they are doing so—a text’s ideological views. It is always easier to see the way ideologies shape texts from other times or places so, for instance, looking back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the assumption in much children’s writing that white males are superior to all other groups is obvious now but, because it was largely accepted as natural at the time, it was invisible and unremarked upon. Even works that were trying to be inclusive often failed to see that they were perpetuating a white, patriarchal—and often also a nationalist—agenda. A vivid example is found in Arthur Mee’s (1875–1943) *Book of Knowledge*—not, of course, a piece of realist fiction, but nevertheless a good demonstration of how ideological assumptions may work against other aims of a text. Mee’s introduction to the first volume of his



The cover from a 1927 edition of Arthur Mee’s *The Book of Knowledge* shows four quite obviously caucasian children portrayed as Crusaders.

© Harper Teen

encyclopedia is accompanied by an image that is meant to illustrate friendship between children everywhere. In fact, it places white Europeans in the foreground of a long snake of “little friends” who become progressively smaller and less developed and who wear fewer clothes as their skin becomes darker. The assumption that this represents a natural hierarchy of races is unquestioned in Mee’s text, and so young readers are encouraged to adopt the same view.

The effects of realist fiction are similar but even more intense since readers are encouraged to identify with characters. This identification is enhanced through the common device in YA fiction of using first-person narrators. Initially, the majority of adolescent narrators, focalizers or central characters in YA novels were white and male, but as greater emphasis was placed on inclusion and ensuring that all readers could find characters like themselves in books, these figures became more diverse. Just as with Mee’s *Book of Knowledge*, however, intention and ideology were often at odds. The unwritten rules of children’s publishing—no sex, no bad language, no bad role models, no violence, and, as far as possible, the use of grammatically correct English—were loosened as YA fiction evolved. Nevertheless, the ethos persisted, and when combined with European literary tradition, it tended to result in an approved voice and narrative structure that precluded writing that more accurately reflected different cultural traditions and ways of speaking. Over time, greater diversity of representation, voices, and narrative forms has become available. YA fiction in particular now incorporates language that approximates more closely to that used by young people, including swearing and slang, but these create their own problems; slang is easily misused and rapidly dates, for instance.

One way to avoid both such specific problems and the larger issue of the coercive nature of YA fiction is to adjust the relationship it has with realism. We have already looked at fantasy as an alternative way of dealing with personal and cultural problems; a different approach is to experiment with realism itself by making use of metafictional and magical realist devices.

Metafiction, Magical Realism, and Adolescent Readers

Where realist fiction tries to make readers forget that they are reading, metafiction constantly calls attention to the fact that it is composed of words on a page and is making use of literary conventions. Instead of interpellating readers, then, metafiction constantly makes them stand outside the text and observe what it is doing. An early and particularly exuberant piece of YA metafiction is Aidan Chambers’s (b. 1934) *Breaktime* (2008).

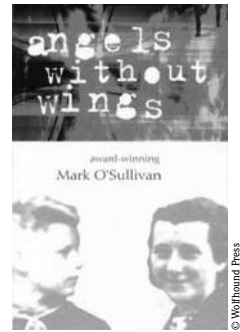
Chambers uses a wide variety of metafictional devices, starting with the way he constantly adjusts the narrating voice. It slides between third-person omniscient



narration that reports what characters are thinking and feeling, through first-person confessional narration and on to the anonymous voice associated with travel brochures and newspaper reports. In writing an account of what he did during his vacation to prove a point about fiction to his classmate Morgan, the central character, Ditto, includes stream of consciousness monologues, flashbacks, reports of events presented in the manner of a play script, and drawings based on strip cartoons. This constant fluctuation prevents close identification with Ditto. At the end of the book Chambers obstructs identification even more when Morgan suggests that he and Ditto may only be characters in Ditto's story. Of course at one level readers know that they *are* characters in a book, but characters are not supposed to know this about themselves, and since the question is left hanging, it constitutes another metafictional device. Traditionally, realist writing moves toward a strong sense of closure; all loose ends are tied up, and the reader is left feeling satisfied. Metafiction, by contrast, refuses closure, leaving readers uncertain about what has happened.

Mark O'Sullivan's (b. 1954) *Angels Without Wings* (1997) also uses the metafictional device of having characters come alive. Set in Berlin in 1934, it deals with the book burnings ordered by Hitler and the way a popular Jewish writer is coerced into using his novels to disseminate Nazi propaganda. The characters rebel and gradually invade the writer's real world, saving him from the SS and themselves from an eternity in the pages of children's adventure fiction. *Angels Without Wings* is metafictional, but the way it inserts fantastic elements into what is meant to be the real world of the book (Nazi Germany) is also an example of magical realism. Unlike fantasy, magical realism does not posit an alternative world where supernatural events occur; readers are asked to accept without explanation events that would normally be regarded as impossible. In all other ways magical realism uses realist narrative techniques so readers find themselves unsettled: how can they believe what they know is impossible and how can they understand the text if they refuse to accept what it reports?

Both Chambers and O'Sullivan are attempting to defy the conventions of realism in order to encourage readers to think about the stories they are told about everyday life. These books want their adolescent readers to realize that just like texts, culture can be read and interrogated. From that position they can decide how far they want to accept or resist the cultural narratives they encounter.



FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why might it be better to deal with potentially disturbing issues such as self-harm and depression in a magical realist narrative than realistically?
2. What connections can you find between the dominance of realism in YA fiction and the tendency to dismiss adolescents discussed in lecture 11?

Suggested Reading

Reynolds, Kimberley. *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Other Books of Interest

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Penguin Books, 2010 (1976).

Bradford, Clare. "Race, Ethnicity, and Colonialism." Pp. 39–50. *The Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*. Ed. David Rudd. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Eccleshare, Julia. "Teenage Fictions: Realism, Romances, Contemporary Problem Novels." Pp. 545–55. *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. Vol. 1. 2nd ed. Ed. Peter Hunt. New York: Routledge, 2004

Falconer, Rachel. "Young Adult Fiction and the Crossover Phenomenon." Pp. 87–99. *The Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*. Ed. David Rudd. New York: Routledge, 2010.

McCallum, Robyn. *Ideologies of Identity in Adolescent Fiction: The Dialogic Construction of Subjectivity*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*. New York: Riverhead Trade, 2005 (1995).

Articles of Interest

Miscek, Jennifer, and Chris McGee. "My Scars Tell a Story: Self-Mutilation in Young Adult Literature." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*. Vol. 32, no. 2, Summer 2007, pp. 163–78.

