Journal of Juvenilia Studies

Published by the International Society for Literary Juvenilia

The Journal of Juvenilia Studies | JJS

JJS is published annually as an open-access peer-reviewed journal that presents the latest scholarship in the field of juvenilia studies (with a particular focus on literary and visual works of art), as well as book reviews and notices. The website also provides a continually updated list of work produced by scholars in the field.

The editorial board welcomes submissions throughout the year, but individual volumes will have submission deadlines advertised on the website in Announcements. A final decision to publish or not is made by the appropriate editor after peer review. All submissions to *JJS* should follow MLA style (8th edition).

Queries concerning articles should be sent to the Editor at peterson.lesley@gmail.com. Queries concerning book reviews should be sent to the Book Review Editor at dcouto@unsw.edu.au. Queries concerning enrolling as a reader should be sent to the Subscription Manager at catherinej1217@gmail.com.

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ISSN 2561-8318 (Print)
ISSN 2561-8326 (Online)
URL: journalofjuveniliastudies.com

Cover image: Handmade marbled paper, creator unknown. English, circa 1830. Wikimedia Commons (commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PaperMarbling002England1830Detail.jpg).

CONTENTS

Volume 1 (2018)

EDITORIAL

ON BEHALF of the International Society for Literary Juvenilia (ISLJ) and the members of the editorial board of this, the ISLJ's *Journal of Juvenilia Studies* (*JJS*), I am proud to introduce our inaugural issue. The *JJS* was conceived and the editorial board formed during the Fifth International Conference on Literary Juvenilia, hosted in 2017 by the University of North Alabama. This publication is itself part of the larger project of forming what has become the ISLJ—a project that was conceived during the Fourth International Conference, hosted in 2015 by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The launch of this issue is scheduled to take place as part of the Sixth International Conference on Literary Juvenilia, hosted in July 2018 by the University of Durham; fittingly, the ISLJ will hold its first AGM at that time as well. We will continue to publish an issue annually for the foreseeable future.

Of course, the origins of the burgeoning international community of juvenilia scholars, whose work the *JJS* is designed to showcase and support, may be traced to the years before there was even a *first* international conference. The history of juvenilia studies must be well known to most of our readers, but it is still a pleasure and an honour to acknowledge the debt this project owes to the pioneering work of Juliet McMaster and Christine Alexander, and to thank them and each one of the other stalwart and stellar members of our editorial board for their continued leadership in the ongoing work of what Alexander and McMaster so aptly describe, in their foundational collection, *The Child Writer from Austen to Woolf* (Cambridge UP, 2005), as the "recovery, publication, and critical exploration of childhood writers" (2).

The *JJS* is an open-access journal, hosted by the University of Alberta, Canada, and I should like here to acknowledge as well the invaluable support of Sonya Betz, Digital Initiatives Projects Librarian, University of Alberta Libraries. Although the *JJS* is free, we encourage you to subscribe, which will ensure automatic delivery of each issue and of related announcements, such as calls for papers. Indeed, I hope you will consider submitting an article or book review for our next issue. We welcome queries and suggestions. But whatever the degree of your future participation in this ever-growing community, I thank you, today, for taking up our invitation to peruse this, our first issue. May its contents contribute to your knowledge and pleasure as they have done to mine.

Lesley Peterson

IN SEARCH OF THE AUTHORIAL SELF: BRANWELL BRONTË'S MICROCOSMIC WORLD

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CHARLOTTE Brontë's early writings are now famous; those of her brother Branwell are less familiar even to Brontë aficionados. What is generally known of Branwell is the story of his eventual descent into drink and drugs, leading to his reputation as "a spectre in the Brontë story, in pathetic contrast with the astonishing achievements of his sisters," as the advertisement for Daphne du Maurier's biography of Branwell so poignantly puts it (Publisher's Blurb). Yet only a year younger than Charlotte, Branwell was both partner and often leader in the creation of events in the prolific writing project associated with their imaginative world of Glass Town and Angria. Since 2017 was the Bicentenary of Branwell's birth, it seems an appropriate time to reassess the brother of the Brontës and to celebrate his remarkable early creativity, rather than focus on the later tragic decline of this precocious child.

The surviving material objects from that childhood tell the story of the Brontës' early collaborative play, their imitation of print culture, and their production of magazines for an imaginary audience. Figure 1 displays the earliest extant writings of the famous Brontë juvenilia. They represent some twenty little hand-made booklets[1] with minuscule lettering and tiny illustrations. The open booklet in the centre, displaying pencil and watercolour sketches, is by Branwell: the earliest dated manuscript, written 12 March 1827 when he was nine years old. It contains pictures of his toy soldiers enacting the Battle of Washington and a few sentences describing the event. These were the wooden soldiers from the box of twelve that his father had given him as a birthday present and that he had shared with his sisters, an act that initiated the Young Men's play which eventually grew into the fictional saga of Glass Town and Angria. It is significant that Charlotte's earliest story book, shown on the

For abbreviations used in citations, please see list of works cited.

Journal of Juvenilia Studies 1 (2018), pp. 3-19. DOI: 10.29173/jjs126

left in figure 1, is a present for her sister Anne, an illustrated story about a little girl of the same name, whereas Branwell has fashioned a "Battell Book," reflecting a fascination with military affairs that continued throughout his writing career. The physical object is a crude tiny hand-sewn booklet of eight pages (only 5 x 8 cm) with a cover of blue paper cut from a sugar bag. Paper was scarce and expensive at the parsonage, and the young Brontës practised recycling with an enthusiasm that would put most of us to shame. The other two booklets shown here are by Charlotte, written three years later: more sophisticated and even smaller (just over 5 x 3 cm, a matchbox size), with brown paper covers and minuscule script that imitates newspaper print. These are magazines initially fashioned to match the size of their audience, the twelve-inch toy soldiers. The tiny size of the print had the added advantage of rendering the contents of the manuscripts illegible to adult eyes, helping to maintain the secrecy of their shared imaginary world.

Fig. 1. The earliest miniature Brontë manuscripts (courtesy of the Brontë society).

When I first started working on these little manuscripts, most people viewed them simply as curiosities and wondered why I wasted my time on such insignificant "kids' stuff" (as one professor put it when I began my first job). Since then, interest in the Brontë early writings and especially their value has risen exponentially. In terms of current market value, a miniature booklet of twenty pages, written by Charlotte at fourteen, sold for £690,850 to a French investor in 2011, more than twice the pre-sale estimate.[2] The Brontës would have been even more astounded by this sum than

I was, and it is clear that different value factors are operating here from those discussed in this essay. No doubt the Brontë name and the rarity of the object played a part in the sale, but so too, perhaps, did the fact that juvenilia are now valued and seen as significant artefacts equal to letters and adult manuscripts. In this paper, however, I am more interested in the intrinsic value of these objects, both the tangible and intangible qualities associated with them: the secrecy implied by their tiny size, the toy soldiers as first audience, the literary models reflected in these booklets, the recycled materials used as covers that indicate household custom, the fictional authors and real authors, the creative practice demonstrated, and much more—including what we might term their microcosmic value.

The *OED* gives a number of related definitions for the word "microcosm," but generally speaking a microcosm is a place, situation, or community, regarded as encapsulating in miniature the characteristic qualities or features of something much larger. In his early novel *Vivian Grey*, for example, Benjamin Disraeli refers to "The microcosm of a public school" to convey his belief that the English public school represents all the features in miniature of the larger community his protagonist strives to enter (1: 11). Originally, however, the term was used to refer to human nature or an individual human as representing the world or universe—hence its juxtaposition with the word "macrocosm" and its use in philosophical theories of the cosmos. G. K. Chesterton invokes this earlier meaning in his assertion that "Man is the microcosm; man is the measure of all things" (34). In this essay, I align the term with the concept of "paracosm," a more recently coined word that is increasingly being used in relation to long-term, full-scale imaginary worlds created by children, in order to read Branwell's microcosmic world—especially the paracosm he created with his sister Charlotte—as representative of the larger adult world from which (as children) they were excluded. Such an approach touches on questions relating not only to small things but also to such large ideas as representation, power, gender, and identity. In relation to Branwell specifically, I suggest that his frenetic literary output is a remarkable witness to early artistic talent, an energetic experimentation with modes of the authorial self, but that his paracosmic world also documents the way imaginative excess and misdirected creativity can handicap a promising young author.[3]

Branwell's Miniature Paracosmic World as Microcosm

PARACOSMS are usually sophisticated alternative realities with their own history, culture, geography, politics, publications, and language. Although they need not reflect the larger real world, most of them inevitably do. Robert Silvey and Stephen MacKeith, in their seminal study "The Paracosm: A Special form of Fantasy," define the paracosm as "a spontaneously created, but maintained and elaborated, imaginary private world" (24; see also Cohen and MacKeith 22). From this definition the "imaginary private world" might or might not be a microcosm, but in my view paracosms will always have microcosmic features, that is, will always reflect in some way the larger real world. As MacKeith points out about the children he and Silvey

examined, "Their imagination didn't work in a vacuum" (22). Based on their study, Silvey and MacKeith list five types of paracosm, organized according to influence: these include worlds based on technology and the future; worlds centred on special places and communities, like schools or theatres; and others that rely on elaborate systems, documents and languages, rather like the Rowley world that the young Thomas Chatterton created with genealogies, maps and architectural drawings. In the Brontës' case, their imaginary world does draw on this last type, but their Glass Town creation fits most squarely into the two most common categories identified by Silvey and MacKeith, namely worlds centred around toys and animals and worlds based on islands and countries.

Imaginary worlds arising from play with toys and animals are usually shared by a small family group. They comprise first the physical objects; then, as the children mature, their imaginations take over. As one of the paracosmists interviewed by Silvey and MacKeith said, "Once we realized we could draw and write about the characters, we were emancipated from the toys" (179). This was exactly the Brontës' experience: the toy soldiers were gradually broken or lost, and their imaginative representatives continued the saga as heroes and authors, directed by their creators—the Brontës themselves. The second common type of paracosm, again significant in the case of the Brontës, involves islands, countries and their inhabitants, and has a heavy focus on stories, featuring some combination of history, romance and biography, that document relationships and the fate of special characters. When Emily and Anne Brontë broke away from their elder siblings' influence, they established the world of Gondal based on rivalry between two islands and their powerful rulers. And the Glass Town and Angrian saga, created and continued by Charlotte and Branwell, involves history, romance and biography par excellence.

Perhaps the most important features of paracosmic play are that the invented worlds are private, seldom revealed to those outside the group, and that the worlds are consistent. The secrecy value of the Brontës' miniature booklets has already been noted; neither their aunt (who ran the household when Mrs. Brontë died) nor their father had any idea of the explosively violent or sexual nature of the Brontë children's early writings. At Roe Head school, Charlotte was tempted to reveal some of the little magazines to her friend Mary Taylor but thought better of the idea the next day since her siblings would see this as betrayal. When, as young adults, the Brontë sisters published poems relating to their sagas, they altered characters and place names to disguise their source. Even Branwell, the first published of the siblings (though his sisters never knew), was careful to mask Angrian references, although most of his eighteen poems published in newspapers were signed "Northangerland," his favourite paracosmic pseudonym.

Both Charlotte and Branwell ensured the consistency of their imaginary world. When Branwell exuberantly kills off important characters in his manuscripts, Charlotte comes to the rescue and, in effect, resurrects them for the next stories (*Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë* 34); and when Branwell becomes bored with his inventions, such as the Glass Town magazine he edits, Charlotte takes over his initiative and keeps the publication going for several more years. It was Branwell, however, who took a pride in systematizing their private world and maintaining a consistent political

structure, features typical of paracosmic play. He documented in encyclopaedic detail, in neat lists, footnotes, sketches and maps, the geography, history, government, and social structure of the Glass Town Federation (and later, the new kingdom of Angria)—laying down the parameters of the imaginary world, ready for the drama, history, and military fiction he would write and illustrate (see fig. 2), and for the stories of high life and gothic romances that Charlotte favoured. From the age of ten, he was interested in architecture: his book with illustrations of "the most celebrated

Fig. 2. "Terror" by Branwell Brontë, aged twelve years, an early character study related to his interest in war (courtesy of the Brontë Society).

Public Buildings in London" is annotated with his opinions: St Paul's Cathedral "capital," the Bank of England "very Bad," Somerset House "Tolerable," and so on (Alexander and Sellars 422–23). He transposed versions of these into Glass Town, later sketching them in the margins of manuscripts.[4] Branwell gained further inspiration from his art lessons, using the copies he made (see, e.g., Alexander and

Sellars 298, colour plate 12) as models for grand buildings like the Tower of All Nations and the Verdopolitan Parliament. (Glass Town is renamed "Verdopolis" half way through the saga.) His manuscripts note the heights of mountain ranges, the lengths of rivers, populations of cities, important churches, grand palaces, the country estates of the nobles, and even more humble sites such as the pubs and dens frequented by a Glass Town underclass of rogues, body-snatchers and murderers—all features that provide consistent context for discrete scenes and action in any number of related poems, plays, novelettes, satires, and serials written by the young Brontës.

From the beginning the Brontës were aware that their creation was fictional, a further pre-requisite of the paracosm. They acknowledged this by inventing special roles for themselves as fictional creators, distinguishing their actual role as child authors from their role as manipulators of supernatural and other unlikely narrative action. Realising their god-like powers over the imaginary world, they named themselves Chief Genii, creators of the Glass Town with ultimate authority over events and special responsibility for protecting their particular chosen country and its leader. Branwell was especially keen on the power this gave him in the "play" with mere mortals, his invented characters. He combined the idea of the Greek Gods on Mount Olympus (a motif from his lessons in the Classics) with the genii from the *Arabian Nights* and with representations of God from the Bible: the Chief Genii appear on clouds amidst thunder and lightning, with the trumpet-like voice of God, or on splendid ethereal thrones before which the Glass Town mortals are often blinded and fall down "as dead." Unlike his sisters, Branwell made a point of stamping his new authoritative image on the title pages of many of his early manuscripts, illustrating his authority as "Mentor," a figure of justice, in a colophon (as in fig. 3). The Chief Genii lend perspective to the narrative process and allow the young writers to play with their role as authors, intervening in events and disrupting the "normal" lives of their characters. Written as the saga is from the point of view of the Glass Town characters, the fictional narrators are only vaguely aware that there are huge creatures (the Brontës themselves, disguised as Genii) who read their minds and control their fate. The Genii are formulated as guardians of the land, protectors and often arbitrary judges; a creative device that works well until "Chief Genius Brannii" decides to run amok and has to be restrained. He appears to have disliked the role of protector, preferring to go on the rampage now and then, uttering "the horrible howl" of his "war-cry" (*EEW* 1: 39). So Charlotte eventually steps in and formally expels all the genii in her poem, "The trumpet hath sounded" (11 Dec 1831, *Poems* 91–93), modelled on Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib," giving us a good example of the collaborative rivalry between brother and sister.

This awareness of creative power, irrespective of gender, is a new sensation for the motherless children. It is inherent in their very first written records. When we read Charlotte's "History of the Year" we sense the excitement of possession and control:

> Next morning Branwell came to our door with a box of soldiers. Emily and I jumped out of bed and I snatched up one and exclaimed,

> "This is the Duke of Wellington! It shall be mine!" When I said this, Emily likewise took one and said it should be hers. When Anne came down she took one also …. Branwell chose "Bonaparte." (*EEW* 1: 5)

Branwell had already invented and documented earlier "plays" with previous sets of toy soldiers, but until Wellington appeared Charlotte and her sisters had shown little interest in their brother's military manoeuvers or invented lands. Pre-empting her brother's usual leadership role, Charlotte composed what she calls "A Romantic Tale" about the voyage of the twelve adventurers or "young men" (the toy soldiers), who discover the coast of Guinea and, after fighting the local Ashantee tribes, elect the Duke of Wellington as their leader and acquire a vast tract of west Africa centred around what is now Ghana and Nigeria. Their federal capital of Glass Town/Verdopolis is at the delta of the Niger. (The later kingdom of Angria is situated to the east.)

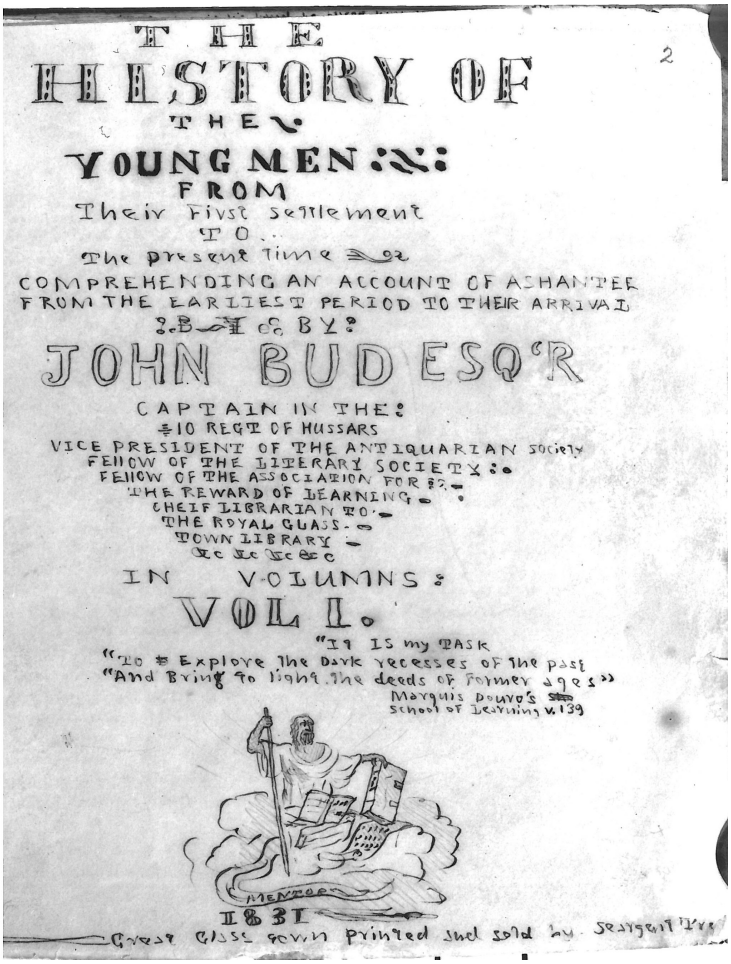

Fig. 3. Title page to Branwell Brontë's The History of the Young Men, *15 December 1830–7 May 1831; reproduced from the Juvenilia Press edition edited by William Baker, with others (2010).*

Not to be outdone by his sister, and in an effort to reassert control over the destinies of *his* toy soldiers, Branwell writes what he calls a "real" history, correcting his sister's version and laying down the physical and historical context from his point of view. He grandly titles it *The History of the Young Men from Their First Settlement to the Present Time* (15 December 1829–27 May 1831), and takes particular care over the title page and credentials of the author Captain John Bud, the eminent Glass Town political writer and historian, one of Branwell's several pseudonyms (fig. 3). Branwell wrote eighteen pages in extraordinarily neat minuscule printing, laying out his pages like a contemporary history, with headed summaries of "Contents" for each chapter and elaborate footnotes (fig. 4). It is notable that Branwell, as the only son, seems to have had privileged access to better quality lined paper (and later bound notebooks), for what he considers an important work, whereas Charlotte uses mainly recycled, unlined, poorer-quality paper of smaller size. The very length of the title, and the carefully-imitated title page based on print culture at the time, suggest the business-like, almost obsessive way in which Branwell contradicts much of Charlotte's fantasy and records instead "exact" dates, battle manoeuvres, government procedures, and business activity. As we have seen in the case of the Chief Genii, rivalry and the power of the author become central features of the Brontë paracosm, both in relation to the creator siblings and amongst the leading heroes and authors of the Glass Town and Angrian saga.

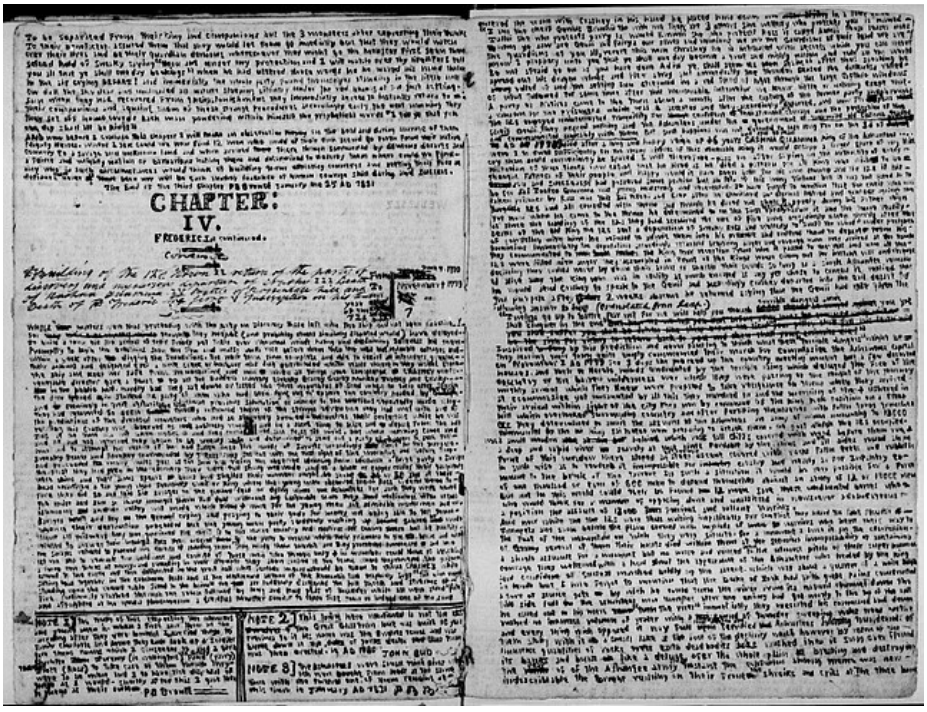

Fig. 4. Manuscript page of Branwell Brontë's History of the Young Men*; reproduced from Juvenilia Press edition (2010), p. xxii.*

Branwell's *History of the Young Men* is a good example of an ostensibly "small world" encapsulating the features of something larger. Unlike later manuscripts, the "History" features undisguised references to the British armed forces and their command of the seas. In fine colonial style, the Twelves under Branwell's control set out deliberately to found a colony in Africa, reflecting British and European land grabs of the period. En route they land at Ascension Island where they engage in fierce battle with the Dutch garrison and manage to annihilate it. In West Africa, they encounter a group of Ashantee, capture and ransom prisoners in exchange for land, trade rights, and peace; but eventually the Ashantee declare war on the British colonists, who in turn destroy the Ashantee capital and massacre its inhabitants. When the authorities in England hear of the Young Men's success, they request a leader for the British troops against Napoleon. Arthur Wellesley is sent; he defeats Napoleon and returns to Glass Town as the heroic Duke of Wellington, who is then elected King of the federation. Branwell is creating here his own miniature version of the Peninsula Wars and mapping onto his African colony the names and battles associated with the two greatest heroes of the day. In subsequent manuscripts, he continues to reconfigure European colonial aspirations, inventing republican uprisings inspired by Napoleon and by demagogues from his "Frenchyland." There is little parallel, however, between Branwell's scenarios and actual historical fact, which can often be boring for an exuberant twelve-year-old boy. Skirmishes between British troops and Ashanti were seldom reported in the years of the early juvenilia since there was a long-standing peace at the time,[5] but Branwell made sure that the action in his narratives was especially bloody and frequent. Thus the saga reflects the child's own version of early nineteenth-century affairs, constituting a microcosm in which the child can play out fantasies of power.

Glass Town as Microcosm of Literary Culture

IF WE return to the little magazines by Branwell, we can see the precocious child imitating various writers and journalistic practice of his day, announcing and playing out his authorial ambitions at the age of eleven. The magazine was Branwell's idea, inspired by the family's favourite *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and he immediately claimed his authority as owner and editor in the title: *Branwell's Blackwood's Magazine*. Only three of the issues under his editorship survive (in the Lowell Collection at Harvard), for January, June, and July 1829,[6] but it is clear from internal references that other issues were produced by him until August that year when he turned his attention to producing a Glass Town newspaper, *The Monthly Intelligencer*. At that point he handed the editorship of the magazine over to Charlotte, contributing occasionally but soon complaining of the "frivolity" and "Foolish romances" that had replaced his previous "soberness" and "gravity" ("Lines Spoken," *EEW* 1: 94–95). A poem in the November monthly issue of the magazine expresses his scorn at Charlotte's efforts to preserve his superior content and discussion. It is a typical example of his early poetry, written at the age of twelve in the voice of Sergeant Bud, one of his pseudonyms and a lawyer:

Lines Spoken by a Lawyer on the Occasion of the Transfer of This Magazine

All soberness is past and gone,
The reign of gravity is done,
Frivolity comes in its place,
Light smiling sits on every face.

Gone is that grave and gorgeous light,
Which every page illumined bright;
A flimsy torch glare in the stead
Of a bright golden sun now fled.

Foolish romances now employ
Each silly, senseless girl and boy;
O for the strong hand of the law
To stop it with its powerful claw.

At night I lay my weary head
Upon my sofa or my bed;
In the dark watches of the night
Does flash upon my inward sight,

Visions of times now pass'd away,
When dullness did the sceptre sway;
Then to my troubled mind comes peace,
Would those bright dreams did never cease.

Thus sang a lawyer in his cell,
When suddenly the midnight bell
Rang out a peal both loud and deep,
Which told it was the hour of sleep.

WT[7] Nov. 20, 1829
(*EEW* 1:94–95)

Verses 4 and 5 are heavily based on Wordsworth's poem "Daffodils" and his idea of emotion recollected in tranquillity; but the emotion recollected here is Dullness (a clear reference to Pope's *Dunciad*, which Branwell knew well at an early age), and the "bright dreams" the lawyer recalls are "visions of dullness." There is surely an irony here, which suggests that Branwell, although he thinks little of Charlotte's romances, is also laughing at his speaker and probably himself as an assiduous imitator of scholarly and editorial practice.

This imitation is an important aspect of *Branwell's Blackwood's Magazine*, which vividly reflects the contemporary literary scene.[8] The young Branwell makes every effort to imitate his model in format, content, style, and tone. The title pages are crude imitations, set out with decorative colophons and publication details; they are followed by contents pages, and advertisements appear at the back. As in *Blackwood's* original, Branwell includes poems, articles on travel, natural history, letters to the editor, prose fiction, literary notices, and reviews. Charlotte contributes a two-part fictional serial called "The Enfant," and Branwell experiments with the various genres mentioned, playing with a variety of character types as pseudonyms for different authors of contributions in different genres. Essentially, he is trying out different literary hats, searching for the best fit; or, to put it more conventionally, he is searching for his authorial voice. As Victor Neufeldt points out, even in his earliest manuscripts Branwell "fully revealed his ambition to become the poet and man of letters" he encountered in the pages of *Blackwood's* (*OCB* 73).

In a book review, for example, Branwell plays a double act: as Sergeant Bud, the serious scholarly lawyer, he writes to himself as editor (Chief Genius Bany) describing an event "of great importance to the world at large," namely, that Chief Genius Taly (Charlotte) has given him a copy of the Scottish poet James Macpherson's so-called

translation of *The Poems of Ossian* (1819).[9] Branwell already knew from reviews in *Blackwood's* about the controversy over the authenticity of these poems, which were purported to be by Ossian, the son of the mythical Irish leader Fingal, and translated from Gaelic. Branwell enthusiastically enters the debate on the side of authenticity and displays a precocious imitation of Macpherson's pseudo-scholarship. For instance, he pompously states, in the guise of Bud, that

> … upon an attentive perusal of the above said works I found they were most sublime and exelent I am engaged in publishing an edition of them in Quarto—3 vols—with notes and commontrys &c I am fully convinced that it is the work of OSSIAN who lived a 1000 years ago—and—of no other there is a most intense anxiety prevailing amongst literary men to know its contents in a short time they shall be gratified for it will be published on the first of July, 1829. (*BB Works* 1: 14; see also *BBM* 12)

This unedited transcription displays the mismatch between Branwell's advanced knowledge of the editorial world and ability to imitate style on the one hand, and his ignorance or disregard of punctuation, spelling and the like on the other. This disparity continues more or less throughout his juvenilia, suggesting his speed of invention and composition, and his impatience with the mechanics of writing.

In his next magazine issue for July, Branwell writes under his own initials ("PBB") a "Review of Buds Commentary on Ossian" that has just appeared in "29 vols Folio," and amusingly admits his dismay to his imaginary readers that there are so many volumes to review. He describes the layout of the edition and quotes a passage from Book 1, composing his own detailed notes from his copy of the original, before giving up in exhaustion: "This is one of the most long winded Books that have ever been printed. We must now conclude for we are dreadfully tired. July 1829 – PBB" (*BBM* 31–32).

Commentary on Ossian appears again in "Nights," Branwell's equivalent of *Blackwood's* famous dramatised dialogue "Noctes Ambrosianae."[10] The "Noctes" was a series of fictitious conversations between imaginary and real literary figures, who purportedly met for heavy drinking dinners at Ambrose's tavern, an actual inn located near *Blackwood's* office in Edinburgh. (It seems that Branwell learnt early that good conversation and inebriation go hand in hand.) Some characters in these conversations are pseudonymous figures, able to write scurrilous comments under the protection of anonymity—boisterous and often libellous writing that provided a vigorous model for the budding Glass Town authors. Branwell's favourite contributors to "Noctes" were John Wilson, who appears as the cantankerous editor "Christopher North," and James Hogg, whose public persona as "the Ettrick Shepherd" was well-known. With genuine writers like Byron and De Quincey, these intoxicated literati discuss politics and the latest books, providing a vital opportunity for readers like the young Branwell to enter imaginatively into their dynamic literary life. It is no wonder he created his own "Noctes" and aspired to become part of their

lively world. Life in literary Edinburgh would have sounded considerably more exciting for a lively young boy than the Haworth Parsonage.

Again, Branwell adapted the real-life, larger literary model to the microcosmic Glass Town situation. He renamed his "Nights" "Military Conversations" since the interlocutors are all ex-military men (derived from the original toy soldiers). His version takes place in Bravey's Inn and evokes the same masculine culture of camaraderie and intellectual conversation that Branwell read of finding at Ambrose's tavern. The Duke of Wellington and his military cronies discuss the various newspapers available in the Glass Town, newspapers that Branwell himself was busy "editing." They converse on topics as varied as the latest parliamentary bills or the American wool trade. Bud reads part of his commentary on Ossian's *Poems* and is challenged by the Marquis of Douro, until Napoleon suggests they sing rather than argue. Like their *Blackwood's* originals they are noisy and quarrelsome, with hissing and shouting of toasts to the "prosperity of GROG!" and liberty (*OCB* 19).

From *Blackwood's*, Branwell and Charlotte derived a model of literature as active interchange and rivalry. Stories about the same event could be told by different characters from various viewpoints and still have validity. As Sergeant Bud, Branwell could criticise Charlotte's editorial policy and, as Lord Charles Wellesley, Charlotte could satirise Branwell's poetry as excessive effusions. Branwell's poetic persona at this time is "Young Soult," the Rhymer, fictitious son of one of Wellington's major adversaries in the Napoleonic wars. This was a voice through which Branwell could espouse republican ideas as the early Romantics had done and counter his heroes in the Tory *Blackwood's* club.

Branwell's Obsession with His Paracosmic World

IN FACT, until the age of 14 (1831), Branwell thought of himself chiefly as the Glass Town poet Young Soult (*OCB* 74). He was consciously building an image of himself as poet. In 1829 alone, in addition to his magazines, a newspaper and a two-volume travel book, he wrote at least 34 poems (or verse fragments), including an attempt at Latin verse and a verse drama (*OCB* 74). This is a remarkable output for a twelve-year-old who was also painting, learning the flute, and probably also learning the organ by this time. Other personas also proliferated, with Branwell impersonating not only the prose writers "Captain John Bud" and his son "Sergeant Bud" but also the demonic incarnation of Chief Genius Bany, an evil little man called S'death who acts as the familiar to Branwell's new hero Alexander Rogue (alias Alexander Percy: see fig. 5). Percy is a revolutionary and a pirate who, by marrying Lady Zenobia Ellrington, gains a title that is later elevated to Duke of Northangerland.[11] In 1831 Branwell then set about inventing Northangerland's biography, a preoccupation that gripped him for the remainder of his writing life.

By his mid-teens, Branwell had become obsessed with his Rogue/ Percy/ Northangerland creation, with developing Percy's Byronic personality, his political machinations, and his ambiguous mentor relationship to Charlotte's hero the Duke of Zamorna and King of Angria. The mercurial Young Soult disappeared, and

Branwell adopted a series of personas who chronicle the entangled fortunes of Northangerland, Glass Town and the new kingdom of Angria. He wrote in turn as Captain John Bud, Captain Sir John Flower (Viscount Richton), Henry Hastings (a formerly admired but now disreputable poet), and Charles Wentworth. By the age of eighteen, Branwell was enmeshed in a sprawling history of nearly 300 pages, written in neat minuscule script and involving intrigue, murder and heartbreak, all more or less instigated by Northangerland.

Fig. 5. "Northangerland, Alexander Percy Esq.," pen and ink sketch by Branwell Brontë, c. 1835, aged eighteen (courtesy of the Brotherton Collection, Leeds University Library).

The multiple characters Branwell impersonated can become confusing. Charlotte began by laughing and ended by worrying about her brother's frenetic activity and divided interests. Her 1834 caricature of her brother as Wiggins brilliantly captures his exaggeration, boastfulness, and ambition in an extended portrait, illustrating his "almost insane devotion to all celebrated characters in Verdopolis" and his excessive

enthusiasms, especially for music and pugilism (*EEW* vol. 2, pt. 2: 109). Wiggins not only kicks his heels into the air and stands on his head at the sound of the organist playing Handel, but also imagines his own tombstone with these words:

> As a musician he was greater than Bach; as a Poet he surpassed Byron; as a painter, Claude Lorrain yielded to him; as a rebel he snatched the palm from Alexander Rogue' [alias the republican Northangerland], … as a traveler De Humbolt, Ledyard, Mungo Park, … never braved half his dangers or overcame half his difficulties. He civilized Australia; he founded the city of Wigginopolis in New Zealand. (*EEW* vol. 2, pt. 2: 250–51)

"Patrick Benjamin Wiggins" was actually a would-be artist, another fictional incarnation first created by Branwell himself, a self-deprecating persona through whom he ominously laughs at his own pretensions to art.

It was at this time that Branwell, despite his poetic ambitions, was planning to become a professional portrait painter and to enter the Royal Academy Schools. In preparation, he painted the famous crudely-executed portrait of his sisters (Alexander and Sellars 225 and colour plate 24), together with numerous other paintings and sketches; but although he had the ability to capture a likeness, he must have been aware of his lack of technical skill. In Branwell's Angrian novelette, "The Wool Is Rising," Wiggins appears as a mere colour grinder to the famous painter Sir Edward de Lisle (*BB Works* 2: 60). In his depiction of Wiggins Branwell mocks his own thick mat of red hair, his slight stature that would look ridiculous in the boxing ring, his face with its "freckled visage and large Roman nose," and his inarticulate response when addressed by someone of importance. It was becoming clear that the confidence of his fictional characters deserted Branwell in any public situation, and he would either stammer or adopt an inappropriate bravado derived from Northangerland and his cronies to boost his confidence. The line between his public and private personas was beginning to blur. He seems to have found it impossible to concentrate on a single purpose or to wean himself from his Angrian personalities and his increasing identification with Northangerland: two problems which I suggest may have been related.

Northangerland had been in the making from his earliest incarnation as Rogue, the renegade hero of the early saga. He develops into a powerful demagogue, revolutionary and politician from a mix of Branwell's passion for Napoleon, for Milton's Satan and for the Byronic Hero (see *OCB* 345–46). He plays havoc with relationships, destroying marriages and political alliances. Through Northangerland's machinations, Branwell complicates the Angrian saga, extending it by a series of wars that Charlotte uses as background for her romances and character studies. Northangerland takes centre stage in all Branwell's manuscripts, many of which probe the recesses of his duplicitous mind. His troubled psychology and various alter egos owe much to James Hogg's portrayal of the doppelganger, a concept that fascinated Branwell. In poetry and prose, Branwell explores Northangerland's atheism and amorality, his restless energy, and his inability to maintain a loyalty or stable

relationship for long. Needless to say, he has three wives and a variety of mistresses, with legitimate and illegitimate children.[12]

Northangerland is also a poet, ostensibly responsible for most of Branwell's long philosophical poems that explore the meaning of life. Branwell's later writing is beyond the scope of this essay, but it should be noted that from the age of twenty he revised many of his earlier poems, divorcing them from their original Angrian context and noting that they are "transcribed" by "P. B. Brontë" (*OCB* 76). Most of his later poems are "public pieces meant for publication" (*OCB* 76), although he continued to explore Angrian themes in an English setting. He also translated six odes of Horace that were later praised and privately published in 1923 by the playwright, poet, and critic John Drinkwater (*OCB* 170).

It is significant, however, that it was under the old pseudonym "Northangerland," as mentioned above, that Branwell made his first attempt at publication in the real world at age eighteen. He sent his poem "Misery" to *Blackwood's*, whose editor failed to answer him, an omission that is hardly surprising given the onslaught of "frequent missives and impassioned appeals" that followed the poem (Alexander, "Readers" 54). The opening sentences of one of his letters provides an example of what he wrote:

> Sir, Read what I write. And would to Heaven you would believe in me, for then you would attend to and act upon it! …. I know myself so far as to believe in my own originality, and on that ground I desire admittance into your ranks. And do not wonder that I demand so determinedly: for the remembrances I spoke of have fixed you and your Magazine in such a manner upon my mind that the idea of striving to aid another periodical is *horribly repulsive*. My resolution is to devote my ability to you, and for God's sake, till you see whether or not I can serve you, do not coldly refuse my aid …. (Alexander, "Readers" 54–55)

The bombastic tone and swagger we see here is not the Branwell Brontë lacking in self-esteem, but the created personality "Northangerland," whose voice the timid young writer would never have used in an actual meeting with the editor of *Blackwood's*. A year later Branwell wrote to Wordsworth in a similar tone, asking him to pass judgement on another poem ("The Struggles of Flesh with Spirit") because he wished "to push into the open world" as a poet (10 Jan. 1837; *OCB* 551). Wordsworth, apparently disgusted by Branwell's excessive flattery and brash dismissal of other contemporary poets, declined to answer. The brilliant assumption of pseudonymous voices that had enabled the precocious young writer was now proving a decided handicap to the aspiring poet; and although Branwell signed many poems in his own name, Northangerland was never far away.