Tucker, Nicholas. "Depressive Stories for Children." *Children's Literature in Education*. Vol. 37, no. 3, Autumn 2006, pp. 199–209.

Websites of Interest

The *Guardian* features an article by Blake Morrison from January 5, 2008, entitled "The Reading Cure," which proposes that "bibliotherapy" can function as a beneficial self-help guide. —

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/jan/05/fiction.scienceandnature>

Lecture 13

Child Hating and Dystopian Fiction

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Clare Bradford, Kerry Mallan, John Stephens, and Robyn McCallum's *New World Orders in Contemporary Children's Literature: Utopian Transformations*, chapter 2.



Multiple, and often contradictory, ideas about childhood coexist in the body of writing called “children’s literature.” Despite the tendency to talk about children’s literature’s preoccupation with childhood innocence, there are many texts that acknowledge that some children have been so frightened or brutalized that they bear little resemblance to the Romantic ideal of childhood. Reflecting life, children’s books about such damaged children show that the traumas they have endured have often been at the hands of adults who are charged with caring for them. Writing about trauma for readers of any age poses challenges; for instance, when a traumatic incident is taking place, people are often so overwhelmed that they cannot comprehend what is happening. This is a kind of protective mechanism, but it means that later there are gaps in the memory that make it hard to piece together incidents. Incomplete memories are often associated with mental illness, which is why Freud was so insistent on the need for those in analysis to work at recovering lost memories and filling in gaps in their personal narratives. A difficult balance needs to be struck in trauma writing, then: writers must find a way simultaneously to let readers know what is happening as they recount the original trauma and to create the sense that the character is unable to take in what is happening. Finding a narrative technique for re-creating this state of mind on the page that is also comprehensible to relatively inexperienced readers is an additional challenge for children’s writers.

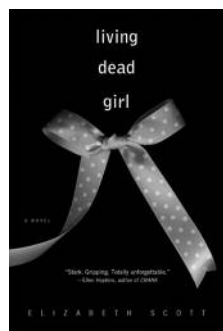


On the other hand, a character’s initial lack of comprehension can be useful when writing for a youthful audience because the vagaries and confusion around the incident are both realistic and respect the duty of care with which writers for young people are charged. One of the unwritten rules of children’s literature is that even when dealing with highly traumatic incidents, books themselves should not be traumatizing. A book such as Elizabeth Scott’s *Living Dead Girl* (2008), which deals with the excruciating situation of a child sex slave who is not only sexually assaulted multiple times on a daily basis but also believes that if she does not submit her family will be killed, must avoid describing what Alice has for years been forced

to do for the man who abducted her. Readers who know something of the kind of abusive relationship Alice endures will be able to fill in the gaps in the narration, but most young readers will only surmise that it is horrible for her. Since Alice's conscious mind shuts down during these incidents, Scott's technique of excluding description not only keeps material that most would deem unsuitable for children out of the text, but also creates a sense of Alice's state of mind.

Although they may not go into graphic detail, at some point children's books about trauma inevitably go on to explain what has happened. In adult fiction this may primarily be done as an act of witnessing: telling a story about an event so that it is not forgotten or hidden. In children's literature the impulse is usually more didactic: writers seek to explain events and their consequences as a way of teaching children how to avoid becoming victims, perpetrators, or bystanders. As Elizabeth Scott does in *Living Dead Girl*, children's writers have to find ways to manage the revelation of what has happened that simultaneously teach children enough to understand the moral issues, give them practical advice about protecting themselves or recognizing when others are at risk, and respect the suffering others have endured. The knowledge gained should not be damaging, but nor should it be so sanitized that it is false to the nature of the events. A frequent device for striking this balance is for the traumatic event to be uncovered when a character is in therapy, as happens in E.R. Frank's *America Is Me* (2002). This allows information to emerge bit by bit rather than in a shocking flash of recall. The therapeutic setting also facilitates the didactic agenda by making it natural to include discussion of the trauma, how characters feel about it and themselves, and, for example, why they should not blame themselves for what has happened.

The therapeutic context is a product of the last century, but stories that feature children and young people who are damaged by those close to them are as old as stories themselves. One of the largest groups of traditional tales is those about parents and stepparents who attempt to destroy their children. Among the earliest of these is the Greek myth about the god Cronus, who, having been warned that one of his children will supplant him, decides to prevent this by swallowing each of his offspring. Eventually his wife tricks him by replacing her last baby, Zeus, with a stone, which is swallowed by the unsuspecting Cronus, ensuring that the prophecy is fulfilled. Like Zeus, many children in traditional tales suffer for a time at the hands of parents and stepparents, whether as victims of incestuous desire ("Donkey Skin"), jealousy ("Snow White"), abandonment ("Hansel and Gretel"), abduction ("Rapunzel"), or greed ("The Babes in the Woods"). The fact that there are so many stories about dangerous parents/stepparents demonstrates that this is an important subject. If the desire to harm children were not constantly

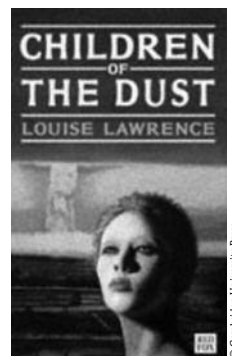


present in society there would be no need to retell and reinforce the lessons in these tales. The stories contain messages for both adults and children: children are warned of possible threats from ostensibly loving adults, while the fact that child characters inevitably triumph over adults who try to harm them encourages parents to accept that they will eventually be replaced by their children and should not view them as rivals. Parents in these stories stand both for those responsible for individual children and as the grown-up generation of a given time, so together this group of stories is a reminder to society of the consequences of failing to look after the children in its care. The need to reiterate this message is reflected in the trend explored in the lecture for this topic for stories that focus specifically on adult hostility toward the young on a mass scale.

The Uses of Dystopia

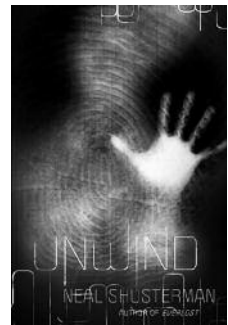
Often the traumas experienced by child characters in these new variations on the theme of adult animosity are not directed at them personally but are the consequences of cultural upheaval or repressive regimes. Although in real life many young people live in powerfully repressive communities or countries, the current tendency is to set these stories in versions of mainstream Western societies. Doing so should not be seen as evasive since the distance created by placing events in the future makes it possible to speculate about tendencies in compelling ways and, more importantly for this topic, to write more graphically about the levels of devastation, violence, injustice, and the mechanisms of control employed than could comfortably be done about the present. Although these futuristic fictions usually draw on popular genres such as adventure and thriller novels as a way of engaging readers, they are often highly didactic, seeking to underline the same set of values found in modern retellings of traditional tales—bravery, loyalty, duty, humility, and all the elements of the Western metaethic discussed in lecture 4. Doing so underscores the importance of humanist values, which are almost always set in opposition to science and technology. The legend of Prometheus has been a recurring motif of this course, and it is present in these future dystopias too. In the case of futuristic dystopian fiction, instead of seeing him as a benefactor of humankind, the god is condemned for his transgression. Such anti-Promethean stories are invariably used to warn humans against acquiring and experimenting with scientific knowledge that is not yet adequately understood and the consequences of which have not yet been sufficiently subjected to moral and ethical scrutiny.