IF WE are looking for an explanation for Branwell's eccentric behaviour and increasing inability to distinguish himself from Northangerland, we might turn again to the characteristics of the paracosm. Cohen and MacKeith point out that

developmental problems associated with the idea of "being in a world of one's own" can develop from long involvement in an imaginative world (1). Longevity is a prime characteristic of paracosms, and a classic disadvantage is that some children use them as a protective escape mechanism, hindering the ability to distinguish between reality and fiction. This kind of imaginative world has been labelled a "post-traumatic paracosm," a response to long-term trauma (Barry M. Cohen 533). Certainly, records suggest that Branwell in particular had been traumatised by the death of his eldest sister Maria, who had been a "little mother" to him as a small child after the death of his mother (Barker 139–40). Whatever the reason, Angria and its disruptive protagonist Northangerland seem to have developed into an escape mechanism for Branwell, who found it hard to cope with ordinary life and the expectations placed upon him as an only boy. Although Charlotte eventually managed to wean herself away from their imaginary world at the age of twenty-three, Branwell continued to write under its influence (though to a lesser extent) until his death at the age of thirty-one.

Despite this possible pathology, however, the evidence of Branwell's early magazines, poetry and histories suggest that his initial motivation was not simply an escape from reality. The early writings I touch on here suggest a playful, agile young mind stimulated by stories he has read, by classical legends of discovery, by war and politics, by the reading of newspapers and magazines—a mind keen to engage with the world despite his youth. For such a child, there is no better way to explore life than to invent a microcosmic world over which he can exercise power and explore situations usually beyond his control. And in Branwell's case in particular, Glass Town and Angria allowed him to channel his creative agency, to play the author and to explore his literary expectations in life.[13]

NOTES

1. The earliest booklets were produced in the years 1829–30. There are twelve early booklets of Charlotte's juvenilia extant (each measuring approx. 3.5 x 5.3cm); and eight by Branwell (ranging in size from 3.5 x 5.3cm – 15.8 x 19cm). In subsequent years the hand-made booklets gradually became larger in size.
2. My transcription of this manuscript, made in Paris soon after Sotheby's sale, will appear as an appendix in *EEW*, vol. 3.
3. Some material in this essay is drawn from my previous publications. Rather than quote myself, I simply indicate sources in the relevant footnotes.
4. See, for example, the image "Mansion" surrounded by text, in Branwell's "The Politics of Verdopolis," by Captain John Flower, 15 Nov. 1833 (Alexander and Sellars 305).
5. Not until 1874 did the British occupy Kumasi, capital of Ashanti (*OCB* 24).
6. First published 1995 (*BBM*).
7. "WT," signifying "We Two," suggests that Charlotte as editor and amanuensis insisted on being acknowledged, although the tone and attitude are clearly those of Branwell. See *EEW* 1: 94.
8. Discussions of Branwell and *Blackwood's Magazine* here are drawn from my essays. See especially *OCB* 60, 41–48, and 227–81.
9. The juvenilia are a tantalizing mix of actual and fantasy events. Branwell's copy of *The Poems of Ossian* (1765), received for his tenth birthday in June 1829, still exists in the Brontë Parsonage Museum.
10. Discussion derived from *OCB* 47.

11. See Branwell Brontë. *The Pirate.* Edited by Christine Alexander, with Joetta Harty and Benjamin Drexler, Juvenilia Press, 2018.
12. The trajectory of Alexander Percy/Lord Northangerland's development is traced throughout *The Early Writings of Charlotte* (1983). More recently, Victor Neufeldt, editor of Branwell's manuscripts, has built on this in a two-part article, "Branwell Brontë's Alexander Rogue/Percy."
13. "Paracosms certainly seem to explore the child's expectations of life" (Silvey and MacKeith 195).

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BB Works	Brontë, Branwell. *The Works of Patrick Branwell Brontë*. Edited by Victor A. Neufeldt, Garland, 1997.
EEW	Brontë, Charlotte. *An Edition of the Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë*. Edited by Christine Alexander, Basil Blackwell, 1987–92. 2 vols. Vol. 3 forthcoming.
OCB	Alexander, Christine and Margaret Smith. *The Oxford Companion to the Brontës*. Oxford UP, 2003.

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TEACHING "THE YOUNG IDEA HOW TO SHOOT": THE JUVENILIA OF THE BURNEY FAMILY

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THE BURNEY family stands at the centre of cultural life in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. Often at the forefront of their professions—be it painting, music, or literature—the Burneys' numerous successes may raise interesting questions about the roles played by nature and nurture in the development of creativity. Fertility of invention could be said to be part of the family heritage, as members expressed their creativity in a variety of ways. In literature, their best-known writer is Frances Burney, whose range of achievement is impressive, as the author of four novels, eight plays, a memoir, and twenty-five volumes' worth of journals and letters. But there were other writers in the family: Frances's father, Charles Burney, wrote musical tours and *A General History of Music*; her brother, Charles, published numerous works of classical scholarship; and brother James authored several works on maritime history. On the female side, no fewer than six generations of published authors can be traced (Clark, "Hidden Talents"). There were also dancing masters, musicians (church organists, violinists and pianists) and a successful artist, Edward Francisco Burney.

Exploring the products of their creativity is possible because, besides being remarkably productive, the Burneys managed to preserve many records; they seem to have had a "hoarding" as well as a "scribbling" habit, as Joyce Hemlow has noted (xxi). Today, some 10,000 documents remain in the family archive, making it one of the richest repositories of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manuscripts now extant, in which there are still new discoveries to be made. Two very recent discoveries are the works of juvenilia that I shall be exploring in this essay.

The period of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was a fertile one for child writers, as Christine Alexander and Juliet McMaster point out in their study of Austen's juvenile contemporaries, "Children Writing in Jane Austen's Time." The output was not only fiction; Katharine Kittredge has "identified 125 books of poetry that were published between 1770 and 1830 by authors under the age of twenty-one;

Journal of Juvenilia Studies 1 (2018), pp. 20-36. DOI: 10.29173/jjs127

eighty-nine of these were published between the years 1790 and 1820." Along similar lines, Laurie Langbauer, noting the affinity of the Romantic poets with youth, characterises a somewhat longer period (1750-1835) as one in which "juvenile writers formed a recognizable writing presence—even more than that, a tradition"—which could be attributed in part to changing demographics (young people being an unusually large proportion of the population) and in part to "shifts in education, along with an exploding periodical press" that provided opportunities for juvenile writers "to write and find audiences" (1). Langbauer argues that "recovering juvenility ... recasts literary history" and will radically alter our understanding of the period (3); my work aims to contribute to this project of reassessment.

Often, a work of juvenilia acquires interest as the early production of an established writer, that is (to quote again from Alexander and McMaster), "as an 'apprentice work'" on the "writer's route to maturity," in which some of the themes or techniques employed in his or her later work can be traced, in embryo ("Children Writing" 3). But, as Lesley Peterson and Leslie Robertson have reminded us, there does not need to be a "later 'great book' by the same author" to justify the study of the work of a child author (271). It is with all these insights in mind that I would like to present this study. While the field of juvenilia has taken tremendous strides in recent years, as witnessed by the flourishing of the Juvenilia Press, the formation of an International Juvenilia Society and establishment of a dedicated journal (of which this is the inaugural issue), there is still much work to do. This paper should be placed within the context of the rediscovery or reclamation of overlooked juvenile writers.

The Burney juvenilia is the work not of an established author but rather of a collective; the first work I shall discuss here is a collaborative effort that reflects or embodies a familial culture, which was evidently an environment that encouraged play, self-expression, and artistic creation. Even though the contributors did not go on to pursue professional careers as writers, they did continue to express their energy in other ways—in performing music for family and friends, penning stage plays for private theatricals, or educating the young. The study of their juvenilia, therefore, ripe as it is with the excitement and possibilities of youth, yields insight into the creative world of the Burneys in particular as well that of the child reader and writer in late eighteenth-century England more generally.

Before going further, I should like to identify these newly discovered child authors and explain how they fit into the family tree. They belong to the family of Esther Burney (daughter of Charles, elder sister to the novelist Frances Burney) and Charles Rousseau Burney—first cousins who married, thus bequeathing creative genes to their offspring from both sides. Charles Rousseau earned a precarious living as a performer and teacher; he may have been drawn to his cousin Esther through a mutual love of music, as they had both performed as child prodigies. They raised a large family (five children in the space of five years and two more a decade later) in a somewhat Bohemian atmosphere in which music, art, literature, and amateur theatricals played an important part. A household with so many children growing up together would have been stimulating enough in itself; in this case, at least three of the first group—Frances, Sophia Elizabeth, and Richard Allen—were involved in the creation of a family periodical.

Their work is remarkable in two respects: first, as a very early example of a family-produced magazine, which predates those already well known—of the Brontë, Stephen, Dodgson, or Alcott families—which belong to later centuries. Second, the publication that sparked their work was itself a children's magazine, and one of the first ever produced.

The Burneys' *Juvenile Magazine* was patterned after John Marshall's publication of the same name, which was "one of the first journalistic attempts to cater to children" (Alexander 33).[1] There had been an earlier one published by Marshall's rival, John Newbery, the *Lilliputian Magazine*, which lasted for just three issues in 1751–52, after which no fewer than eleven juvenile periodicals were started before 1800, leading to a flowering of the genre in the nineteenth century. Of these eleven, Marshall produced three—the first of which was *The Juvenile Magazine*.[2]

It ran for twelve months in 1788, *an Instructive and Entertaining Miscellany for Youth of Both Sexes* (as the sub-title proclaims) that included fiction (moralistic tales), dramatic dialogues, short plays, some poetry, and even music (see Appendix for a sample table of contents). Marshall's *Juvenile Magazine* was a mixed bag that was primarily didactic: some articles taught the basics of geography, astronomy, arithmetic, and other scientific subjects, in keeping with Locke's influential views on education and the expansion of the curriculum that occurred during the period.[3] All the stories in Marshall's magazine have an obvious moralistic bent—with emblematic titles such as "The Young Miser" or "The Passionate Child Reclaimed" that underline the lessons they teach. Each month, there was also a section of instructive puzzles that combined education and entertainment, since an element of play had come to be seen as an important part of learning: "*texts that yield pleasure*" were thought to "bring a more lasting educative influence" to bear (Hilton 4).

The editor was a woman, Lucy Peacock, an author of moral tales and a bookseller in Oxford Street, London. From the outset, she creates a sympathetic persona. Defining her intended readership as "young people from SEVEN to FOURTEEN," she projects a responsive young audience who will be grateful for these efforts on their behalf and send in contributions to the editor who invites their participation.[4] She also encourages her readers to seek advice, suggesting that the role of the Editor is to act as a mentor, especially to those without parents to guide them: if you should find yourself with "an *unruly passion* or *habit* intruding, or a *situation* in which you are at a loss to conduct yourselves, by addressing a letter to the *Editor*, at *Mr. Marshall's*, you will be furnished, in the next magazine, with that advice which may enable you to *overcome* the one, and accommodate yourselves to the other." This framework of "a two-way communication" would become standard in juvenile magazines (Drotner 21).

Girls or young women "received special attention," reflecting the editor's belief that "they must cultivate their minds and their manners just as intensely as their brothers" (Drotner 20). In fact, the writing often seems directed towards a female audience, emphasising those subjects which they were likely to cultivate: music and languages, for instance, which were seen as desirable feminine accomplishments (scores are regularly printed, and some articles are written wholly in French). A series of letters purportedly from a young lady in the city to her protégée in the country

instructs her in such subjects as arithmetic and ethics. A "Female Adviser" also writes a regular column about feminine deportment. (She advises "humility and diffidence" above all.) In essence, the appearance of this and other magazines geared towards a "mass reading public of juveniles" in a newly commercialised publishing industry could be seen as "an important element in the construction of modern childhood" (Drotner 4).

The *Juvenile Magazine* created by the Burneys in 1792 imitates its prototype in many ways, but moves away from the heavy didacticism—and uses a much lighter touch. While imitating the formal features of Marshall's publication in content, it sets a very different tone in a world that is purely inventive, and often quite irreverent. The Burney's *Juvenile Magazine* is also designed as a monthly; there are six surviving issues, bearing the dates of January to June 1792. These six surviving issues may be all there were, given that the last issue ends with an index, which would usually signal the completion of a series of issues which could then be bound. This is not the only feature that imitates an actual publication. The covers are printed neatly to look like typeface; the place of publication is given as well, as though the magazine were privately printed from a press located at the editors' home address.

It is remarkable how closely the Burneys' *Juvenile Magazine* resembles the original in its appearance and format: the regular features that begin each issue—the title page, table of contents, and the editor's address to the "Correspondents"—look so similar that they surely must have been deliberately and carefully copied. On the back cover, the "Editor" of the Burneys' magazine addresses an audience of "CORRESPONDENTS, SUBSCRIBERS, AND THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL," suggesting a possible monetary motive, if the word "Subscribers" can be taken literally, but it is more likely a fiction, part of an editorial pose, in imitation of other periodicals. Some early magazines did publish a list of subscribers: *The Lilliputian Magazine*, for instance, printed a list of its financial supporters whose names ran over nine pages and included several junior members of the nobility (Drotner 22). The grandiosity of the editor's address here is evidently playful; the audience probably consisted of a small group of readers made up of family and friends.

Also included is an advertisement for a second publication, *The Miscellaneous Review*, which never got off the ground. The intention, however, speaks to the ambition of the Editor, who claims that he "aims at rendering his work little short of Perfection." Like other early collections of family-created newspapers, the *Juvenile Magazine* helped its young authors to construct an imaginary universe in which they could build confidence in their writing, refine their craft, and find a voice.[5]

However, there are signs that the young writers struggled with the task they set themselves—keeping to a monthly format, for instance. A poem celebrating the birth of a younger sister, Amelia Maria, on 5 August 1792, appears in the May issue, thus convincingly contradicting the chronology in a way that underlines the elements of play and fictional pose in the whole enterprise.

Some monthly columns or features soon disappear, such as the riddles or puzzles that were a regular feature of Marshall's publication, in which they served a didactic purpose (as vehicles to teach the basic elements of grammar or astronomy). In the Burneys' magazine, by contrast, the topic chosen for the puzzles was one that remains

dear to an adolescent's heart—food. In the first month, clues were given for elements of "The Dessert," and in a subsequent issue, clues are keyed to the whole Dinner. After that, the entire section disappears.

Another example of adaptation is the column on "Remarkable Events," a hold-over from Marshall's *Monthly Occurrences* which had given (under the guise of a news story) admonitory vignettes of children who had met with an untimely and often violent end through inattention to their parents' precepts. The Burneys' reports deviate from their model and eschew the didacticism; perhaps not unsurprisingly**,** they focus on the musical world, and are strictly circumstantial: for example, they give a report on the burning of the Pantheon on 14 January 1792 and a review of a concert, before fading away entirely.

The Burneys' first issue features an essay written in the genre of the formal periodical paper that contains reflections on the training of youth. Evoking the juvenile poems of Pope, it also cites Hume in stressing the importance of education. Rather than focusing on the need for correction and repression of the evil tendencies of children (as Marshall's publication had done), it borrows images from nature (of blossoming and growth) to suggest the natural flowering of talent: it ends with a couplet asserting that children, like "Tender plants, by due degrees / Grow up mature, to noble trees." Advocating the nurturing and encouragement of talent, this message could be taken as the implicit theme of the entire family-produced magazine.

` The illustrations are also intriguing. Elaborate frontispieces were a regular feature of children's magazines, and those found in the Burneys' production carry the boast that they have been specially engraved. Given the artistic skill of their uncle, Edward Francisco Burney, this was a claim worth investigating. However, it appears to be unfounded; the illustrations prove to be simply popular prints, which enhance the appearance of each issue but are often unrelated to the content. For instance, one is a print (*c.*1783) of the actress Sarah Siddons; another is an engraving titled the *Naval Review, Plymouth* (1792), by Robert Dodd; a third looks as though it were taken from a ladies' fashion magazine, and so on.

Another claim is that "all the works but those which are entirely original will be excluded." In fact, carefully chosen excerpts appear in every issue, which means the magazine functions also as a commonplace book, a genre which was popular during the period. In the choice of texts, the tastes of the young editor can be detected. Some, like Andrew Marvell's *The Wounded Fawn*, in which a nymph mourns the death of her pet, are obvious choices to appeal to the taste of a young reader. Others consist of juvenilia themselves, and showcase the work of other young writers: *Poems by Susanna* (London, 1789), for instance, was composed when the author was fourteen years old;[6] and the *Poems* of Maria and Harriet Falconar (London, 1788),[7] when the authors were just sixteen and fourteen respectively.

In these cases, the authors were drawing on what Langbauer has identified as a self-conscious tradition of juvenile writing, which helped to create a sense of a shared community among the young writers. Roger Lonsdale, in his anthology of women poets, has remarked on the "number of precocious children who were finding their way into print at this period" (451), although the examples he gives are mostly male—whereas in the Burneys' *Juvenile Magazine*, all but one of the contributors appear to be

female. The exception is the eldest brother, Richard Allen Burney, who, as "Philosophus," contributes a series of "Curious Experiments" that can be undertaken at home with everyday materials, such as shadow boxes or magnets: a feature in keeping with the scientific bent of Marshall's publication.

While the impression is skilfully created of the magazine's having numerous contributors, most of the enterprise was the work of just two. Foremost was the young Frances Burney (niece to the novelist), who, at sixteen, appears to have been the mastermind, acting both as editor and author of many of the stories. Her position of authority may have come naturally to her, given her rather "overbearing" personality,[8] and she apparently relished her role. Each issue begins with an address to "the Correspondents" in which she sallies forth, Lady Catherine-like, "to scold them into harmony and plenty." For instance, she gives short shrift to a "Peggy Pindar," whose "Pindaric Ode" is "trite and vulgar," and to "Amicus," whose "productions [are] too uninteresting" to be included. The emblematic names signal that these are fictitious characters and non-existent submissions, invented as a joke. When addressing real contributors, the editor's tone is somewhat kinder, and—in the case of one who comes from a higher social class—positively deferential.

Besides playing the role of editor, the young Frances Burney also writes much of the material, experimenting with a variety of genres, reminding us of the level of literacy necessary for this kind of literary game; children's magazines were geared to the middle or upper classes. Her best effort is probably "Wealth, Wisdom and Virtue," a tale patterned after those contained in the *Arabian Nights*. It is full of exotic colour and imitates the heightened florid style of the translation while being shaped effectively towards an edifying lesson (the importance of using riches well), which follows a practice common in children's literature of the period in which a moral is tagged on at the end of a fairy tale to make it serve a didactic purpose.

Frances also writes two pastoral dialogues, following classical models—and even quotes some Latin. Her ease in employing different genres suggests that she was conscious of the literary effects she was trying to produce, using touches of comedy or literary parody. In "A Turkish Tale," for instance, she corrects the author, who (she writes) "forgets that the Muses of the ancients were very little if at all known among the Turks." This light, metafictional comment is an example of the playfulness that emanates from the Burneys' *Magazine*.

The versatility of the young Frances Burney's contributions foregrounds the role-playing which arguably is at the heart of the pleasure of juvenilia (Neufeld 173–74). The multiplicity of the roles she plays is reflected in the number of pseudonyms she employs. First, there is the simple initial "F" that she signs as editor; perhaps its brevity is meant to be in keeping with the male persona she is assuming. In an example of literary cross-dressing, she refers to herself as "he," thus making a claim to masculinity whenever she speaks loftily from the covers, thereby adding to her own authority. On special occasions, she uses her full initials "FB" (like those of her famous aunt), once enclosing them in an ornate medallion. Mostly, however, her nom-de-plume is "Francisca," the Italianised form of her first name. Besides allowing her to adopt different voices and genres, the various pseudonyms create the

impression of multiple authors contributing to the *Juvenile Magazine*, in imitation of Marshall's original.

The other main contributor is Frances's younger sister Sophia Elizabeth, whose writing provides an interesting contrast with her sister's contributions. While Sophia is equally versatile in her use of genres, her tone is quite different. At once more satirical, her work is often marked by black comedy and outlandish occurrences (somewhat reminiscent of the juvenilia of Austen). Throughout her work, children regularly defy or disobey their parents, who are often flawed or irrational characters. Her young protagonists frequently run away from home, experiencing raucous adventures untrammelled and unprotected by figures of authority.

Sophia Burney contributes several works of fiction as well as plays. Her main poetic contribution to the magazine is the ballad of "Egbert and Ellen," a major effort consisting of thirty-four stanzas that evokes a world of legend and medieval folklore, imitating the adult writers of the time who were "working in a period ... that truly valued antiquarianism and mediaeval revivalism (Sumner 138).[9] It features a strong heroine, who defies the villain, disobeys her father, and rescues the noble hero. The light and airy tone is reflected in the upbeat rhythm of the quatrains, simple in form, yet well adapted to carrying the narrative:

1
Egbert, a young and valiant Hero
Lov'd a fair and virtuous Dame;
She saw the merits of her lover
And return'd his ardent flame
. . . . . .

29
After a battle she arrived
And through the soldiers push'd her way
Till she discovered Egbert's body
Breathless on the ground it lay

30
Horror struck her gentle bosom
She fear'd his life she could not save;
But directed those around her
To bear him to the Hermit's cave.

The strength and freedom of the heroine underlines the benefit of the family-produced magazine in allowing the young writers to find a voice. In this they recall the Brontës, who, as Christine Alexander has written, "experimented with a range of genres and styles, developed a sense of audience, played with a rich variety of characters, and experienced the power that editors and authors exercise over their literary creations" (37).

The six issues of the Burney's *Juvenile Magazine*, a rich compendium of poems, stories, plays, puzzles, excerpts, and illustrations, are remarkable first of all in their preservation, which in itself is a testimony to the appreciation of those around them, the adults who read, "subscribed" to, and evidently supported the venture. As a collaborative effort, the magazine reflects a familial culture and atmosphere that encouraged creativity and helped to bring the Burneys to the forefront of the artistic, musical and literary cultures of the time.

This is not the only collection of juvenilia of this literary family to have survived, however. The experience of creating a magazine may have stimulated further productions, for the following year, Sophia Elizabeth Burney took the time to gather her writing into several anthologies, thus creating her own body of work. Her anthologies represent a different kind of juvenilia in being single-authored works which often bear resemblance to the writing of Frances Burney (the elder), the novelist, who played a major role in encouraging their production, and to whom they are dedicated. A narrow strip of paper, just one inch wide, probably added as an afterthought to a letter, is glued into a cover of the first issue of the *Juvenile Magazine*. Dated October 1792, it was written soon after the sixth issue was completed. This strip of paper was sent by Sophia's aunt Frances Burney, who advises her niece to "summon all her brightest ideas" and "send off a Sheet a Week" to her aunt: "All will be welcome" (*Journals* 12: 994-95).

The connection between the two—published author and aspiring youth—is a significant one, especially in light of the disappearance of Frances Burney's own juvenilia in a symbolic act of destruction. She herself was a lifelong writer who (by her own account) "at ten, ... began scribbling, almost incessantly, little works of invention" (Frances Burney, *Memoirs* 2: 123) but on her fifteenth birthday built a bonfire in which she "committed to the flames" all her youthful writings, including an entire novel, the prequel to *Evelina*. Struggling to overcome a guilty "propensity" to write, she burned "whatever, up to that moment," she "had committed to paper," possibly to propitiate her future stepmother who disapproved of the unladylike habit of "scribbling."[10] There is, therefore, a note of poignancy in her urging of the young Sophia to continue her "scribbling" apace and send it on, to someone who would keep it safe and know how to value it.

As a published author, Frances Burney played the role of mentor to a niece who shared her sense of exuberance and fun. As a child, Sophia was described as "a merry pleasant little thing" with "very quick parts" and a "constant *gaieté de coeur*."[11] Even as a young woman, she was, according to her aunt Frances, full of "comic & quaint stories & conceits" (*Journals* 4: 212). The kinship between them remained, which may be one reason why Sophia's works often call to mind the novels of her famous aunt in their similar use of common themes and motifs and attitudes towards money, gender and class.

In response to her aunt's encouragement, Sophia Burney gathered some of her contributions to the *Juvenile Magazine*, as well as other original compositions, into a series of anthologies. They were purportedly written when Sophia was thirteen, which would place their time of composition between September 1790 and 1791; this timing accords with the date of the *Juvenile Magazine* that began in January 1792. The actual

copying and creation of the anthologies, however, must date from sometime later, given the use of Frances Burney's married name on the title-page, "Madame d'Arblay," which proves that they must post-date her wedding of 28 July 1793.

There are, in fact, three surviving manuscripts that I have amalgamated and prepared as an edition for the Juvenilia Press (2016), with the help of Sarah Rose Smith.[12] Previous to this, they had remained unpublished, although there was a privately printed edition of one of them, "Novels, Plays, and Poems," in fifty copies printed up by a bookseller in time for Christmas 1930, based on a manuscript in a family collection that was ultimately bought by McGill University. A second anthology, "Works," is held at the Kislak Centre at the University of Pennsylvania.

Although these two anthologies have different titles, they look very similar (both have the same "Dedication" and "Address to the reader") and contain a similar mix of fiction, poetry, and plays, none of which is duplicated. They dovetail very nicely in that the Table of Contents in "Works" lists four items that are missing but can be found in "Novels, Plays and Poems," which also contains two other titles. Both of these are labelled "volume 1"; a third manuscript, marked simply as "II^{d}," is also found in the Kislak collection, and could be the second volume of one of these (possibly the McGill manuscript), but it is impossible to tell, as there is no title. It contains some duplicates and some unique titles.

In all, in the three manuscripts, there are three poems, four plays, four tales, and two longer stories. The elaborateness of the scheme (and the number of copies made by Sophia) testifies to the support given to the young author by those around her, who evidently encouraged her efforts. Although adult encouragement for juvenilia is not universal, it can be an important factor in the confidence and productivity of the child writer.

Richness of invention is the phrase that best characterises the work of Sophia Burney. Remarked as the jokester in the family, Sophia usually writes in a humorous vein. Of the thirteen titles**,** just two are explicitly called "Tragedies"; most are ostensibly comic—although the comedies often incorporate violence (evidently meant to be funny). Meanwhile, the actual tragedies end in a bloodbath. In the first, "The Royal Tragedy," an orgy of stabbing at the end leaves the stage littered with bodies in a scene that is evidently played for laughs, judging by the risible dialogue. The second tragedy, "Murder Committed," features just four main characters and moves quickly to its fatal conclusion in which the heroine is killed by her father for refusing to marry a high-ranking male, and her fiancé kills himself for grief. This embryonic plot is not dissimilar to those featured in the heroic tragedies penned by Frances Burney at court, which often depict female "anguish" and "confinement" at the hands of men (Darby 58). In Sophia Burney's writing, too, the women suffer from male violence in coercive situations which could be read as a protest against the female lot, raising gender issues which have been the subject of debate in criticism of Frances Burney's novels.[13]

Even in Sophia Burney's comedies, narrative closure is often brought about through death. Although this may simply be the tying up of loose ends by an inexperienced author, the pattern does seem quite obsessive. The fates that overtake her characters can be gruesome, such as the blinding and drowning of the ass in "The

History of Blind Jack," the swallowing of the hero by a shark in "The Adventures of a Boy," and the gibbeting of brother and sister in "The Unlawful Marriage." While somewhat grotesque, all of these grisly incidents are treated lightly by the narrator. The first provides the occasion for a bad pun, the second allows the narrator to move on with the story, "Our valiant Hero being now at Ease in the Sharks [*sic*] stomach" (S. E. Burney 42), and the last immediately precedes the up-beat conclusion, "So there ends our happy tale" (32). While outlandish humour may seem a hallmark of juvenilia (Austen's work, for instance, is often described as "sprightly," "daring," or "raucous" [Doody, "Jane Austen" 102]), still the pervasiveness of extreme violence and its light-hearted dismissal in Sophia Burney's work seem unusual. Her opening epigraph even evokes the death of the reader quite cheerily: "Keep them ever in your head, / And dont [*sic*] forget them till you're dead" (1).

Some of the tales feature another recurring motif, a wayward youth who runs away, often paired with a brother who is sent to look for him. The pattern occurs in "The Unlawful Marriage," where the first embarks on a long sea voyage and the pursuing brother dies. The loss of a prodigal son with destructive consequences for his loved ones may have had personal resonance for the author, given a little-known piece of family history. A family memoir recounts the story of Sophia's high-spirited elder brother Charles Crisp, who ran away twice: once (at twelve) walking one hundred miles home to London from his grandfather's house, and again at the age of sixteen, absconding suddenly from his apprenticeship, and disappearing without a trace. He was never heard from again, and his whereabouts remained unknown for several years.[14]

The impact of the missing son or brother must have been devastating, causing much "uncertainty, and painful suspense" to the family. The episode might explain the figure of the runaway youth that haunts the juvenilia, and the tendency of the imagined endings to bring uncontested finality. The repetition suggests a way of dealing with trauma by revisiting it and resolving it in a narrative, a practice not dissimilar to that of Frances Burney who (as Julia Epstein has suggested) often depicted "moments of trauma," pain, and violence in her journals which she recovers from through her writing.[15]

As for Charles Crisp, it would not be until seven years later that his sad fate was learned. Without money or plans, he had joined the East India Company and sailed to Calcutta, caught dysentery on the voyage, and died in a military hospital on Christmas Eve, at the age of seventeen. An eye-witness account stresses his courage in the face "of his approaching dissolution," and his wish that his "sincere penitence" should be conveyed to his parents.

For many writers, the grief of bereavement acts as a catalyst for creativity. The death of Frances Burney's mother when she was ten may have encouraged her habit of compulsive writing, begun in childhood; grief may also have played a role in the juvenilia of the Brontës, Maria Edgeworth, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, as Beverley Taylor has pointed out (142). For Sophia Burney, the banishment and loss of her brother Charles Crisp may have had a similar effect. Charles Crisp disappeared early in 1791, the year that apparently produced all these compositions. The uncertainty of his fate might also explain her tendency to end her plays and stories so

decisively, using death (that unanswerable narrative incident) to provide a firm and inescapable conclusion (Clark xxix). Death, at least, brings closure.

There are other violent incidents in Sophia Burney's writing, such as imprisonment, duels, kidnapping, maiming, and wife abuse. The latter occurs in "Pensylvania [*sic*]," in which the heroine wavers so much between two suitors that the one who marries her "always left her in a straight waistcoat when he went out [so that] she did not prove unfaithful to him" (48), a solution which apparently has the approval of the narrator. The strident nature of her comedy reminds us that a robust sense of the ridiculous was acceptable within the cultural and, more specifically, the familial context. As Charles Burney writes, gatherings of family members were strongly marked by laughter: "we used, old & young, Male & female, to sit up all night—not to drink, but to laugh a gorge déployée ..." (38).

In one poem, Sophia Burney evokes Henry Fielding, a reference which seems especially apt, given the boisterousness of her humour and her inclusion of direct addresses to the reader. Fielding has often been compared with Frances Burney, who was said "to translate the Fielding-type of novel into the feminine key" (Cecil 78). For some readers, however, her comedy went too far, degenerating into coarseness, the more surprising in a woman writer. Recent critics have remarked on the problematic nature of scenes (such as the beating of Madame Duval) which depict cruelty yet invite the audience's laughter. The works of Sophia Burney, which are even more strident in their content, bring an added perspective to these controversies.[16]

The boisterous tone of Sophia Burney's work contrasts with that of her sister Frances, whose work often centres on love, courtship, and marriage. Just three of Sophia's tales close in an uncomplicated way with a wedding, and few of the marriages she depicts are satisfactory, often bedevilled with differences of class. In "The History of Walter Scarecrow," for instance, the hero fails to secure the "handsome, ... fashionable, ... [and] rich" woman to whom he aspires, and has to settle for a farmer's daughter, only to find that her parents "disliked him on many accounts," of which his "meanness" and "poverty" are key.

If meanness defines the suitors, mercenariness would be the word that best defines the brides, raising interesting questions about female characterisation.[17] Marriage is presented as a way to rise and a stepping-stone to riches. Anxiety about finances marks the works of Sophia Burney, as it does those of her aunt Frances Burney, who often juxtaposes characters from different classes, to great comic effect.[18] A quintessentially Burney scene is one in which the heroine is embarrassed by her association with someone of a lower class than she or in which she aspires to belong a class higher than her own,[19] which is similar to the situation of Sophia's Walter Scarecrow who goes up to London in hopes of becoming a gentleman.

Similar attitudes towards money and class in the works of both writers should be placed in the context of the precarious position of the Burneys and their aspirations to gentility. The family's place in London society was an equivocal one: Charles Burney, a self-made man who had risen from lowly origins by virtue of talent and hard work, ensured his entrée into London society by cultivating agreeable manners. This strategy may be echoed in the advice given to Walter Scarecrow, the (comically inept) hero, that "to render himself as agreable [*sic*] as possible [was] the surest way

to make his fortune." Yet with his "mean appearance" and "awkward and clownish" manners, Walter fails to impress anybody; moreover, his intended debut as a gentleman is undercut by the shady district in London from which he launches his campaign (he lodges in the same street from which Sophia Burney's family had started out). This kind of inside joke and personal reference shows that the juvenilia are written for an intimate circle; the implied audience is one whose tastes and habits are well known.

In conclusion, the creativity fostered in the family bursts from the pages of these two works of juvenilia. Both are inspired by—but soon depart from—their models. Marshall's *Juvenile Magazine* provides a format, structure, and impetus to the young Burneys, who soon turned their own magazine into a co-operative venture, creating a community of shared literary activity. The effect of all this activity, in encouraging Sophia Burney to create her own single-author anthologies, reflects the role that juvenilia can play in forming the next generation of authors. Dedicating her efforts to her famous aunt, who had already written two bestsellers, is a sign of Sophia's aspirations and underlines the role played by Frances Burney. Her literary success encouraged the women of her own and later generations, serving as a model to which to aspire.

There are other works of Burney family juvenilia that survive and even more that were lost, including an entire series of three-act plays, apparently presented in a private theatrical season.[20] These enticing traces point to the possibility of more discoveries, and underscore the extraordinary productivity of this gifted family.

In her comprehensive biography of the Brontë family, Juliet Barker emphasises that their "intense family relationship" was essential to their writing (830). Expanding on these insights in her own study, Lamonica Drew notes that "family underpinned the social, emotional, and imaginative lives of the Brontës. Family provided the supportive network in which they wrote and through which they embarked on publication." The parsonage at Haworth, she writes, was because of this family support "a place of extraordinary creativity and productivity" (1–2).

The same could be said for the young Burneys and for their home on Titchfield Street, from which they operated their own private "juvenilia press." Further study of their early works and those of other creative families is warranted—writers whose skill was formed in the crucible of an intense period of shared creativity in childhood and youth. A focus on these family collectives would represent an important sub-category in the field of literary juvenilia.

APPENDIX: MARSHALL'S *JUVENILE MAGAZINE* SAMPLE TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE YOUNG Burneys imitated John Marshall's *Juvenile Magazine* to create their own *Juvenile Magazine* in 1792. The table of contents found in Marshall's January 1788 issue is reproduced here, with the original capitalization and italics preserved:

THE
JUVENILE MAGAZINE;
OR, AN
INSTRUCTIVE and ENTERTAINING
MISCELLANY
FOR
YOUTH of BOTH SEXES.
For January 1788.
Embellished with Two Prints; L'ENFANT DOCILE; and the
SILLY BOY.
CONTENTS.