In Louise Lawrence's *Children of the Dust* (1985), survivors of a nuclear holocaust mutate into "homo superior," challenging those who remain underground supported by machines. Children of both above- and below-ground families suffer and overcome life-threatening events.



One of the important functions of literature for all ages is precisely its ability to contemplate consequences—to test ideas in the abstract, turning narrative into a form of thought experiment. Science fiction, of which dystopian futuristic fiction is a subgenre, has an impressive history of predicting what will be possible in the near future and speculating about the problems, potential, and ethical issues that might arise when theory becomes reality. To give a current example of such a topic, debates about the moment when life begins coupled with advances in surgical procedures and developments in cloning are giving rise to a rapidly growing body of writing about a future when bodies and identities are less clearly defined and respected than they are today. Neal Shusterman’s YA novel *Unwind* is an example of a YA novel that engages its readers with these debates. *Unwind* posits a world in which abortion is illegal, but before children reach the age of thirteen their parents can decide to have them “unwound,” meaning that they are dismantled into their organs and body parts, which are then donated to those in need. Technically, because their bodies still exist in some form they are not considered to have died, so unwanted children can legally be got rid of and their parents can think of themselves as doing a service for others in the process.

Unwind (2007) is a particularly interesting variation on the theme of child-hating; it establishes adults as all-powerful and children as entirely disposable. It also belongs to the anti-Promethean strand of futuristic dystopian fiction. While there is much to be said for the thought experiment approach to futuristic fiction, it is also important not to demonize science and new technologies in writing for the young. The rising generation is inheriting many challenges, from population growth and depleted resources to global warming. While changing behavior will slow down the pace at which some of these problems are advancing, it won’t solve them. The solutions will come from developments in science and technology, and so the stories that we give young people need to avoid characterizing these as the problem and concentrate on encouraging children to engage with them, understand them, and think about how they can be used responsibly and to best effect. Dystopian futuristic fiction and reminders of past mistakes have their role to play, but they need to be matched by new kinds of texts and new approaches to problem solving. Young readers need playfully experimental narratives that not only make gestures toward but creatively embrace new media and technologies as part of new ways of telling stories about society. The final topic explores some developments in children’s literature that suggest that just such an alliance between literature and new technologies is beginning to produce a new generation of children’s literature.



FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What effect does writing about children who have experienced trauma have on the image of childhood in children's literature?
2. If a text does not show a traumatic incident, how might it nevertheless teach readers about its consequences?
3. Is there a difference in the kind of hostility toward the young expressed through the Cronus myth and fiction such as *Galax-Arena* or *The Hunger Games* trilogy?

Suggested Readings

Bradford, Clare, Kerry Mallan, John Stephens, and Robyn McCallum. *New World Orders in Contemporary Children's Literature: Utopian Transformations*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Other Books of Interest

Caruth, Cathy, ed. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Giroux, Henry A. *Stealing Innocence: Corporate Culture's War on Children*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.

Kincaid, James R. *Child Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Mallan, Kerry, and Sharyn Pearce, eds. *Youth Cultures: Texts, Images, and Identities*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003.

Mendlesohn, Farah. *The Inter-Galactic Playground: A Critical Study of Children's and Teens' Science Fiction*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2009.

Sambell, Kay. "Carnivalizing the Future: *Mortal Engines*." Pp. 374–87. *Children's Literature: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*. Eds. Heather Montgomery and Nicola J. Watson. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Websites of Interest

The *io9 Booklist* website provides recommendations and articles on YA science fiction. —
<http://io9.com/5384382/where-to-start-with-young-adult-science-fiction>

Lecture 14

You Can BE Harry Potter: The Child and the Electronic Narrative

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is *Children's Literature: Approaches and Territories*, edited by Janet Maybin and Nicola J. Watson, section 6, pp. 330–79.



It is a commonplace of children's literature criticism that children's literature is unique in being defined by its audience rather than its producers or subject. Where, for example, women's writing is written by women and post-colonial literature is often by and always about issues pertaining to people and places that have been colonized, children's literature is almost never written by children. That may be about to change. New technologies make it possible for writers who in the past would have been neglected or rejected by publishers to make their work available in different formats and to audiences that previously could not be easily and affordably accessed. Whole new niche audiences can be identified online, and digital publication or print-on-demand services mean that their tastes can now be catered for, creating opportunities for new kinds of writers. Leaving aside the issue of quality, since that must be determined on a case-by-case basis, the new flexibility and responsiveness of publishing creates unprecedented opportunities for children and young people to develop stories in the expectation that someone else will read them. Perhaps more importantly, cyberspace offers the possibility of collaboration, mentoring, and feedback that is inspiring large numbers of young people to write and revise their own work, and critique and contribute to that of others. It is not just in reading, viewing, and playing transmedia texts that collaboration is possible; fan forums in particular involve writers working together to develop each other's skills and stories. Often they also interact with the authors of the primary fan text, so re-creation, creation, and co-creation are entwined. Modern-day Jo Marches no longer need to retreat to the attic, scribbling in the hope that one day someone outside the family will enjoy their stories. And if a squabble with siblings leads to a paper copy of a story being destroyed, as long as it has been backed up properly, the story will survive.

Reading and Writing

Many writers acknowledge that what they read as children inspired them to think in new ways, including about how stories can work. Just



as our childhood experiences continue to affect us in maturity, so reading done in childhood does not disappear. It is laid down and, like wine, may mature over time, developing into something more complex and pleasing. Memoirs, journals, critical analyses, and tributes demonstrate the influence of, for instance, Frances Hodgson Burnett on D.H. Lawrence, the *Alice* books on Virginia Woolf, Beatrix Potter on Graham Greene, *The Wizard of Oz* on Salman Rushdie, and comics on Philip Pullman. Significantly, none of these writers simply recycled influential texts from their childhoods; instead, they were inspired by them to create new kinds of stories. If the readers of one generation become the writers of the next, then the new ways of reading and writing that are developing in cyberspace are likely to have long-term consequences for the future of writing. Already one of the most fundamental aspects of fiction has been radically altered: the sense of an ending.

According to the French philosopher and critic Roland Barthes (1915–1980), one of the pleasures of reading is the knowledge that the story will come to an end. More experimental or highly literary works have sometimes deliberately withheld or subverted this pleasure through inconclusive endings, but children’s books have traditionally favored the satisfying kinds of endings associated with realist fiction. Transmedia texts, however, are much less concerned with endings. This can be seen in Kate Pullinger and Chris Joseph’s *Inanimate Alice*, which is being published in episodes. Its readers are experiencing it as it develops, and though it is possible to make comparisons with the publication of serialized fiction in the nineteenth century, it requires a different kind of engagement and offers different kinds of satisfactions from serial publication and most children’s stories. While the plot is unfolding, for example, readers are asked to solve puzzles, play games, listen to music, explore the setting, and build up a relationship with the world of the text that goes beyond the illusionism offered by realist fiction. These activities continue once the basic plot elements of any installment have been experienced. The pleasure in such readings is unlike anything Barthes anticipated.



The banner for the home page of *Inanimate Alice* (www.inanimatealice.com).

Additionally, because they make use of different media and require readers to switch from game to video clip to printed text—and may still be in development—transmedia texts foreground the fact that they are not reality, which, theoretically at least, is empowering for readers. The oscillation between immersion and management of the technology creates a new relationship with the text that is compounded if, as is true of some online fictions, readers are also contributing ideas for how plots and characters should develop. Instead of coercing readers to take up particular points of view as realist texts do, these collaboratively generated texts are offering ways for readers to insert themselves in texts. Contributions may take the forms of writing, still or moving images, drawings, soundscapes, solutions to problems, or commentary. Whatever the manifestation, it is important to think about the levels of character identification for younger readers, since they have fewer barriers between themselves and what they are reading. The title of this concluding lecture references the *Harry Potter* books, for instance, and as fan responses to Rowling's series have shown, there is a strong wish-fulfilment dimension to the way many young people have read these books. This is evident by the commitment with which some fans have dressed up as characters, waited obsessively for the publications of each new book (and later film and computer game) in the series, and written elaborate fan fictions. All of this serves as a reminder that in the case of writing for children, the manner in which they might insert themselves into a text raises some ethical considerations about the safety of identity on the Internet. For the purposes of this discussion, it is more important to focus on the possibilities rather than the practicalities, however, and theoretically online and transmedia texts offer a more equal relationship between readers, writers, and texts than previously existed since readers can affect development and outcome to varying degrees. Nevertheless, there are reasons to be vigilant about invitations to children to participate in story-making or other collaborative projects with people they do not know. The unembodied nature of online relationships has many strengths (freedom from stereotyping, including on the basis of age, being high on the list), but particularly for young and inexperienced participants, it can pose risks.

Collaborative Reading

Currently, in fan and other online fiction forums, writing and reading offer largely democratic, co-creational environments. In transmedia texts, however, considerable narrative control still rests with the named creative team (transmedia texts require the skills of writers, artists, designers, musicians, filmmakers, and programmers), which chooses when and how far readers can interact with texts. Whether involvement can evolve into more participatory fictional forms that remain satisfying for readers remains to be seen. What is certain is that children's literature is currently providing the primary public platform for the development of transmedia

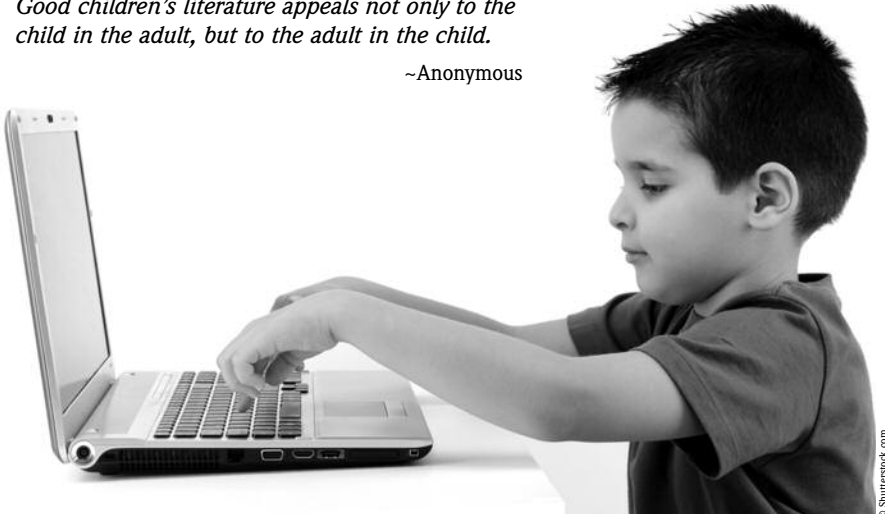
texts. In doing so it no longer constructs readers as lone explorers of flat pages but as network participants in literary games. This revised understanding of what it means to read has the potential to engage children who have typically found reading alienating and unrewarding but who have enjoyed television and interactive media. But the change may be more profound than finding new ways to support literacy.

The media specialist Henry Jenkins has argued that the digital age makes so much information available to even tiny children through portable computers of various kinds that it is increasingly difficult for any one person to master and stay up-to-date with a single discipline, never mind the range of areas with which an educated person in the past would have been familiar: the term “gentleman scholar” (for which read committed “amateur”/enthusiast or cultivated individual) assumed current knowledge of all the arts and sciences. Jenkins has proposed that if we are to make the connections between disciplines that are necessary for problem-solving and generating new insights, we can no longer look to individual geniuses but need to foster collective intelligence. The skills of collaborative interpretation learned through transmedia texts appear to be the first step in developing the skills that will lead to such a condition. Meanwhile, children’s literature is doing what it has always done by exploring the storytelling potential of new media.

This consideration of new media brings us to the end of our survey of the origins, evolution, and recent developments in children’s literature. Much has been covered, but there are many issues and aspects of children’s literature that have barely been acknowledged—not least with regard to interactions between old and new media.

Good children’s literature appeals not only to the child in the adult, but to the adult in the child.

~Anonymous



FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How would you explain the difference between reading a text that is focalized (told through one character's eyes) and taking on the persona of an avatar in a game?
2. What is different about listening to and discussing a story as part of a group and reading a transmedia text as part of an online community?
3. When reading a transmedia text such as *Inanimate Alice*, do readers have less control over pace and appearance than in a traditional print-only fiction?