NOTES

1. Alexander gives a good analysis of the early family magazines. See also Dawson, who discusses the *Lilliputian* and the *Juvenile Magazine* at length as "the earliest English children's periodicals" (175).
2. Published monthly beginning (and ending) in 1788, there are twelve issues, copies of which are held at the British Library and the Bodleian. Microfilm copies are held at other libraries, for instance, at the Cambridge University Library and the National Library of Australia.
3. A good discussion of the subject is in Hunt, ch. 2.
4. In the first issue, the editor announces: "Those young persons who wish to contribute to the *Juvenile Magazine* by any literary production, will have that attention paid to their performances, which their abilities, and the goodness of their intentions may merit" (iv).
5. The value of juvenilia in allowing a young writer to imitate and, at the same time, appropriate adult authority has been noted by Alexander (31).
6. *Poems, By Susanna* (London, 1789) were purportedly written by "a young Lady of fourteen years of age" whose poems were "being published without either the knowledge or consent of their author," which accounts for no last name being given (v–vii).
7. The first volume of *Poems* by Maria and Harriet Falconer was published by subscription in 1788 when the co-authors were about sixteen and fourteen respectively. They also published *Poems on Slavery* (1788) and *Poetic Laurels* (1791). For a brief biographical notice and an excerpt, see Lonsdale (451–52).
8. The remark is found in a journal-letter of Susanna (Burney) Phillips to Frances Burney, printed in an entry under Sunday 17 January [1788], in R. Brimley Johnson (200). Susanna writes that her niece Frances is "generally harsh and overbearing to Sophy, who I think, as I always thought is much the more interesting and pleasing of the two—."
9. It is possible that this poem was a joint production with her sister.
10. Frances Burney tells the story of the bonfire in the Dedication to her last novel, *The Wanderer* (1814). She also repeats it in her *Memoirs of Doctor Burney* (2: 124–25). Doody suggests a connection between the bonfire and the impending marriage of her father with the widow, Elizabeth Allen, which it preceded by a few months (*Frances Burney* 36).
11. The first of these remarks is contained in a letter from Susanna (Burney) Phillips to Frances Burney, 20 January [17]88, Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, quoted with permission, and the second in an entry dated 17 January [1788], printed in R. Brimley Johnson (200).
12. My edition of Sophia Elizabeth Burney's *"Works and "Novels, Plays, and Poems,"* was edited with the help of Sarah Rose Smith. Permission to quote here from the text and introduction of this edition has been kindly granted by Christine Alexander and the Juvenilia Press.
13. Influential critics who see sublimated protest in Frances Burney's works include Staves, Lowder Newton, and Cutting. Spacks's early feminist readings also played an important role in revisionist readings.
14. The tale unfolds in a family memoir generally referred to in Burney scholarship as the Worcester Memoranda, a typescript of which several copies survive.
15. Epstein notes the "obsessive recurrences of violence" in Burney's journals, and finds a strong narrative focus on the "retrospective memorialization of herself at moments of trauma" (41).
16. Critics who write on the violence in Burney's fiction include Fraiman and especially Zonitch. For an overview of Burney's critical reception since her own time, see Clark, "The Afterlife."
17. Influential critics on gender issues in Frances Burney's writing (besides those already mentioned) include Brown, Rogers, Straub, and Cutting-Gray. Thaddeus, in her biography of Burney, outlines three stages of feminist criticism of Burney since the 1970s.
18. Examples of financial anxiety in the novels of Frances Burney include the loss of Cecilia's fortune; the debt troubles that plague Camilla; and the Wanderer's frustrating attempts to make a living. Copeland raises the issue of money in Frances Burney's novels; other critics who comment are Campbell, Burgess, Thompson, and Henderson.

19. As Doody writes of the fiction of Frances Burney, the "clash of cultures and ideologies" forms "a large source of her humour," and is evident in scenes in which characters from different classes clash to comic effect ("Burney and Politics" 99).
20. The inside covers of two of the issues, evidently recycled and reused, bear the titles of two plays which were written in 1791, evidently as part of a series, *The Eastern Theatre*, which included at least four plays.

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THE POLITICAL WORLDS OF BOXEN AND NARNIA: SMALL BODIES IN BIG SPACES

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IT WAS because of "extreme manual clumsiness" (*Joy* 15), as he would have it, that Clive Staples (or "Jack") Lewis first applied himself to writing. Unable to use "a screw, a bat, or a gun" (16), he turned to pen and paper as a way to fill in the idle hours of childhood. Consequently, in a small attic room that he claimed as his own private study, the young Lewis fashioned his first imaginary world in drawings and stories. Called Animal-Land, it began as a medieval country of anthropomorphised animals who battled cats and defended castles. Meanwhile, however, Jack's older brother and best friend, Warren, had invented his own paracosm, a fictional version of India; in order to work together, the two brothers merged their worlds into one they now called Boxen. The result was, in some ways, a compromise. Fascinated with trains and steamships, Warren insisted on modernity. Lewis got to keep his talking animals, but they no longer wielded swords and engaged in heroic battles; instead, they argued affairs of state, made small-talk, and engaged in political intrigue against their enemies. Also noteworthy is the fact that, despite being the creations of two young boys, all the characters in *Boxen* are adults.

Given Lewis's enduring popularity as an author, and given the increasing interest in juvenilia studies of late, it is perhaps surprising that Lewis scholars have generally ignored his early writings: only two editions of Lewis's Boxen tales are in print, and both editors are guarded in their introductory comments.[1] The problem, according to Walter Hooper, editor of the first collection (published in 1985), is that Lewis unnaturally attempted to sound "grown up" in his juvenilia, and it is this artificial maturity which mars the stories (Introduction 7). To describe *Boxen*, Hooper uses the epithets "stodgy, prosaic, and political" (7). Elsewhere, he implies that *Boxen*, although "pleasant," is marginal in the Lewis canon ("History" 384). A. N. Wilson follows Hooper's lead in his 1990 biography of Lewis, for he mentions the stories only in passing, offering the judgement that they are "intensely dull" (16). To be fair, Lewis himself describes his early writing as "prosaic," with "no poetry, even no romance, in it" (*Joy* 18).

Journal of Juvenilia Studies 1 (2018), pp. 37-47. DOI: 10.29173/jjs104

It cannot be denied that Lewis's Boxen stories bear little resemblance to his beloved, and romance-filled, *Chronicles of Narnia*, a fact that could account for the lack of either scholarly or authorial interest. The exciting and dangerous adventures of the protagonists in the *Narnia* stories are missing in these tales. The landscape of the paracosm is not medieval and romantic; instead, it is modern and, despite being populated with animal characters, familiar. Two stories do have distinct medieval qualities, but these are set firmly in Boxen's distant past.[2] Nevertheless, I would argue that, while it is true that the *Boxen* stories lack the romance of the *Narnia* tales, the political element that Hooper seems scornful of in fact remains essential to Lewis's mature writing, although it is less obvious there. As an adult, Lewis was known as many things: a medievalist, an apologist and a novelist. The theological foundation of his writing has been the focus of much commentary, and religious allegory is the usual interpretation of much of his fiction; he is not generally thought of as writing political commentary. In one recent study of Lewis's fiction, Kath Filmer argues that, "contrary to his own denials and the almost complete absence of any appreciation of them in the range of biographies and critical studies of his work now available, Lewis held very strong political views … in accord with those held by his contemporary, George Orwell" (7). Filmer does not consider Lewis's juvenilia; however, an attentive reading of the *Boxen* stories, especially alongside both Orwell's political satire and Lewis's own later work, may lead us to join Filmer in re-evaluating Lewis's corpus, where we find that political commentary underpins much of Lewis's writing—a commentary that begins in the *Boxen* stories. If the *Boxen* stories depict political scheming and negligent leadership, the *Narnia Chronicles* describe a paracosm founded on the Greek *polis*, or the ideal state. The two worlds complement one another, and both are important to a full appreciation of Lewis's political thought.

Written when Lewis was between the ages of six and fourteen, the *Boxen* tales are made up of fourteen works of varying length;[3] three are plays and the rest are short novels, complete with chapter headings, volume numbers, illustrations and maps. Each story fills somewhere between 100 and 200 handwritten pages in a total of twelve notebooks. Peopled with clothed animals, the stories have recognisable roots in the delightful tales of Beatrix Potter. However, unlike the childlike characters in Potter's creations, Lewis's mice, rabbits, and cats are portraits of the adults that surrounded the Lewis boys. In particular, their father can be seen as an influence in the depiction of Lord John Big (see fig. 1, for which no higher resolution was available). In a biography of his brother, Warren Lewis states that Lewis's preoccupation with politics resulted from the culture of his home life. Their father, Albert Lewis, was a solicitor whose early political ambitions never materialised. However, he remained a loyal Ulsterman who defended the rights of Protestants in Northern Ireland as he could: Albert spent his professional life as a prosecutor presiding over trivial cases in the Belfast courts and using his prodigious oratory skills to denounce Irish politics to anyone who would listen.

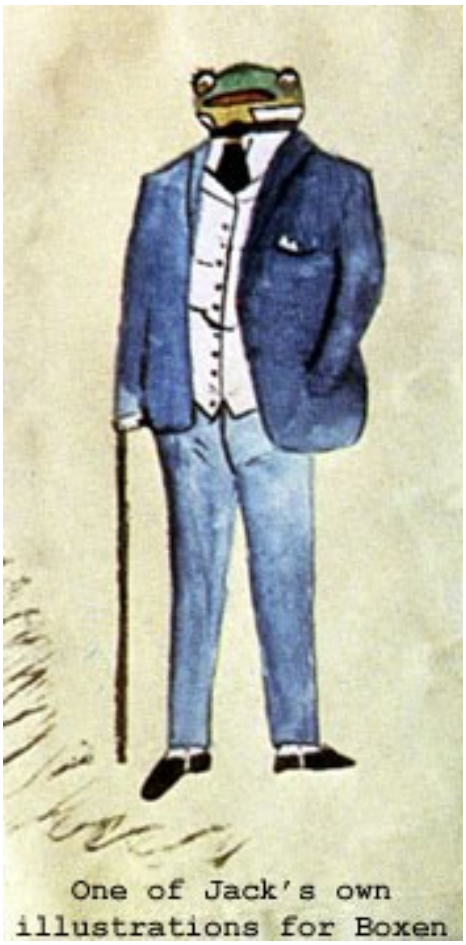

Fig. 1. Portrait of Lord John Big, pen and water colour illustration by C. S. Lewis (courtesy the C. S. Lewis Company Ltd.).

Although Warren was no longer involved in the actual writing, Lewis kept him up to date on all Boxonian events as if they were local news stories. After Warren left for school in 1905, Lewis became the primary writer, but he always kept his brother informed about the goings-on of their Boxonian subjects, with stories that conveyed the adult world at home where he still lived. For example, in 1906, Lewis wrote that "at present Boxen is slightly convulsed. The news has just reached here that King Bunny is a prisoner. The colonists (who are of course the war party) are in a bad way. … Such are the state of affairs recently" (*Letters* 3).[4] According to Warren, the brothers would refer to their stories throughout their lives as a form of common bond which provided a connection between the two men who had been scarred first by a sometimes "convulsive … state of affairs" at home, and then later by war and personal failure.[5]

Perhaps surprisingly, the political manoeuverings that make up much of the plots of the Boxen stories are more mundane than Machiavellian. In fact, a cynical reader might find the intrigues all too familiar from the contemporary political landscape.

For example, the parrot Polonius Green constantly attempts to gain a position in the Clique, Boxen's cabinet. Like Shakespeare's character in *Hamlet*, Lewis's Polonius is an officious, impertinent meddler. As a result, he is expelled, setting off a chain of events that result in war with a neighbouring country. James Bar, the steward of Boxen's navy, is, for unknown reasons, Big's nemesis. In "The Sailor," Alexander Cottle, a young naval officer, is commissioned with reforming the navy, which includes reforming Bar. Blocked in all his reorganisational attempts, poor Cottle must then cover up his failure in a series of complicated and humorous deceptions. "The Life of Lord John Big of Bigham" details Big's rise to power, and is followed by "Littera Scripta Manet," which revolves around Bar's blackmail of Big for some suspected indiscretion. These political bungles and tricks are timeless and realistic; we can imagine Lewis's father reading about such incidents in the newspaper, vociferously expounding on government failure to his family, and Lewis, full of ideas, retreating to his attic room and his notebooks.

Because of the tales' emphasis on affairs of state, a grasp of the governmental makeup of Boxen is imperative to understanding the tales themselves. The narrative revolves around several principal characters and their adventures in politics, society, and war. Lord John Big, the young kings Hawki and Benjamin VII, and naval steward James Bar appear in nearly all the tales. Big, a frog, holds Boxen's highest political office, namely that of the Little Master. He is speaker of the house, guardian of the kings, head of the cabinet, and Prime Minister. Boxen is a monarchy or, more specifically since Animal-Land and India are joined nations, a double monarchy; the two kings (Hawki, an Indian, and Benjamin VII, a rabbit) are the joint sovereigns who allow themselves to be dominated by Big's overbearing nature. Despite being grown man and rabbit (the reader is informed that they are 35 [*Boxen* 95]), the kings mostly act like boys, and are frequently referred to as "the boys." They think politics an "indescribable bore" (*Boxen* 112) and have to be coaxed into participating in Clique meetings. In fact, they are quite willing to give up any royal prerogative, preferring to remain in perpetual boyhood.

Content to let Big deal with all political affairs, "the boys" enjoy life and delight in annoying Big. In one instance, Big is horrified to discover the two kings returning home after a night on the town "bare-headed, & worse, each singing a music-hall song at 2 in the morning, & worse & worse each with a music hall actress!!" (*Boxen* 78). Like an angry father, Big reprimands the sulky monarchs and then sends them to bed. It would be easy to dismiss such stories as quasi-autobiographical, with Lewis and Warren transformed into the powerless kings, and Big representative of their loud, loquacious father.[6] However, this autobiographical reading, while it may contain some truth, is too limited an interpretation of *Boxen*. After all, the kings are adults who happily choose not to exert their power.

As such, they also show a boyish love of prank. For example, in the story "The Locked Door," the vindictive Polonius Green, angered by his expulsion from the Boxonian Clique, seeks revenge against Big. Big's inveterate enemy Bar suggests that Green challenge the Little Master to a duel, but Green contemptuously dismisses the idea. Bar "was silent for some seconds and then cried 'I have it' & burst into laughter" (107). For several minutes, he is so overcome with "aching sides and streaming eyes"

at the thought of his brilliant solution that he cannot speak. Finally, he explains his plan, and the friends share "a hearty guffaw at the scheme. It was as follows: to buy (at the Little-Master's expense) 500 golf balls, with which they would … stuff his mattress" (108). A few pages later, Lewis depicts Lord Big lying on his bed, unable to understand why it is so hard and lumpy. After several valiant attempts to fall asleep despite the discomfort, Big decides he simply cannot stand the pain a moment longer. He takes out his pocket-knife and slits the mattress: "A second later he regretted the rash act for a deluge of golf-balls sprang out, bouncing from floor to walls and thence to the Little-Master's person" (111). Green and Bar complete their revenge when Big receives the bill for £50 worth of golf balls. Lewis goes to great length to craft his prank, leaving the ultimate comeuppance (the £50 bill) until much later in the story. Simple lines also demonstrate great humor. In the first Animal-Land tale, "The King's Ring," a Harbour-Master demands that sailors "Get to work now. Paint this boat," to which one sailor grumbles in an aside, "O go paint your nose" (25). One can imagine a child mumbling such a response to an adult's admonishment. These humorous situations provide refreshing glimpses of the child behind the stories. However, in some cases at least, they also show the child's ability to move from resentful mumbling to active plotting.

Fig. 2. Boxonian politicians in the lobby of the House, pen and water colour illustration by C. S. Lewis (courtesy the C. S. Lewis Company Ltd.).

Clearly, politics is not confined to the cabinet, council or war room; society itself is a political minefield that must be navigated with care if it cannot be avoided. Lewis's boy-kings find adult social life just as stereotypically stultifying as they find political

life, with characters playing endless rounds of whist in the evenings, attending heavy, Wagnerian-style operas, or appearing at dinner parties where they engage in polite, but boring conversation (see fig. 2). For example, in "Boxen: or Scenes from Boxonian City Life," the kings are forced by Big to attend a party where an uncomfortable Benjamin strikes up a conversation with another young guest, Phyllis Legrange. The following is an example of the socially awkward conversations endemic to Boxonian society:

> "Good evening," said Bunny nervously. "Er—have you been to Sangaletto?"[7]
> "No", replied Miss Legrange, "I never go to operas."
> "I hate them," said the rabbit, feeling it was what he should say.
> "Oh, Your Majesty! That's very bad taste"
> Then they both laughed politely. (75)

As an adult, Lewis claimed to have hated adult parties as a child because of their inherent hypocrisy. Regularly taken to dances that were "really for adults, but to which mere school boys and schoolgirls were asked," he writes, "It was the false position … that tormented me; to know that one was regarded as a child and yet be forced to take part in an essentially grown-up function, to feel that all the adults present were being half-mockingly kind and pretending to treat you as what you were not" (*Joy* 43). This perception of the banality, falsity and social politics of polite society, as expressed by the adult Lewis, is also clearly evident in in the youthful *Boxen* stories' depiction of "grown-up function[s]."

Because most of the *Boxen* plots involve political scheming, it would be easy to assume that Lewis had a keen interest in the subject. Yet later in life, Lewis would reject party politics, terrified of what could happen if political dealings were left "in the hands of unscrupulous operators who do not believe in humanity itself" (A. N. Wilson 199), and this detestation of the subject began much earlier in his life. Lewis's mother Flora died from cancer when Lewis was ten, leaving Albert grieving, alone, and uncertain about how to raise his sons on his own. Unable to see them as children and deal with them on that level, Albert often treated the boys like adults, offering little sympathy and much "lightning and thunder" in response to their youthful play (*Joy* 38). In his autobiography, Lewis implies that Albert attempted to treat the boys as equals: "the theory was that we lived together more like three brothers than like a father and two sons" (*Joy* 101). What they really wanted, however, was a father: a father who was both authoritarian and respectful of their need for freedom to do what boys like to do. Instead, they were often subjected to their father's political conversations, in which he and his friends engaged in what Warren described as "a contest as to which could say the most insulting things about 'this rotten Liberal government'" (*C. S. Lewis* 23). In Warren's opinion, this "grumble and torrent of vituperation" convinced his brother that "grownup conversation and politics were one and the same thing, and that therefore he must give everything he wrote a political framework" (23). On this reading, then, Lewis wrote about politics because he believed the subject to be important, even as he detested it.

Appreciating the high value Lewis placed on such an adult subject may help us interpret young Lewis's motives for trying so hard to sound grown up in his juvenile writing. Imitation is, as Christine Alexander states, "a major characteristic of youthful writing" since, in all things, "we learn by imitation" (*Child* 77). The poet Robert Browning also argues that imitation is a necessary part of an artist's development, because "Genius almost invariably begins to develop itself by imitation. ... its object is to compete with, or prove superior to, the world's already-recognised idols, at their own performances and by their own methods" (qtd. in Alexander 78–79). Since it is, then, an integral part of the creative process, a study of imitation offers insight into the mind of the child author. By studying the forms and conventions a child imitates, scholars can learn more about, for example, that child's reading habits or composition process. Scholars like Alexander argue that children, and to some extent adults, imitate the books they read until they develop confidence in their own abilities as writers. In the case of C. S. Lewis, this assumption does not really hold true: the books he loved most as a child and which he remembered fondly as an adult were by Beatrix Potter and Edith Nesbit. The *Boxen* stories show an obvious influence from Potter's stories with their anthropomorphised animals, but her rural landscape with its cottages, gardens, and woodlands is replaced by the modern, urban cities of Boxen. The urbane, scheming Boxonian inhabitants have little in common with the simple, childlike characters of Peter Rabbit, Squirrel Nutkin, and Jemima Puddle-Duck. They will return in the Narnia stories in the form of Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, Hogglestock (a hedgehog) and Reepacheep, to name only a few. In order to understand what Lewis was imitating in the *Boxen* stories, however, we need to consider not only whose books he was reading but also whose voices he was hearing.

Critics who study juvenilia wrestle with what Brent Wilson calls the "fundamental question," namely why children create art in the first place (45). One approach to this question has been to suggest, as Alexander does, that children engage in "colonizing the adult world" by giving "an account of both their own and the adult world, adopting the freedoms of the adult world within a defined discourse, and exploring a power not normally associated with childhood" (31). This colonisation of the adult world is, in my view, an important aspect of Lewis's juvenilia, which barely speak of children or childhood. Instead, the focus is solely on adults, specifically adults who are politicians. Lewis, a boy silently listening to the adult conversation in his house, whose father talked, but did not converse, was attempting to find a voice, and a place, in what he perceived to be that adult world, by partaking in the conversations he assumed to be adult. In other words, he was colonising it.

Moreover, Lewis's *Narnia* stories are very much preoccupied with "the adult world" and just as political as the *Boxen* tales. Filmer asserts that "his political consciousness ... was always active. Indeed, Lewis's politics ... pervade all his fiction" (53). *The Chronicles of Narnia* are commonly accepted as allegories of the Christian message, and certainly that is how Lewis intended that they be read. He was anxious to "steal past the watchful dragons" of a religion which had become stultified by a too-sombre approach ("Sometimes" 528), an approach which emphasised obligation in reverentially hushed voices "as if it were something medical" (527). Yet in practice, what an author reveals is often more than what he intends; in *The Chronicles of Narnia*,

Lewis's political ideals, in addition to his religious ideals, can be seen quite clearly in many of the episodes. As an adult, Lewis was not actively involved in partisan politics and took little interest in transitory policy questions. But *politics* in its fullest sense does not mean only parliamentary intrigue and debates about taxes. And in *Narnia*, Lewis has much to say about the underlying foundations of a just political order.

Specifically, I would argue that the political origins of Narnia are found in the Greek *polis*. The word *politics* comes from the word *polis*, an almost untranslatable Greek word describing a comprehensive community which combined spheres and identities we moderns tend to keep separate: religion, government, family, school, business.[8] Political life in the *polis* asks perennial questions like "What is a good life?" and "How should we live together?" Politics is, therefore, inextricably tied to the most fundamental questions about human nature and purpose, the questions in which Lewis is deeply interested. In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, he transposes the idea of kingship out of political reality into a fictional realm whose structure and moral purity permit a righteous kingly rule. This imaginative transposition enables Lewis to encourage an appreciation of the values he considered essential to being human and to the politics that govern the human. However, as we can see in *Boxen*, Lewis considered those values (courage, moderation, wisdom and justice—the four virtues outlined by Plato in *The Republic*[9]) to be largely inaccessible to people forced to function within modern political structures. The foundational decision to set his *Chronicles* in a Narnia that is both hierarchical and medieval is itself a political point for the progress-hating Lewis (Fermer 77). A product of the turbulent Irish Home Rule conflict, the First World War (in which he was a soldier), and the Second World War, Lewis was wary of political systems which encouraged the rise of upstart statesmen. Jadis the White Witch (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*), Miraz (*Prince Caspian*), and Shift (*The Last Battle*) are all usurpers who wrest power from rightful, hierarchical rulers, with disastrous results. Political position, Lewis repeatedly affirms, is best held in the hands of the ordained, not the usurping and unnaturally ambitious.

The medieval world of Narnia is, then, a metaphor for the kind of political system of which Lewis approved. In *Prince Caspian*, we find Narnia a divided world, in which humans under the usurping rule of King Miraz have been "felling forests and defiling streams" (23) so that the Dryads and Naiads have "sunk into a deep sleep" (23). Lewis clearly associates such activities of the modern world, evidence of industrial progress and competition, with evil. In *The Last Battle*, modern evils are symbolised by the ape Shift and the donkey Puzzle, whose self-aggrandisement and self-deception, Lewis believed, motivate the perpetrators and mindless promoters of political causes to justify any means of implementing their aims.[10] This theme is one we may recognise from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, a book that, as Kath Filmer notes, Lewis admired (53).[11] In *Why I Write*, Orwell identifies four motives that are always present when writing prose. The fourth, the political motive, he defines as "the desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people's idea of the kind of society that they should strive after," adding that "no book is genuinely free from political bias" (6). Although Lewis's religious beliefs, manifestly apparent in his association of political wrongs with evil, do set him apart from Orwell, both authors agree in denouncing totalitarian power, the misuse of science, the corruption of

language, and the erosion of individual rights. *The Last Battle* depicts the ruthless destruction of the natural Narnian environment and the erosion of traditional Narnian (or medieval) values in an inescapable analogy with the modern, mundane world. It is as much a political commentary as *Animal Farm*.

Although *Animal Farm* chronicles a failed revolution, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* ends with a positive, restorative change in government. While the princes in *Boxen* are overgrown boys who grudgingly exercise what little royal prerogative is given to them by the domineering Lord Big, the children in *Narnia* are prophesied, respected, transformed, and transforming. More particularly, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Pevensie children physically embody the four virtues of the *polis*:[12] courage (Lucy the Valiant), moderation (Susan the Gentle), wisdom (Peter the Magnificent) and justice (Edmund the Just). Thus the adult Lewis bestows political agency on his child protagonists, an agency he lacked as a child and could not bestow on his "boy" kings.

As an adult, Lewis wrote that his father "represented adult life as one of incessant drudgery under the continual threat of financial ruin" (*Joy* 25). For his part, as he recalls, his young self "took it all literally and had the gloomiest anticipation of adult life" (25). The *Boxen* stories certainly convey this preoccupation with the "gloom" that awaited all adults who became aware of their disempowerment in the larger political system. The inhabitants of Boxen reflect this general powerlessness: the kings who abdicate responsibility; Big who assumes it, but must always machinate in order to maintain it; Polonius Green, James Bar and many others who struggle to find a position on the political ladder by any nefarious means. The political world of Narnia, by contrast, reflects Lewis's interest in the medieval world of his scholarship. It is a landscape that can include his Christian beliefs, as well as a landscape that allows for the ancient ideals of the *polis*, the ideal political state, to thrive. Yet these political ideas began to take shape in the little room at Little Lea that young Lewis claimed as his own creative place. In this liminal space between the lower regions of parental control and the no-man's land of the attic, Jack Lewis considered the limits, responsibilities, problems, and potentialities of power. These ideas would remain with him and provide a framework for much of his later writing.

NOTES

1.The first edition was produced by Walter Hooper, the literary executor of the Lewis estate. Published in 1985, it contained only eleven of the stories. Douglas Gresham's 2010 edition contains all of the known tales.

2. Two stories, "The King's Ring" and "The Relief of Murray," are set in Boxen's equivalent of the Middle Ages; the former takes place in 1327, while the latter includes drawings of knights on horses.

3. According to Hooper, more stories did exist, but, after his brother's death, Warren consigned many of Lewis's personal writings to a bonfire. Hooper was only able to save a few of the notebooks (Hooper, "History" 368). Some Lewis scholars (Kathryn Lindskoog in particular) question this story.

4. This plotline does not exist in any of the stories.

5. Warren became an alcoholic later in life; Lewis periodically had to find him and place him in facilities that assisted with sobriety (A. N. Wilson 271 and elsewhere). This connection with *Boxen* seems to have helped create a link when their lives diverged personally and professionally.
6. This is one of the most common readings of *Boxen*; Hooper, in particular, stresses this reading of the stories. (See Introduction vii.)
7. *Sangaletto* is, as Lewis gives in a footnote, "a [fictional] grand opera of the heaviest type." The young author is having fun comparing the complexities and artificiality of party conversation and opera.
8. For more information on Plato's *polis*, see Donald Morrison.
9. See Salazar (140).
10. Shift and Napoleon (Orwell's Pig) and Puzzle and Boxer (Orwell's horse) are similar characters.
11. In *Of This and Other Worlds* (1982), Lewis discusses Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984* in the chapter "George Orwell," arguing that the former is the superior novel. Orwell reviewed Lewis's *That Hideous Strength* (1945) favorably. It is interesting to note that both *That Hideous Strength* and *Animal Farm* are subtitled "fairy stories" by their authors.
12. See Morrison (3).

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PAMELA BROWN'S *THE SWISH OF THE CURTAIN*: A PROGRAMME FOR LIFE?

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I LIKE to think that we who work on juvenilia are examining the *real* Children's Literature: that is, literature *by* children, not just *for* them. Pamela Brown's *The Swish of the Curtain* of 1941, however, is both *by* a juvenile, and *for* juveniles; it is also *about* them. Young Pamela Brown was just thirteen when she began her novel. It presents a group of stage-struck young people who find a deserted chapel, convert it to a theatre, and proceed to stage shows there with great success. Pamela wrote in Colchester in England, on the threshold of the Second World War; but the experience she drew on, the amateur theatricals she performed with her young friends, was undertaken before the war, and the war itself, which was exploding all around her as she wrote, does not figure in her narrative. She finished *The Swish of the Curtain* "soon after her fifteenth birthday," says the book's blurb, "which fell in 1940."[1] It was published the next year, when she was sixteen, by Thomas Nelson and Sons, who remained her publishers over many years. The book was a remarkable success, reprinted in 1942, 1944, 1946 … and many times since. And it is still in print.

Pamela Brown wrote several sequels, besides many other books; but none seems to have been so successful, nor to have had so many reprints, as the one written by the teenager. Besides its long shelf life as a book, *The Swish of the Curtain* became a radio series on BBC, and in 1980 it was adapted as a three-part television serial, which can still be found. It is lovingly done, preserving all seven of the original novel's young protagonists.[2] It seems, then, that for many decades now the book has been a rallying-call for all stage-struck young people. Even today there is a drama school for young people called "Swish of the Curtain," with branches in several counties in England, and summer productions of such shows as *Peter Pan* and *Annie*.

Not bad, for a book written *and published* by a teenager! And it is interesting to me that though Pamela Brown went on to write many books for young readers as well as radio and television scripts (she was a mainstay of the BBC Children's Hour programs), it is her youthful achievement that continues to outshine all the later

Journal of Juvenilia Studies 1 (2018), pp. 48-61. DOI: 10.29173/jjs109

works. No doubt part of this novel's success with young people was the fact that it was by one of themselves; but this "first, fine, careless rapture" of a girl who went on to become a prolific novelist certainly stands as a shining example of successful teenage authorship.

Despite being both successful and prolific, Pamela Brown may not be familiar to scholars of juvenilia today, nor *The Swish of the Curtain* either. Writing for children seldom achieves classic status. So a brief synopsis with commentary may be in order. Seven talented young people from three contiguous households in the fictional town of Fenchester share an ambition to make it big on the stage, and they luck into a disused chapel, which they are allowed to convert into a theatre: they call it the Blue Door Theatre. Each has a salient talent. The eldest, Nigel Halford, is an aspiring artist and becomes a scene painter. Of his twin siblings, Vicky does acrobatics and hopes to be a dancer; "Bulldog" is a general handyman, lighting expert, and contriver of the curtain that is finally made to "swish" in a satisfying manner. Jeremy Darwin, next door, shines in music, plays the violin and the piano, and prolifically composes songs. His sister Lyn is the most dedicated actress and producer, temperamental and ambitious. Sandra Fayne, besides being thoughtful and tactful, has a good singing voice, and a talent for designing and sewing costumes—this makes her the perfect wardrobe mistress. And her sister, Madelaine, or "Maddy"—at nine the youngest of the group—is a budding character actress, and source for chaos and humour. *There* is a microcosm of the performing arts for you!

This specialization among the characters allows for appropriate and recognizable dialogue—something we also find in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, one of the many novels Pamela invokes in *Swish*. Right from the opening exchange we can learn the characteristic attitudes of Jo, Meg, Amy and Beth:

> "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents," grumbled Jo, lying on the rug.
>
> "It's so dreadful to be poor!" sighed Meg, looking down at her old dress.
>
> "I don't think it's fair for some girls to have lots of pretty things, and other girls nothing at all," added little Amy, with an injured air.
>
> "We've got father and mother, and each other, anyhow," said Beth, contentedly, from her corner. (Alcott 1)

Brown was to produce a television movie of *Little Women* in 1950, and she scripted a program about Alcott called *Louisa*, which she afterwards turned into a novel, about Louisa May Alcott's youth.[3] As her own book's jacket blurb notes, there were clear affinities between Brown and Alcott. Both wrote as children, and *for* children; both wrote plays, both loved the theatre and wanted to become actresses.

All the young people in *Swish* are more or less writers as well as performers, and they frequently write their own scripts, including song lyrics; moreover, these compositions are often fully included in the narrative, which presents a number of plays-within-the-novel. Much of the narrative of *Swish*, in fact, is made up of generous excerpts from their various productions, which essentially provide the main episodes

of the novel. The young people's first production at the Blue Door Theatre is a variety show featuring a Spanish dance, a comedy interlude showing an agonizingly bad ballet lesson, and a romance about lovers who are on different sides of the English Civil War. At Christmas they do a Nativity play for children; in summer scenes from Shakespeare for the Vicarage fête, and then a *Cinderella* pantomime for the following Christmas. Meanwhile their school lives are progressing; they approach and Nigel takes the daunting "School Cert." (now called O Levels), and they face careers.

The staunch adult supporters throughout are the Vicar and his wife, soon joined by the Bishop, who believes in their talent and their shared vocation to turn their Blue Door Theatre project into a professional repertory company. The three sets of parents, on the other hand, are impatient for their offspring to grow out of this theatre nonsense. So there is a sense in which the parents are the antagonists who must be overcome—though these are good law-abiding Anglican families, wanting the best for their children. Although none of the parents directly quotes Noel Coward's hit 1935 recording, "Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage, Mrs. Worthington," the title of this song from Pamela's youth aptly conveys the fictional parents' prevailing sentiment. Nevertheless, the Bishop persuades the parents to strike a bargain: If the Blue Door team can win the prize at the coming competition for amateur companies in presenting a one-act play, then the parents will send them to drama school. So the climax of the book's action is the competition, for which the Blue Doors write their own one-act play, set in a circus.

Well, of course they do win; and in winning the trophy, the applause, and the detailed praise of the adjudicator, they have also won their hearts' desire, the means to go to drama school in London and become full-fledged professional performers. This satisfying conclusion is all brought about very convincingly, with remarkable specificity on matters like staging, costume design, lighting, and makeup, as well as sustained and entertaining excerpts from their scripts. The accounts of song-writing are not always convincing. In movies about musicals we are familiar with the convention that composers of new songs sit down at the piano and bingo! start warbling a new song right off the bat. We know that in reality the process of composition is more agonizing and more time-consuming—but young Brown cheerfully exploits the convention. When the Blue Doors are contemplating their pantomime, we learn,

> Jeremy sat down at the piano and sang
>
> I wonder why
> The day's so long
> And holds no song
> For me.
> I wonder why?
> I wonder why
> I feel so sad,
> There's nothing glad

> In me.
> I wonder why? (*Swish* 257)

On hearing this, Jeremy's friends chorus "Marvellous! … Splendiferous!" Pretty hackneyed and unconvincing, one might think. But it is worth remembering that an inexperienced young teenager is actually cooking this up as she goes along—no mean feat in itself.

The first sequel to *Swish*, *Maddy Alone* of 1945, started as a radio serial on BBC's Children's Hour, and Brown dedicated this second novel to her producer, "John Keir Cross, remembering some happy days at Broadcasting House." For the radio version of *Swish of the Curtain*, she recalls, he "wrote the music" of Jeremy's song (*Maddy Alone* vi). Brown's mother wrote to thank Cross for his "very sweet and appropriate air 'I Wonder Why,'" adding that "my husband must be quite tired of hearing me sing it."[4] Who knows but Irving Berlin was inspired by that song when he came to write his hit song of 1950, also titled, "I Wonder Why"![5]

Like most young writers, Brown is interested in the matter of love and sexuality. The problem for her young people, though, is the prudery of the *adults*. When they plan their Civil War romance, they discuss the casting:

> "A heroine can't be kissed by a hero if he has to stand on tiptoe to do it."
>
> "Golly! Are we going to have kissing in it?" Bulldog looked shocked.
>
> "Of course," said Lyn scornfully. "Have you ever seen a play or a film that hasn't any?"…
>
> Sandra said slowly, "This is rather an awkward point. Of course, the play must have a romance in it, but will all the old ladies in the audience stand for it?" (*Swish* 80)

The solution for this occasion is to cast a brother and sister as the lovers, by way of *not* shocking the old ladies. The Blue Doors get bolder, though, and when they do a version of the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*, the lovers are not related, but the scene is superbly successful. For the most part, however, Brown stays with wholesome chastity among her young people, even when she follows them into their late teens.[6] When Nigel and Lyn dispute the right way to represent Romeo and Juliet, the Bishop dismisses them: "As neither of you knows anything about love … don't you consider this argument rather futile?" (207)

Aside from the omission of the War, of course the book is of its time, and there are many period reminders, even besides the extraordinary cheapness of things: one-and-six to get a chimney swept! In fashion, the new presence of "slacks" among the girls—duly resented by the boys—reflects changes both in fashion and the status of women. The place of women had notably improved since so many of them had entered the work force at the start of the war, and this change finds its way into the novel. When Nigel hears Lyn and Sandra discussing homes, he says to them,

> "I thought you wanted careers."
>
> "I want a career, then a home."
>
> "You're greedy," Jeremy told her. "And I don't think women ought to have careers." He knew this always made Lyn see red, and winked at Nigel, who said seriously, "A woman's place is in the home."
>
> "The time has gone when women spent their lives being unpaid housekeepers," replied Lyn cuttingly. (28)

It sounds second-wave feminist!

INASMUCH as Lyn is about the closest we have to an on-stage Pamela Brown (a role she perhaps shares with Sandra, who is sometimes the spokeswoman of the company), should we relate this exchange to Brown's later life? A career she certainly had. And she did marry, as well; her husband seems to have collaborated with her in certain professional ventures.[7] But I find no record of children. Perhaps her multiple readers sufficed.

A notable difference between *Swish* with its sequels and today's young adult fiction is the plentiful literary allusion. These kids are already familiar with many Shakespeare plays, and much besides. To succeed in an artistic endeavour, they reasonably believe, you need to be familiar with other people's artistic endeavours. And references to Bernard Shaw, Tennyson, the *Alice* books, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and other novels come thick and fast: young as they are, the Blue Doors read widely and quote frequently. They even play a "Quotations" game—I remember playing it myself at school—in which you must cap a line quoted by someone else with another line that contains one of the same words. For instance, when Nigel quotes the aphorism, "'If wishes were horses, beggars would ride,'" Sandra promptly responds with Alfred Noyes: "'And the highwayman came riding, riding, riding, up to the old inn door'" (189). And so on.

Readers too are expected to pick up on allusions: "'Words, words, words,' she [Lyn] quoted to herself" (291)—and that "quoted" challenges the reader to recognize the fragment from *Hamlet*. In "The Rainbow Caravans," a later story about a girl who wants to become a writer, the young narrator laments being removed from school, "because if you're a writer you need to have a good education so that you can quote Shakespeare and Milton and people like that" (*Ballerina* 157). This unashamed literariness contrasts sharply with today's practices. In my own fiction for young adults the editor was constantly on my case to delete allusions. "Kids don't recognize them and don't like them," I was told. Recognizing them, of course, is all the less likely if the young reader is never exposed to them. Pamela Brown's kids, by contrast, are dyed-in-the-wool literary, and proud of it.

"The liveliness, skill, humour, and precision" of *Swish*, says the book's blurb, "augurs well for the carry-through of creative art." And sure enough, it was followed by four sequels, from *Maddy Alone* of 1945 to *Maddy Again* of 1956, besides many other novels. I have not yet read them all, but among those I have read I do recognize a recurring pattern. A young person—most often a girl—wants to do something really

difficult—ballet, or skating, or acting in a travelling family theatre company—and after many difficulties, succeeds. These are up-beat stories, but challenges are presented realistically, and success has to be *earned*, by hard labour as well as talent.