Suggested Readings

Maybin, Janet, and Nicola J. Watson, eds. *Children's Literature: Approaches and Territories*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Other Books of Interest

Applebaum, Noga. *Representations of Technology in Science Fiction for Young People*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Burn, Andrew. "Multi-Text Magic: Harry Potter in Book, Film, and Videogame." Pp. 227–49. *Turning the Page: Children's Literature in Performance and the Media*. Eds. Fiona Collins and Jeremy Ridgman. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006.

Greenway, Betty, ed. *Twice-Told Children's Tales: The Influence of Childhood Reading on Writers for Adults*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. Rev. ed. New York: New York University Press, 2008.

Mackey, Margaret. *Literacies Across Media: Playing the Text*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Murray, Janet. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998.

Spufford, Francis. *The Child That Books Built: A Life in Reading*. New York: Picador, 2003.

Tatar, Maria. *Enchanted Hunters: The Power of Stories in Childhood*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009.

Articles of Interest

Ryan, Marie-Laure. "From Narrative Games to Playable Stories: Towards a Poetics of Interactive Narrative." *Storyworlds: A Journal of Narrative Studies*. Vol. 1, no. 1, 2009, pp. 433–60.

Websites of Interest

1. *Inanimate Alice* is a transmedia website by Kate Pullinger and Chris Joseph designed as a story that unfolds over time and on multiple platforms. — <http://www.inanimatealice.com>
2. The Georgia Tech *School of Literature, Communication, and Culture* website provides an article by Jacquelyn Ford Morie and Celia Pearce entitled “Uses of Digital Enchantment: Computer Games as the New Fairy Tales.” — <http://www.lcc.gatech.edu/~cpearce3/PearcePubs/MoriePearceFROG-FINAL.pdf>
3. The *Transformative Works and Cultures* journal website provides a paper by Anastasia Marie Salter entitled “‘Once More a Kingly Quest’: Fan Games and the Classic Adventure Genre” from volume 2, 2009. — <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/33/71>
4. The *MIT World* website features author and American media scholar Henry Jenkins in a video from May 18, 2010, entitled “Toying with Transmedia: The Future of Entertainment Is Child’s Play.” Jenkins considers the kinds of narratives that will be produced by a generation growing up with multimedia texts and toys. — <http://mitworld.mit.edu/video/813>

Children’s Literature Organizations

The children’s literature organizations and discussion lists below each have resource sections that provide information about children’s literature events, activities, and debates.

1. The American Library Association has a strong interest in children’s and YA literature and provides information about activities, events, and prizes. — <http://www.ala.org>
2. The *Child_Lit* website hosted by Michael Joseph at Rutgers University provides a forum for discussion of theory and criticism in relation to children’s literature. — <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mjoseph/childlit/about.html>
3. *ChLA* is the website of the Children’s Literature Association primarily dedicated to teaching professionals. — <http://www.childlitassn.org>
4. The International Research Society for Children’s Literature (IRSCl) is an international organization dedicated to promoting academic research in children’s literature. — <http://www.irscl.com/history.html>

CHILDREN'S BOOKS CITED IN LECTURES

The children's books cited by Professor Reynolds in this course are listed on the following pages by the lecture in which they are mentioned.

† Indicates books cited in multiple lectures.

Lecture 1

- Aesop. *Aesop's Fables* (sixth century BC)
- †Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women* (1868) and *Good Wives* (1869)
- †Barrie, J.M. *Peter Pan* (stage play, 1904; first novelization [as *Peter and Wendy*] 1911)
- Baxter, Richard. *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* (1652)
- †Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678)
- †Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865)
- Downham, Jenny. *Before I Die* (2007)
- Foxe, John. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (1563)
- Hoffmann, Heinrich. *Struwwelpeter* (1845)
- Masefield, John. *The Box of Delights* (1935)
- †Meyer, Stephenie. *Twilight* series (2005–2008)
- Peter, Hugh. *Milk for Babes and Meat for Men* (1630)
- †Sherwood, Mary Martha. *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818)
- Wigglesworth, Michael. *The Day of Doom* (1662)
- Williams, Carol Lynch. *The Chosen One* (2010)

Lecture 2

- †Aikin, John, and Anna Laetitia Barbauld. *Evenings at Home* (1792–1796)
- Cooper, Mary (publisher). *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book* (1744?)
- †Fenn, Lady Eleanor. *Rational Sports in Dialogues Passing Among the Children of a Family* (1783)
- Lamb, Charles, and Mary Lamb. *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807)
- Johnson, Jane. *A very pretty story* (1744)
- Mental Amusements* (various contributors, 1797)
- Goldsmith, Oliver (author uncertain). John Newbery (publisher). *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes* (1765)
- †Sinclair, Catherine. *Holiday House* (1839)
- Trimmer, Sarah. *Fabulous Histories* (1786) (retitled *The History of the Robins*)

Lecture 3

- Almond, David. *Skellig* (1998)
- †Anderson, M.T. *Feed* (2002)
- †Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *The Secret Garden* (1911)
- †Charlesworth, Maria Louisa. *Ministering Children* (1854)
- Day, Thomas. *Sandford and Merton* (1783, 1786, 1789)
- †Grahame, Kenneth. *Dream Days* (1895) and *The Golden Age* (1898)
- †Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (2003)

- Jefferies, Richard. *Bevis: The story of a boy* (1893)
- †Kipling, Rudyard. *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *The Second Jungle Book* (1895)
- †L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time* (1962)
- †Nesbit, E[dith]. *The Wouldbegoods* (1901)
- †Pullman, Philip. *His Dark Materials* trilogy (1995–2000)
- †Ransome, Arthur. *Swallows and Amazons* series (1930–1947)
- Stead, Rebecca. *When You Reach Me* (2009)
- Travers, P.L. *Mary Poppins* (1934)
- Uttley, Alison. *The Country Child* (1931)
- †White, E.B. *Charlotte's Web* (1952)

Lecture 4

- Ashford, Daisy. *The Young Visitors, or, Mr. Salteena's Plan* (1919)
- †Carroll, Lewis. *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871)
- Cruikshank, George. *George Cruikshank's Fairy Tale Library* (1870)
- †Grahame, Kenneth. *The Wind in the Willows* (1908)
- †Kingsley, Charles. *The Water-Babies* (1863)
- Lang, Andrew. "Coloured" *Fairy Books* (1889–1910)
- †MacDonald, George. *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872)
- †Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit* (1937)