Nearly all the Blue Door novels are illustrated by Newton Whittaker, with coloured dust jackets (see for instance fig. 1) and frontispiece, and about ten black-and-white scenes from the action through the book.[8] The drawings are of their period, but stylish and accurate; and they present the young people not as cute kids or scruffy Bohemians, but as well-grown young people, leggy and with quite sophisticated clothing and hairstyles. The drawings, in other words, present the novel's protagonists as "young adults" of the day, ready to provide respectable role models (fig. 2).

"AMONG the many literary forms with which juvenilia intersect, biography and autobiography are arguably the most significant," writes Christine Alexander (154). And it is of course always fascinating to observe the interaction of life with literary production in a young author. Unfortunately, we do not know a great deal about Brown's life, and information on it is scarce. (For instance, the archives of her publishers Thomas Nelson and Sons have been scattered and destroyed.) Born at the very end of 1924 (December 31 in fact) and dying at sixty-four in 1989, Brown "was passionate about the theatre, and from an early age, put on plays with her friends," says the Wikipedia article on her. No surprise there! She grew up in Colchester in Essex, but moved with her family to South Wales while she was still writing *Swish*, keeping her friends in Colchester informed of her progress. But further personal information is hard to find. The record switches to her professional life; and here we have the long list of her novels for children (the term "young adult" had yet to be invented), and her many credits as a script-writer and producer for radio and television. From her publications we can discover a little more, such as the fact that she travelled fairly widely,[9] and that she was deeply interested in theatre history.[10]

Life worked into writing is what we find in Pamela Brown's later novels; indeed, it is what we expect to find in a young writer, as well as in mature ones. Aspiring writers are typically advised to "Write what you know"—and what can one know better than one's own life?[11] But to find *writing worked into life*—That is, writing that is a sign-post of aspects of life yet to come: we can hardly expect that. It seems to me, however, that young Pamela Brown, in composing *The Swish of the Curtain*, was in some sense laying down a program for her future life and career. The grand motive of the Blue Door Theatre troupe is to get to drama school and become professionals. And that is what Pamela Brown proceeded to do herself. Her writing became, in fact, a stepping-stone, an enabling factor, in achieving this ambition. She did indeed qualify to go to RADA, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, in London, starting in 1942 and graduating in September 1943.[12] And she used her earnings from the publication of *Swish* to help pay her fees. That is turning writing into life with a vengeance! And from RADA she did proceed to become an actress. In a letter to her producer of July 1943, when she was still only eighteen, she wrote, "I am now playing in 'The Man Who came to Dinner' at the Savoy Theatre";[13] so we know she made it to at least one West End production, besides working for ENSA, the organization set up to entertain the armed forces during the War.[14] The work for the BBC also included some

dramatic performance. On the casting for the radio version of *Maddy Alone* Cross the producer wrote to her, "Yourself, of course, will be Sandra," Maddy's sister.[15] Unfortunately, though, the record of Brown's acting career peters out, in part because there was another actress, a few years older, registered with the name Pamela Brown; and Equity, the actors' union, will not register more than one performer under the same name. *Our* Pamela had to re-name herself Mela Brown. I would dearly like to discover which repertory company she joined and what roles she played, but that information is elusive.

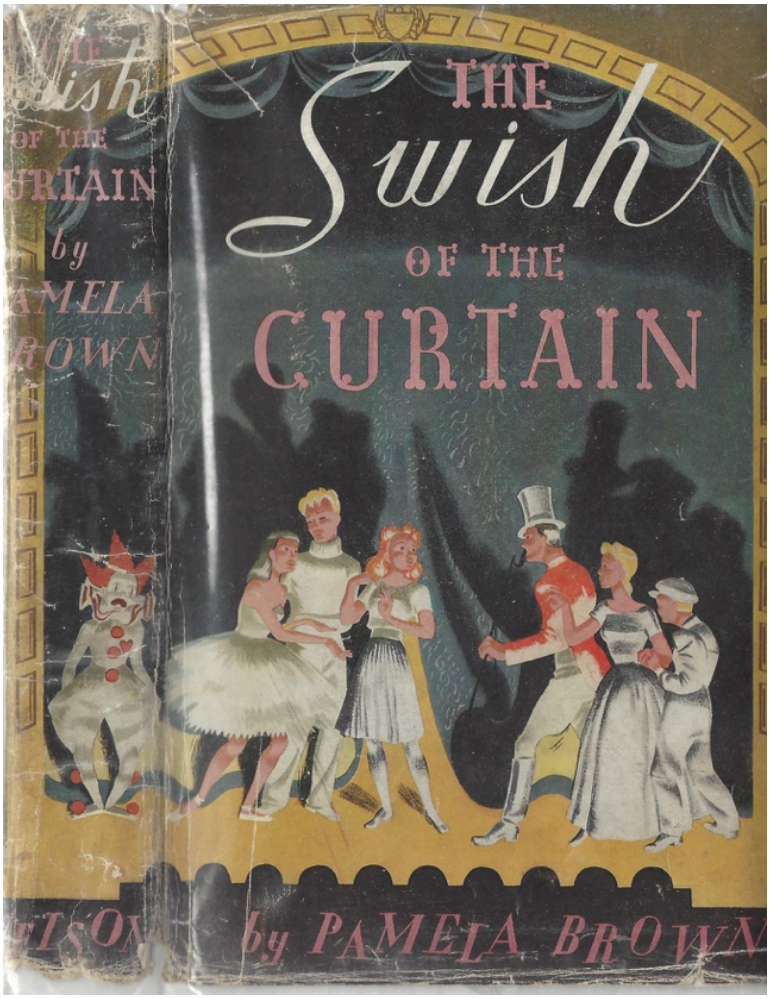

Fig. 1. Dust jacket by Newton Whittaker for The Swish of the Curtain, *first edition.*

However, as an *author*, our Pamela kept her full name, and of the two careers, actress and author, the author in time began to predominate. And of course, though *Swish* is most obviously about the stage vocation, it is also about composition, so in this, too, the early writing worked its way into later life. Composition is going on in *Swish* throughout the company's various shows. When the Blue Doors are performing

their one-act play in the competition, the judge, impressed, "glanced at her programme for the author of the play, and saw to her amazement 'by the company'" (*Swish* 334). Thomas Nelson, on reading *Swish*, must have been equally amazed to learn it was by a teenager.

Brown, it seems, continued to support her acting career by her writing. While she was still at RADA, and still only seventeen, she wrote two scripts for BBC radio, one on the sonnets of Shakespeare and Sidney, and one on Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. (That literary knowledge was standing her in good stead, it seems.) In 1944, at nineteen, she collaborated in adapting *Swish* as a three-part serial for BBC radio, and of course this helped considerably with the sales of the book. Her mother wrote to John Keir Cross from her home town of Brecon in Wales:

> There has been great enthusiasm in this small town over the broadcasts, and everyone seems to have listened—from the Dean and Director of Education down to the butcher and baker! W. H. Smith had 25 copies of the third edition of the book and when we went in yesterday to buy one, only one still remained. They have already sold over a hundred.[16]

The Swish serial was broadcast again in 1948 and 1957. Those royalties must have been welcome to a struggling actress.

The time came when RADA itself was willing to employ Brown's services as a writer. Her play "The Children of Camp Fortuna" was performed by RADA students before she wrote it up as a narrative and published it in 1952 in a collection titled *To Be a Ballerina and Other Stories* (vi). And it was as a writer rather than as an actress that Brown was to make her mark, although performance of some kind continued to be a mainstay of her subject matter. In a story included in the same collection, called "The Rainbow Caravans"—where, I note, the circus is prominent again, a kind of irresistible metaphor for performance—we have a young first-person narrator whose ambition is to be a *writer*. The emphasis now has shifted: Her best friend Jean, she writes, "wants to be an actress, which I think is a jolly good thing to want to be, but it makes her show off rather. And she is pretty, which will help for being an actress, but which makes her show off even more" (160). Sally the narrator, on the other hand, is "very plain," she says, with spots (158). (One wonders whether Brown's appearance was a handicap in her acting career.)

Sally Dimble is still in elementary school, daughter of a widowed mother who runs a boarding-house in East-End London: *not* a privileged situation. "Sometimes I despair of ever being a writer, as I have nothing to write about," moans Sally (*Ballerina* 157). But she conscientiously keeps a diary; and when a circus comes to the bombed site on her street, she finds her inspiration, especially when the girl who trains the performing dogs invites her into her caravan. Much to her chagrin her diary and a story she calls "The Rainbow Caravans" disappear for a while; in due course it emerges that that one of her mother's lodgers is a publisher's reader, and he has taken her work to show his boss. Sally receives a letter from the Managing Director of

"Mason and Sons, Publishers"—clearly a fictionalization of Thomas Nelson and Sons, Brown's own publisher—inviting her to come to see him.

For the interview with the publisher Sally buys a hat with a veil in order to look "sophisticated," as well as to hide her spots. The publisher tells her,

> "We are looking for some new authors for full-length books for children, and, while we know you are still a school-girl yourself, we do feel that the atmosphere of your work is the sort of thing that we want. Real happenings to ordinary children …. What we want is the effect on a twelve- or thirteen-year-old of a circus coming into her life …." (207)

At this Sally is so overwhelmed that she bursts into tears. "I could have died," she writes. "I tried to blow my nose, and got caught up in the veil, and oh! it was awful!" (208). Once she has got her sophisticated hat off, however, and can have "a good blow," she settles down to sensible talk about revising her story for publication:

> "We liked your title, *The Rainbow Caravans*, but we don't want your heroine to run away in the end—that is rather too fictional. … You could write it in diary form if you liked. It would have to be at least seventy thousand words in length. Now, do you think you could do it?" (*Ballerina* 207–08)

Brown's "The Rainbow Caravans" is a brief story, and far short of seventy thousand words. But it *is* in diary form. So, in a sense, it is about itself. Of course I would love to know how much of Brown's own experience as a young girl writer feeds into this story of the negotiation with the publisher. It seems entirely likely that Thomas Nelson, or his "Managing Director," would also have stipulated for realistic content—"Real happenings to ordinary children"—and if this was indeed the case, then perhaps it is also the case that the negotiation with the parents in the final, published version of *Swish* has taken the place of some original, wilder resolution, such as the Blue Doors making a smashing success of their theatre without ever receiving professional training!

I am not the first person to guess at a personal connection in this story. A BBC representative, when offered an adaptation of it by Brown and her husband, wrote to a colleague, "It *may* be founded on fact. After all Pamela herself got the contract with Nelson when she wasn't much older than the heroine in this story."[17] Did a hat with a veil figure in Pamela Brown's interview? We will never know. But I do like to think that memory was working alongside invention when she wrote this story. In works later than *The Swish of the Curtain*, as we might expect, memory plays a large role, since as the years and the experience accumulate there is more to remember. *Maddy Again* is the last of the Blue Door series, published relatively late in 1956. By this time Brown's career had progressed considerably, and she had many writing credits, not only for her novels but also for a number of screenplays and adaptations for the BBC—including, for instance, *Anne of Green Gables* (1952). And in *Maddy Again* Brown

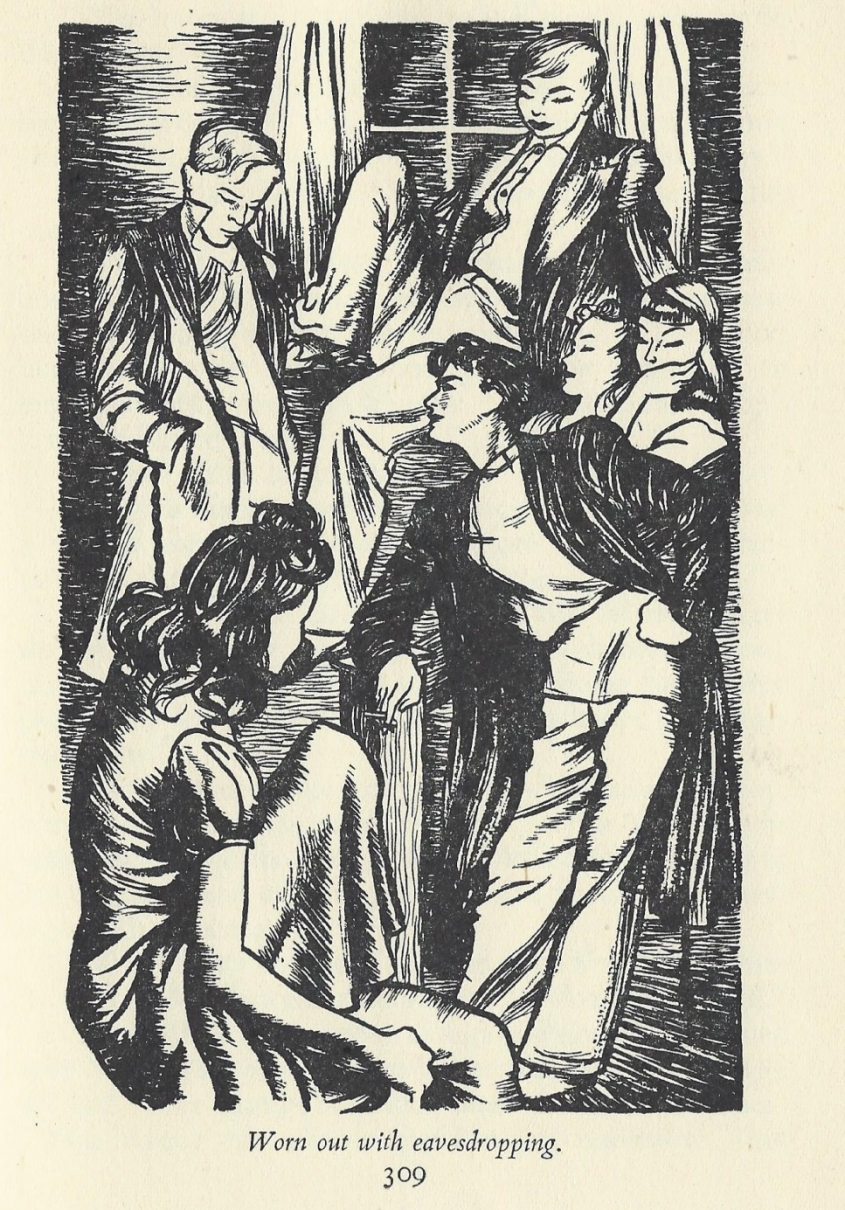

Fig. 2. Illustration by Newton Whittaker, in The Swish of the Curtain, *first edition.*

draws on her own career in BBC television. Maddy is now among the junior students at "BADA" ("The British Academy of Dramatic Art," as she fictionalises RADA). Television has become the dramatic genre of choice, and we get plenty of instruction on how the stage actor must tone down voice and expression for this more intimate and in-your-face medium. A significant minor character is "Miss Tibbs," the writer for a series about children encountering other children from different cultures. In writing the script for the interviews, Miss Tibbs must be on her toes and ready to adapt at short notice. When a cheerful black woman shows up as Maddy's chaperone, the producer takes a hasty decision to include her in the show:

> "You write her just a few lines, Miss Tibbs, but make them good ones. Can you do that by tomorrow?"
>
> "Trust me," said Miss Tibbs stoutly, nodding her head in determination. (*Maddy Again* 129)

It is worth noting that, though she appears to take a subordinate role to her male boss, Miss Tibbs was actually the one who initiated the idea. And though Miss Tibbs is described as "an elderly woman, with cropped grey hair" (129), the Miss Tibbs in the coloured illustration to this episode looks much closer to Brown's own age of thirty-two at the time (fig. 3). I like to think it could be a portrait.

Though Miss Tibbs here has the subordinate role as writer, by the time she wrote *Maddy Again*, Brown had often taken the boss's role of "producer." Television was not yet on the scene when young Pamela Brown undertook writing *The Swish of the Curtain* in the late 'thirties, so we cannot expect her to have dreamed up a career for herself in it. But there is a producer in stage productions too. And young Brown had already imagined herself in that role. Lyn, Brown's partial alter ego in *Swish*, is most committed as an actress, but she is also the "producer" of the young people's shows. (Today we call the role Director.) As the various amateur companies bustle about getting ready for the one-act play competition, and the Blue Door girls are ready to go on stage, Miss Hanston of the Hanston Dramatic Class

> … looked hard at the girls as they stood, arms linked, in the wings.
>
> "Who is your producer?" she asked them, in a kind but patronizing tone.
>
> "I am," said Lyn sweetly, looking about six in her ballet frock.
>
> (*Swish* 331)

And when the Blue Doors win the competition, it is Lyn as producer who collects the trophy:

> In a dream Lyn walked up to the footlights, her cheeks flushed to match the red velvet of her dress.
>
> "Are you the little producer?" she was asked by the amazed Mrs. Seymore [the judge].
>
> "Well, yes, in name," she replied, smiling up into the friendly eyes, "but the play produced itself."
>
> She took the heavy statue and turned to the applauding audience.
>
> (341)

So the final triumph of the book focuses on the producer, as well as on the astonishing youth of the company.

Fig. 3. Colour illustration by Drake Brookshaw, in To Be a Ballerina and Other Stories.

ULTIMATELY it was as producer, as well as writer, that Pamela Brown too was to flourish. And though I have failed to find much about Mela Brown the actress, there is no shortage of evidence of Brown's success as a producer for television. In the 1950s alone she produced eighteen television shows, some of which were series, some based on stories that she had written and adapted herself.

The 1980 television adaptation of *Swish* must have seemed like the consummation most devoutly to be wished of her career, where the aspirations she had celebrated as a teenager came together in the new medium that she had made her own. In *Swish* "the play's the thing," and the focus is on the stage, as it continues to be in today's string of drama schools for young people named after Brown's novel. Its first sequel, *Maddy Alone*, is the story of the making of a film. And in the last, *Maddy Again*, the centre of action is television. The series thus provides a microcosm not

only of Brown's own developing career, but of the evolution of performance media. She would no doubt have made an arresting narrative out of social media and the digital revolution, had she lived long enough.

Swish is a shapely tale. At the beginning the seven protagonists, overlooking the sea, announce their various ambitions; and at the end they gather at the same lofty viewpoint, and Sandra—here speaking for Brown, it seems—reflects, "All our dreams have come true; all our ambitions have been realized; and all our castles in the air are now solid ones" (343). We might call *The Swish of the Curtain* the castle in the air that Brown, through the course of her career, managed to turn solid.