Lecture 5

- Blyton, Enid. *Malory Towers* series (1946–1951) and *St. Clare's* series (1941–1945)
- Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885)
- Coolidge, Susan. *What Katy Did* (1872) and *What Katy Did at School* (1873)
- †Cormier, Robert. *The Chocolate War* (1974)
- Cross, Gillian. *The Demon Headmaster* series (1982–2002)
- Dyer, Elinor Brent. *Chalet School* series (1925–1970)
- Farrar, F.W. *Eric, or Little by Little, a tale of Roslyn School* (1858)
- Fielding, Sarah. *The Governess, or, little female academy* (1749)
- Hughes, Thomas. *Tom Brown's School Days, by an Old Boy* (1857)
- Jones, Diana Wynne. *Witch Week* (1982)
- †Lyga, Barry. *Boy Toy* (2007)
- Mayne, William. *A Swarm in May* (1955)
- Nesbit, E[dith]. *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904) and *The Railway Children* (1906)
- Pascal, Francine. *Sweet Valley High* series (1983–2003)
- Richards, Frank. *Billy Bunter* series (1908–1940)
- †Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter* series (1997–2007)
- Spyri, Johanna. *Heidi* (1881)
- Westall, Robert. *Falling into Glory* (1993)
- Yonge, Charlotte M. *The Daisy Chain* (1856)

Lecture 6

Alger, Horatio. *Ragged Dick* (1867), *Mark the Match Boy* (1869), *Phil the Fiddler* (1872), and *Bound to Rise* (1873)

Aunt Hattie (Mrs. Harriett Newell Woods Baker). *The Hole in the Pocket* (1881)

†Brenda (Georgina Castle Smith). *Froggy's Little Brother* (1875)

Cummins, Maria Susanna. *The Lamplighter* (1854)

Finley, Martha. *Elsie Dinsmore* series (1867–1905)

†Janeway, James. *A Token for Children* (1671–72)

Leslie, Madeline. *Diligent Dick, or the Young Farmer* (1871)

Porter, Eleanor H. *Pollyanna* (1913)

Stretton, Hesba (Sarah Smith). *Jessica's First Prayer* (1866) and *Little Meg's Children* (1868)

Wetherell, Elizabeth. *The Wide, Wide World* (1850)

Lecture 7

Childers, Erskine. *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903)

Collins, Colin. *The Man from the Clouds* (1912)

Ewing, Juliana Horatia. *The Story of a Short Life* (1885)

Henty, G.A. *With Lee in Virginia* (1890) and *With Kitchner in the Soudan* (1903)

Hines, Lewis. *Men at Work* (1932)

Jansson, Tove. *The Book about Moomin, Mymble, and Little My* (1952)

Joyce, James. *The Cat and the Devil* (1936)

†Milne, A.A. *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928)

Mitchison, Naomi, ed. *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents* (1932)

Munari, Bruno. *The Circus in the Mist* (1968)

Perkins, Lucy Fitch. *The Dutch Twins* (1911)

Potter, Beatrix. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902)

Shaw, Ruth, and Alan Potamkin, eds. *Our Lenin for Boys and Girls* (1934)

Stein, Gertrude. *The World Is Round* (1939)

†Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–1955)

Wedding, Alex (Grete Weiskopf). *Eddie and the Gypsie* (1935)

Wodehouse, P.G. *The Swoop! Or, How Clarence Saved England: A Tale of the Great Invasion* (1909)

Woolf, Virginia. *Nurse Lugton's Golden Thimble* (1923–24)

Lecture 8

Alexander, Lloyd. *The Chronicles of Prydain* (1964–1968)

Baum, L. Frank. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900)

Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline* (2002)

†Garner, Alan. *The Owl Service* (1967)

†Lewis, C.S. *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950–1956)

Norton, Mary. *The Borrowers* (1952)

†Pearce, Philippa. *Tom's Midnight Garden* (1958)

†Sendak, Maurice. *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963)
Storr, Catherine. *Marianne Dreams* (1958) and *Marianne and Mark* (1960)
Westall, Robert. *The Scarecrows* (1982)

Lecture 9

Boston, Lucy. *The Children of Green Knowe* (1954)
Garner, Alan. *Red Shift* (1973) and *The Stone Book Quartet* (1976–1978)
Jones, Diana Wynne. *The Homeward Bounders* (1981) and *The Magicians of Caprona* (1980)
Scieszka, Jon, and Lane Smith. *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* (1992)

Lecture 10

Ahlberg, Allan, and Janet Ahlberg. *Bye Bye Baby* (1989)
Ballantyne, J.M. *The Coral Island* (1858)
Block, Francesca Lia. *Weetzie Bat* (1989)
Child, Lauren. *Clarice Bean* books (1999–2010)
Cleary, Beverly. *Beezus and Ramona* books (1968–1999)
Cormier, Robert. *We All Fall Down* (1991)
Edgeworth, Maria. *The Parent's Assistant* (England, 1796; America, 1809)
Edwards, Dorothy. *My Naughty Little Sister* series (1952–1974)
Fine, Anne. *Goggle-Eyes* (1989)
Gaiman, Neil, and Dave McKean. *The Wolves in the Walls* (2003)
†Hinton, S.E. *Rumble Fish* (1975)
Hoban, Russell, and Lillian Hoban. *Frances* books (1960–1970)
Jones, Diana Wynne. *The Ogre Downstairs* (1974)
L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wind in the Door* (1973) and *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* (1978)
Mahy, Margaret. *The Haunting* (1982)
McKay, Hilary. Casson family series (2001–2007)
Montgomery, L.M. *Anne of Green Gables* (1908)
†Newbery, John. *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (1744)
Parnell, Peter, and Justin Richardson. *And Tango Makes Three* (2005)
Paterson, Katherine. *A Bridge to Terabithia* (1977)
†Rosoff, Meg. *How I Live Now* (2004)
Simons, Francesca. *Horrid Henry* books (1994–)
Streatfield, Noel. *Ballet Shoes* (1936)
Taylor, Mildred D. Logan family sequence (1976–2004)
Wiggen, Kate Douglas. *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1903)
†Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House* series (1932–1943)
Wilson, Jacqueline. *The Diamond Girls* (2004)
Wyss, Johann David. *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1st ed., 1812–13)

Lecture 11

- Blume, Judy. *Forever* (1975)
- †Burgess, Melvin. *Smack* (1996)
- Cabot, Meg. *The Princess Diaries* books (2000–2009)
- †Chambers, Aidan. *Breaktime* (1978)
- Chbosky, Stephen. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (1999)
- †Lanagan, Margo. *Tender Morsels* (2009)
- Mahy, Margaret. *The Changeover* (1984) and *Alchemy* (2002)
- Meyer, Stephenie. *New Moon* (2006)
- Rennison, Louise. “. . . and that’s when it fell off in my hand.” *Further fabbitty-fab confessions of Georgia Nicolson* (2005) and *Brothers, Boyfriends and Babe Magnets* (2006)
- Salinger, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951)
- Townsend, Sue. *Adrian Mole* series (1982–2009)

Lecture 12

- †Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak* (1999) and *Wintergirls* (2009)
- Brooks, Kevin. *Candy* (2005)
- Burchill, Julie. *Sugar Rush* (2004)
- Geras, Adele. *Watching the Roses* (1991)
- Grimm, Jacob, and Wilhelm Grimm. (Brothers Grimm). “Snow-White and Rose-Red” (1812)
- Hautzig, Deborah. *Second Star to the Right* (1981)
- Hinton, S.E. *That Was Then, This Is Now* (1971)
- Kenrick, Joanna. *Red Tears* (2007)
- Mee, Arthur. *Book of Knowledge* (published in installments between 1908–1910)
- O’Sullivan, Mark. *Angels Without Wings* (1997)
- Rayban, Chloe. *Virtual Sexual Reality* (1994)
- Suzuma, Tabitha. *From Where I Stand* (2007)
- Tan, Shaun. *The Red Tree* (2001)
- Voigt, Cynthia. *Orfe* (1993)
- Vrettos, A.M. *Skin* (2006)
- Walsh, Edna. *Chatroom* (2007)

Lecture 13

- Appleton, Victor (Stratemeyer Syndicate), *Tom Swift/Tom Swift Jr.* series (1954–1971)
- Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008–2010)
- Du Bois, William Pène. *The Twenty-One Balloons* (1948)
- Frank, E.R. *America Is Me* (2002)
- Heinlein, Robert. *Rocket Ship Galileo* (1947)
- Kästner, Erich. *Émile and the Detectives* (1929–)
- Keene, Carolyn (Stratemeyer Syndicate), *Nancy Drew* series (1930–)

Lawrence, Louise. *Children of the Dust* (1985)
Levithan, David. *Wide Awake* (2006)
MacGregor, Ellen. *Mrs. Pickering Goes to Mars* (1951)
Mark, Jan. *Useful Idiots* (2004)
O'Brien, Robert C. *Z for Zachariah* (1973)
Rennison, Louise. *Angus, thongs and full-frontal snogging* (1999)
Rubenstein, Gillian. *Galax-Arena* (1995)
Scott, Elizabeth. *Living Dead Girl* (2008)
Shusterman, Neal. *Unwind* (2007)
Swindells, Robert. *Brother in the Land* (1984)
Westerfeld, Scott. *Uglies* quartet (2005–2007)

Lecture 14

BBC (producer-publisher). *In the Night Garden* (program first aired 2007)
Carman, Patrick. *Trackers* series (2010–)
Cousins, Lucy. *Maisy's House* (1995)
Gibbons, Alan. *Shadow of the Minotaur* (2000)
Hit Entertainment (producer-publisher). *Bob the Builder* (first television program aired 1999)
Jones, Diana Wynne. *Hexwood* (1993)
Kostick, Conor. *Epic* (2004)
Pullinger, Kate, and Chris Joseph, eds. Bradfield Company (producer-publisher) *Inanimate Alice* (transmedia website)
Rushdie, Salman. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990) and *Luka and the Fire of Life* (2010)
Troward, Amelia (?). *The History of Little Fanny, exemplified in a series of figures* (1827)
Ubisoft Montreal (producer-publisher). *Assassin's Creed* (2008) and *Assassin's Creed II* (2009) (transmedia video game)



COURSE MATERIALS

Suggested Readings

- Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Vintage, 2010 (1978).
- Bradford, Clare, Kerry Mallan, John Stephens, and Robyn McCallum. *New World Orders in Contemporary Children's Literature: Utopian Transformations*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Carrington, Bridget, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel. *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*. Lichfield, UK: Pied Piper, Ltd., 2008.
- Cunningham, Hugh. *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 2005 (1995).
- Demers, Patricia, ed. *From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850*. 3rd ed. Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Hunt, Peter, and Millicent Lenz. *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. New York: Continuum, 2001.
- Lerer, Seth. *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Maybin, Janet, and Nicola J. Watson, eds. *Children's Literature: Approaches and Territories*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Montgomery, Heather, and Nicola J. Watson, eds. *Children's Literature: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Natov, Roni. *The Poetics of Childhood*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Nelson, Claudia. "The Unheimlich Maneuver: Uncanny Domesticity in the Urban Waif Tale." Chapter 8. *Youth Cultures: Texts, Images, and Identities*. Eds. Kerry Mallan and Sharyn Pearce. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003.
- Pinsent, Pat. "Theories of Genre and Gender: Change and Continuity in the School Story." *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction*. Kimberley Reynolds, ed. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2005.
- Reynolds, Kimberley. *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Rustin, Margaret, and Michael Rustin. *Narratives of Love and Loss: Studies in Modern Children's Fiction*. Rev. ed. London: Karnac Books, 2002 (1988).
- Tolkien, J.R.R. "On Fairy Stories." *Tree and Leaf*. Oxford: Tolkien Estate Ltd./HarperCollinsPublishers, 2001 (1964).

Trites, Roberta Seelinger. *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2004.

Tucker, Nicholas, and Nikki Gamble. *Family Fictions*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Alderson, Brian, and Felix de Marez Oyens. *Be Merry and Wise: Origins of Children's Book Publishing in England, 1650–1850*. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2006.

Alston, Ann. *The Family in English Children's Literature*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Applebaum, Noga. *Representations of Technology in Science Fiction for Young People*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Appleyard, J.A. *Becoming a Reader: The Experience of Fiction from Childhood to Adulthood*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Avery, Gillian. *Behold the Child: American Children and Their Books 1621–1922*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Blake, Andrew. *The Irresistible Rise of Harry Potter*. New York: Verso, 2002.

Bradford, Clare. "Race, Ethnicity, and Colonialism." Pp. 39–50. *The Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*. Ed. David Rudd. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Burn, Andrew. "Multi-Text Magic: Harry Potter in Book, Film, and Videogame." Pp. 227–49. *Turning the Page: Children's Literature in Performance and the Media*. Eds. Fiona Collins and Jeremy Ridgman. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006.

Byatt, A.S. *The Children's Book*. New York: Vintage, 2009.

Carroll, Lewis. *The Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition*. Notes: Martin Gardner. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999 (1960).

Caruth, Cathy, ed. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Darton, F.J. Harvey. *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*. 3rd ed. Ed. Brian Alderson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Davin, Anna. *Growing Up Poor: Home, School and Street in London 1870–1914*. London: Rivers Oram Press, 1996.

Dusinberre, Juliet. *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999 (1987).

Eccleshare, Julia. "Teenage Fictions: Realism, Romances, Contemporary Problem Novels." Pp. 545–55. *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. Vol. 1. 2nd ed. Ed. Peter Hunt. New York: Routledge, 2004.

- Erikson, Erik H. *Childhood and Society*. New York: Vintage Books, USA, 1995.
- Falconer, Rachel. "Young Adult Fiction and the Crossover Phenomenon." Pp. 87–99. *The Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*. Ed. David Rudd. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Flanders, Judith. *The Victorian House*. London: Harper Perennial, 2004.
- Gargano, Elizabeth. *Reading Victorian Schoolrooms: Childhood and Education in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Garth, John. *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth*. Orlando: Harcourt/Mariner Books, 2005.
- Giroux, Henry A. *Stealing Innocence: Corporate Culture's War on Children*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.
- Greenway, Betty, ed. *Twice-Told Children's Tales: The Influence of Childhood Reading on Writers for Adults*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Grenby, Matthew Orville. "The School Story." *Children's Literature*. Chapter 4. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.
- Gubar, Marah. *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2010.
- Higonnet, Anne. *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1998.
- Hilton, Mary, Morag Styles, and Victor Watson, eds. *Opening the Nursery Door: Reading, Writing and Childhood 1600–1900*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Hourihan, Margery. *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Hunt, Peter, ed. *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1995.
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. New York: Routledge, 1981.
- Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. Rev. ed. New York: New York University Press, 2008.
- Kincaid, James R. *Child Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Leavis, Frank R., and Denys Thompson. *Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1964 (1933).
- Lenz, Millicent, and Carole Scott, eds. *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005.

- Lewis, C.S. "On Three Ways of Writing for Children." *On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature*. Ed. Walter Hooper. Orlando: Harcourt/Mariner Books, 2002 (1966).
- Lomax, Elaine. "Writing Other Lives: The Outcast Narratives of Hesba Stretton." Pages 1–80. Bridget Carrington, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel. *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*. Lichfield, UK: Pied Piper, Ltd., 2008.
- Mackey, Margaret. *Literacies Across Media: Playing the Text*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Mallan, Kerry, and Sharyn Pearce, eds. *Youth Cultures: Texts, Images, and Identities*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003.
- McCallum, Robyn. *Ideologies of Identity in Adolescent Fiction: The Dialogic Construction of Subjectivity*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Mendlesohn, Farah. *The Inter-Galactic Playground: A Critical Study of Children's and Teens' Science Fiction*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2009.
- Miall, Antony, and Peter Miall. *The Victorian Nursery Book*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1990 (1988).
- Mickenberg, Julia L. *Learning from the Left: Children's Literature, the Cold War, and Radical Politics in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2006.
- Mickenberg, Julia L., and Phil Nel, eds. *Tales for Little Rebels: A Collection of Radical Children's Literature*. New York: New York University Press, 2010.
- Muir, Percy. *English Children's Books 1600–1900*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1954.
- Murray, Janet. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998.
- Musgrave, Peter W. *From Brown to Bunter: The Life and Death of the School Story*. London: Routledge, 1985.
- O'Malley, Andrew. *The Making of the Modern Child: Children's Literature and Childhood in the Late Eighteenth Century*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*. New York: Riverhead Trade, 2005 (1995).
- Plotz, Judith. *Romanticism and the Vocation of Childhood*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2001.
- Prince, Alison. *Kenneth Grahame: An Innocent in the Wild Wood*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2009 (1994).

- Reynolds, Kimberley. *Girls Only? Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880–1910*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.
- . “Changing Families in Children’s Fiction.” *The Cambridge Companion to Children’s Literature*. Pp. 193–208. Eds. M.O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- . “Sociology, Politics, the Family: Children and Families in Anglo-American Children’s Fiction, 1920–60.” Pp. 23–41. *Modern Children’s Literature: An Introduction*. Ed. Kimberley Reynolds. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Robson, Catherine. *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Rose, Jacqueline. *The Case of Peter Pan, or, The Impossibility of Children’s Fiction*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992 (1984).
- Ruwe, Donelle, ed. *Culturing the Child 1690–1914: Essays in Memory of Mitzi Myers*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005.
- Sambell, Kay. “Carnivalizing the Future: *Mortal Engines*.” Pp. 374–87. *Children’s Literature: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*. Eds. Heather Montgomery and Nicola J. Watson. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Spufford, Francis. *The Child That Books Built: A Life in Reading*. New York: Picador, 2003.
- Stephens, John. *Language and Ideology in Children’s Fiction*. Chapter 3. London: Longman Publishing Group, 1995.
- Stephens, John, and Robyn McCallum. *Retelling Stories, Framing Culture: Traditional Stories and Metanarratives in Children’s Literature*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Tatar, Maria. *Enchanted Hunters: The Power of Stories in Childhood*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009.
- Thiel, Elizabeth. *The Fantasy of the Family: Nineteenth-Century Children’s Literature and the Myth of the Domestic Ideal*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Thiel, Liz. “The Woman Known as Brenda.” Pp. 147–208. Bridget Carrington, Elaine Lomax, Mary Sebag-Montefiore, and Liz Thiel. *A Victorian Quartet: Four Forgotten Women Writers*. Lichfield, UK: Pied Piper, Ltd., 2008.
- Townsend, John Rowe. *Written for Children: An Outline of English-language Children’s Literature*. 4th rev. ed. HarperCollins Children’s Books, 1992 (1974).
- Wall, Barbara. *The Narrator’s Voice: The Dilemma of Children’s Fiction*. London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 1991.

- Waller, Alison. *Constructing Adolescence in Fantastic Realism*. New York: Routledge, 2011 (2008).
- Walsh, Jill Paton. "The Rainbow Surface." Eds. Margaret Meek, Aidan Warlow, and Griselda Barton. *The Cool Web: The Pattern of Children's Reading*. Pp. 192–95. London: The Bodley Head, 1977.
- Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

RECORDED BOOKS

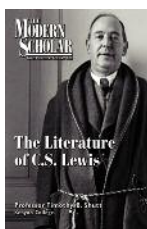
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Professor Timothy B. Shutt—Kenyon College

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