NOTES

1. Dust jacket of *The Swish of the Curtain*, by Pamela Brown (1941), 1946 reprint.
2. "Seven children is a difficulty," wrote her producer John Keir Cross of the BBC before the radio serialization. But the problem seems to have been differentiating the children's voices for only audio transmission. Letter of 30 May 1943, BBC Archives.
3. She subsequently turned the program into a book on Alcott called *Louisa*. Brown's book concentrates on Alcott's early life, and the book ends with the opening sentences of *Little Women*, quoted here (172).
4. Letter to Pamela Brown, 30 January 1944 from "Sepha. I. Brown," BBC Archives. If "Sepha." is short for "Seraphina," as seems likely, then there is a further compliment to her mother in Pamela Brown's *Family Playbill* of 1951, where Seraphina Mannering is the heroine's mother, and the leading lady of a Victorian touring drama company. The book is dedicated "For my Parents."
5. From the Broadway musical of 1950, *Call Me Madam*. The song was recorded in the following years by teams of artists, including Dinah Shaw, Perry Como, and Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong. Two songs, "I Wonder Why?" and "The Swish of the Curtain," are included in the BBC television series of *Swish* of 1980.
6. Brown seems to rejoice that the principals in this scene are played by actors of the correct age. The heroine Lexy in *Family Playbill* (1951) likewise scores her first acting success as Juliet, partly because she is of the right age for the role. Why snatch the rightful property of young people to give to seasoned actors?
7. She married the actor Donald Masters (1916–1962), and it seems she collaborated with him in some writing ventures. My thanks for this information to Adela Burke, who has been a very able research assistant in my study of Pamela Brown.
8. The exception is *Maddy Again* (1956), which is illustrated by Drake Brookshaw.
9. "The Children of Camp Fortuna" and "Citizen of Cairo," in *To Be a Ballerina and Other Stories*, are set in or near Cairo, and show an intimate knowledge of it. *Maddy Alone* likewise shows she knows Paris and its environs.
10. *Family Playbill* (1951), for instance, convincingly presents a Victorian family troupe, the Mannerings, and their travels and provincial performances. *Romeo and Juliet*, apparently Brown's favourite Shakespeare play, figures prominently again, and the youthfulness of the principals seems to have been a large part of its appeal to her.
11. For instance, Jane Austen wrote to her niece Anna Austen, commenting on the draft novel Anna had sent her, "you had better not leave England. Let the Portmans go to Ireland, but as you know nothing of the Manners there, you had better not go with them." *Jane Austen's Letters* 269.
12. "She is listed as Pamela Beatrice Brown, from South Wales, aged seventeen and a quarter. She took her entrance test on 25/2/42, and started courses in the Academy in April. We have her listed for four terms and taking her 'finals' in the summer of 1943. She also took the option of studying French for an extra guinea." E-mail from James Thornton, RADA Librarian, 25 April 2017.

13. Letter of 12 July 12. BBC Archives.
14. See Mrs. Brown to John Keir Cross, letter of 20 February 1944, BBC Archives.
15. John Keir Cross to Pamela Brown, letter of 14 May 1943, BBC Archives.
16. Mrs. Brown to John Keir Cross, letter of 20 February 1944, BBC Archives.
17. Memo 14 March [1955], signature illegible, BBC Archives. This BBC official's response to the story is derogatory, describing it as "Not a bad story (but only a children's version of a Women's Magazine success story) …. I think No." A colleague agrees: "A very conventional story, … clumsily adapted." One would expect warmer commentary for this long-serving member of the Corporation. But the response may be influenced by pique, since Brown had recently announced her intention of "turning to the jungle of the free-lance." Letter to Josephine [Plummer?] of 14 March [1955?]. BBC Archives.

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EXHIBITING CHILDREN: THE YOUNG ARTIST AS CONSTRUCT AND CREATOR

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IN JULY 1912, *T. P.'s Weekly* published a one-page feature titled "The Child in Art. The Remarkable Drawings of a Girl of Twelve." Just below the headline, a small ink illustration titled "An Angel Child" depicts two winged women kneeling on either side of a praying child, protectively arching around its naked body, their heads haloed in light. The "Girl of Twelve" is Daphne Allen, daughter of painter Hugh Allen, whose drawings and watercolours were exhibited in London and later collected in at least three volumes—*A Child's Visions* (1912), *The Birth of the Opal* (1913), and *The Cradel of Our Lord* (1916)—the first two of which were published by George Allen, a press founded by the young artist's grandfather.[1] While the first paragraphs of the article make clear that this is an account of Allen's work and a review of her first book, the headline and featured image are not as transparent. "The Child *in* Art" suggests representations of childhood rather than a real young person, implying not that the child is making, exhibiting, or selling art—all of which Allen did—but instead that she is art itself. Furthermore, the "Remarkable Drawings" are *of*, not *by*, a girl of twelve, a prepositional ambivalence that allows us to imagine Allen as simultaneously artist and model. A cursory reader might pause briefly over the drawing of an "angel child" and wonder: did Allen draw that idealised, beatific infant—or is that infant Allen? Who is real, and who is an artful construct? After all, by the time Allen hung her first gallery exhibit, the boundary between real and imagined childhood was deliciously porous. Lewis Carroll's Wonderland and its dream-child protagonist—both the living Alice Liddell and the shapeshifting girl of the story—still resonated from the previous century, and fawning mothers could purchase blue velvet, lace-collared Fauntleroy suits to transform their sons into copies of Frances Hodgson Burnett's fictional little lord.

This intimate exchange between real children and the stories we tell about them is at the fore of juvenilia studies, as scholars examining texts children produce must balance attention to the young person as author or artist with a critical awareness of

Journal of Juvenilia Studies 1 (2018), pp. 62-81. DOI: 10.29173/jjs101

systems of publication, reception, and analysis that are typically managed by adults. In what follows, I explore the challenges of researching and writing about child-produced creative work amid the often-overpowering constructs of childhood that surround it by investigating two young artists as case studies: Allen, that remarkable girl of twelve, and Pamela Bianco, whose art was first exhibited in Turin in 1919 when she was 12 years old and later in London, Dublin, New York, and San Francisco. Bianco was the daughter of author Margery Williams Bianco, and her early publications include *Flora* (1919), a book of her drawings accompanied by poems by Walter de la Mare.[2] Both Allen and Bianco pursued art into adulthood—Allen as an illustrator for popular periodicals and a designer of stained glass windows and Bianco as an illustrator and fine artist—but my focus here is on their work as children. First, I describe some of the challenges I face in researching and writing about these child artists, most of which arise from the idiosyncrasies of their cultural moment; in particular, my access to their work is sometimes frustrated and sometimes illuminated by the discourses of childhood embedded in lingering Romanticism and burgeoning modernism. Next, I argue that both were savvy and self-aware in negotiating, through their art, the discourses that surrounded them. My hope is that the methodologies I use might be relevant to others, and with that in mind, I end by considering how my approach could prove useful for scholars embarking on parallel projects, in different periods and contexts.

The Child Artist as Exhibit

MY EARLIEST glimpses of both Allen and Bianco were warped by the beer goggles of Romantic childhood. As Alan Richardson and others have made clear, Romantic childhood as a cultural construct was diverse and "no less powerful for being somewhat incoherent" (Richardson 171). However, the divine child epitomised in William Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*—that ur-text of Romantic childhood—remains one of its most powerful and persistent paradigms. Barbara Garlitz writes that the assumptions "that the child is fresh from God and still remembers its heavenly home, that the aura which surrounds childhood fades into the common light of adulthood, that the child has a wisdom which the man loses ... became the most important and the most common ideas about childhood in the nineteenth century" and, in fact, beyond (647).[3]

This thoroughly established model of the beatific child certainly influences the publication and reception, for example, of Allen's first book. The title page of *A Child's Visions* features a drawing of a naked child perched precariously (and improbably) atop a craggy mountain and framed by a sky filled with stars (fig. 1). The image, read alongside the book's title and a parenthetical reference to the artist—"(Daphne Allen, Aged 12 Years)"—might suggest that the pictured child is the artist herself, a confusion similar to that generated by the *T. P.'s Weekly* review. Despite the fact that Allen was, at the book's publication, an adolescent, the text works to frame her as simultaneously infant and wise, her connection to the spiritual world

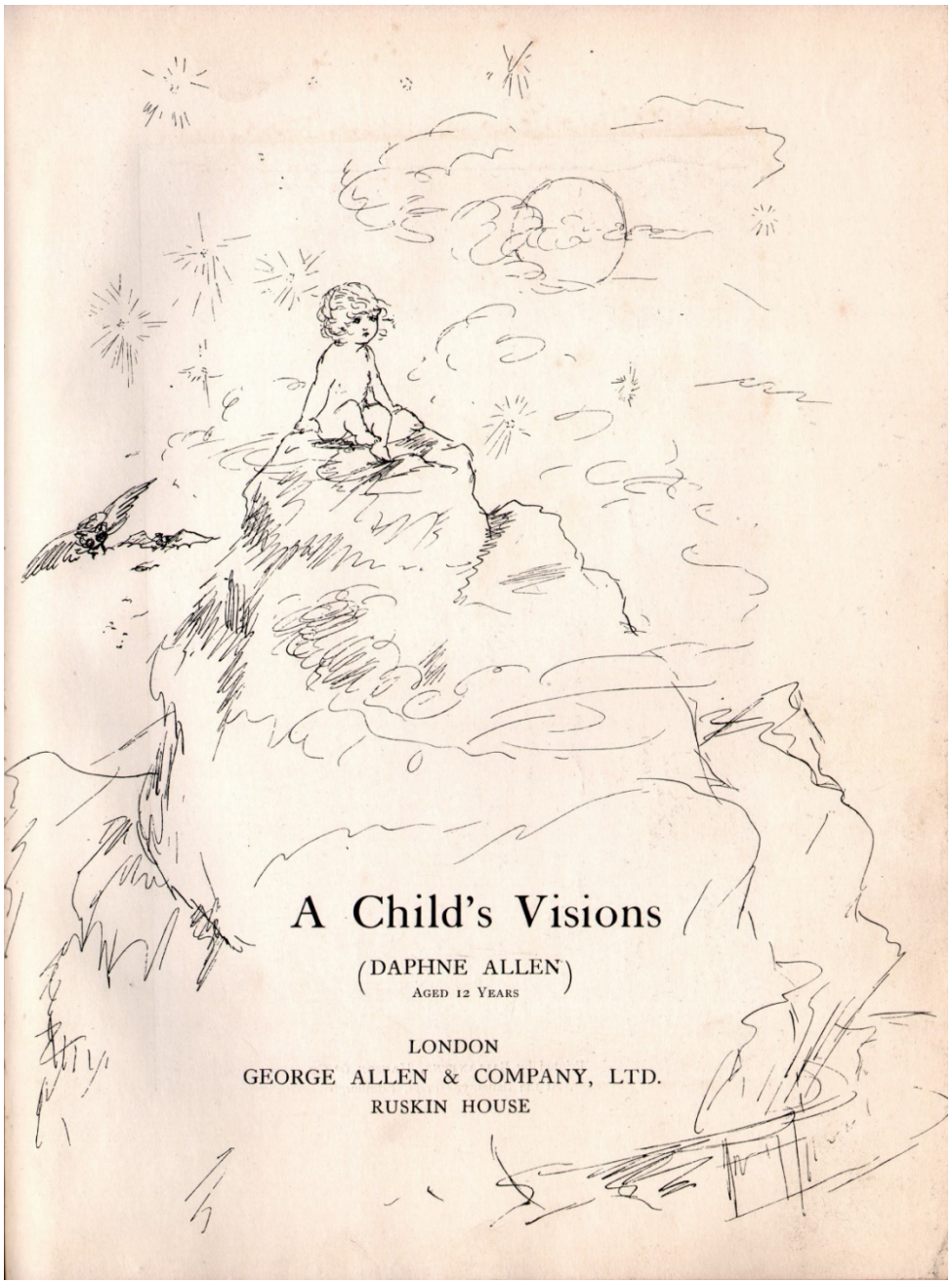

Fig. 1. Daphne Allen, title page to A Child's Visions.

unmediated even by a wisp of clothing. In case we miss the point, the next spread features one of Allen's angel drawings accompanied by probably the most famous passage from Wordsworth's *Ode*, reminding us that "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting" and that "trailing clouds of glory do we come / From God, who is our home" (qtd. in Allen v). In the book's remaining pages, the editors chose to feature only Allen's religious illustrations despite the fact that, according to a reviewer for the

Bookman, Allen's gallery exhibit included "scenes from old Fairy Tales, Greek Mythology, the Arthurian Legends, Shakespeare, Wagner, and a number of exquisitely graceful studies of Cupids" ("News" 4).[4]

These images, paired with passages from hymns and religious poetry, dwell on biblical scenes that emphasise children's spiritual purity—for example, a tableau of angels adoring the infant Christ and an illustration of the young Jesus discovered in the temple—and C. Lewis Hind, in his introduction to *A Child's Visions*, characterises Allen as an artist who takes "the New Testament [as] her chief source of inspiration" (ix). Reviews of the book affirm this figuration. For example, in the pages of *The Antiquary* Rev. J. Charles Cox writes that "there is evidently in the mind and brain, or thought-power—or whatever we like to call it—an exquisite fund of holy ideas and pure conceits, to which it is impossible to assign any other term than inspiration" (336).

Early reviews and reproductions of Bianco's art were not, like those of Allen, curated to focus on only spiritual or religious imagery; instead, her first published work features idealised figures, primarily children, in natural or domestic landscapes. However, in many ways Bianco was presented, like Allen, as the epitome of Romantic childhood. J. B. Manson, then the secretary of the Tate Gallery, wrote in a review of Bianco's drawings in *The International Studio*, "It is as though Pamela Bianco were the mouthpiece of a divine spirit; as though, through her, a spirit fresh and sweet as a south wind over a field of violets finds concrete expression. ... As the throat of a nightingale trills forth its inimitable song, so she expresses the gracious and seraphic visions of her innocent nature" (22, 23). Manson sustains this overwrought language for five pages, describing Bianco's drawings as "expressions of a spirit clear as crystal" and writing that hers "is a nature untrammelled by the impediments of intellectual knowledge, uncorrupted by useless, if inevitable, association, unhampered by concepts" (23). Manson's paean to Bianco's genius unites Wordsworth's divine image of childhood and its "visionary gleam" with a Rousseauvian commitment to the unsullied goodness of the child of nature. The review is illustrated with a photograph of the young artist, hair fastened in beribboned pigtails, likely a photograph that predates by a few years Bianco's gallery debut at age 12. Like Allen, then, Bianco is sometimes framed by adults around her as a young child rather than an adolescent, perhaps a strategy to underscore her precocity or an attempt to shore up her childhood against the impending adulthood that would spoil her status as a divine and unmediated "mouthpiece" of God and nature. In 1924, when Bianco was 17, Helen Appleton Read of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, fretting that "Child prodigies have a distressing, if normal, way of growing up into men and women," turned (predictably) to the *Ode*, noting that "'Shades of the prison house,' to quote Wordsworth, close more darkly upon the child of genius, perhaps by force of comparison, than upon the ordinary boy or girl" (5). Taken together, assessments of Bianco's art suggest that, as with Wordsworth's "Mighty Prophet" or Rousseau's fictional pupil, her divine innocence is both her greatest asset and her most troubling vulnerability.

While my view of Allen and Bianco is refracted by Romantic tropes of childhood, any sense of their creative process is obscured by Romantic models of genius that figure artistic work as solely inspiration, no perspiration. Jerome McGann has

described this as an ideology of "sincerity" generated by "a set of stylistic conventions developed by the Romantics to give the illusion of 'spontaneous overflow' to their verse" (63). The "spontaneous overflow" McGann references is, of course, Wordsworth's term from *Lyrical Ballads*, and Angela Esterhammer notes that similar formulations of immediate and (to use Manson's word above) "untrammelled" creativity are present in the work of William Blake, John Keats, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who in *Kubla Khan* described composing poetry "without any sensation or consciousness of effort" (Esterhammer 154). A dedication to Romantic models of creativity is one of the most persistent notes in accounts of Allen and Bianco, and often the assumption that they were naïve interlocutors speaking forth inspiration works hand in hand with—or, perhaps, relies on—assumptions that the child's imagination, like the Romantic poet's, is both innate and spontaneous. For example, many writers describe Allen's work as requiring neither forethought nor skill. A reviewer in the *Sphere* calls her "an *improvisatore*," and Hind notes that her drawings "show no sign of effort, because they were all done in joy without self-consciousness" (C. K. S. 98, Allen x). A reviewer in *The Bookman* uses a similar formulation, writing that Allen "draws and paints for her own amusement only, making no labour of it, giving rapid expression in colour and line to any fancy that comes to her, using no indiarubber [*sic*] to sketch but leaving it unaltered in its first freshness" ("News" 4). Hind also compares Allen's art to play—"Other children play seriously with dolls: Daphne plays seriously with Art" (Allen ix), he writes — a description echoed across multiple reviews of her work that erases any sense of craft in favour of a joyful and therefore truthful and innocent activity. Similar language appears in accounts of Bianco's exhibitions. A reviewer in the *New York Times* assures readers that "an eraser is something she has never known in her work" ("Girl" 12); another describes Bianco's art as "the unconscious outgrowth of her play spirit" (Read 5).

One of the consequences of framing Allen and Bianco as Romantic geniuses is the insistence, by the adults around them, that they be preserved from what is considered the potentially disastrous repercussions of educating them as artists. Doing so, many reviewers and patrons argue, would spoil the naturalness of their work, replacing it with a studied artificiality. Some descriptions of Allen's work locate its merit in the absence of formal education; H. Addington Bruce, writing in *Good Housekeeping*, is careful to note that Allen, "according to good authority, has had no art training whatever, yet her drawings ... have been acclaimed by some critics as being of a quality that 'would not shame William Blake'" (333).[5] However, this approach to preserving the young artist's naïveté is particularly pronounced in reviews of Bianco's work. A piece in *Current Opinion*, for example, quotes Bianco's father as insisting that his daughter "has never ... had a teacher in drawing and painting," and that while "it has not been possible to keep Pamela from seeing anything in the way of art," he and his wife "believe in guiding, but not forcing, education. We do not want Pamela to lose any of her originality through the influence of others" ("Girl" 675). One writer in *American Art News* writes of Bianco that "it would be difficult to overestimate her probable success if left to evolve her own future, untrammelled by mischievous instruction" ("Child Genius" 5).

Both Allen and Bianco were exhibiting their work in the early decades of the twentieth century, so while Wordsworth still held court over ideas of childhood, the modernists, and in particular their preoccupation with the child's innocent eye, were beginning to intervene.[6] Wassily Kandinsky, in his essay "On the Problem of Form"—which was published in 1912, the same year Allen published *A Child's Visions*—writes that "There is an unconscious and enormous force in the child, which ... puts the work of the child on an equally high (and often much higher!) level as the work of the adult" (167). This "enormous force" was often characterised as primitive, and adult artists, stymied by experience and artistic training, could no longer achieve the child's enviable perspective. Roger Fry approached child artists in a similar way, writing in "Children's Drawings," published in 1917 upon his exhibition at the Omega Workshops of children's art alongside that of modern artists, that "no modern adult can retain the freshness of vision, the surprise and shock, the intimacy and sharpness of notation, the *imprévu* quality of primitive art. And it is just here that untaught children have enormous superiority" (267–68). Jonathan Fineberg has traced the many ways child art influenced adult artists, noting its centrality to a range of modernist movements. "For the artists of the twentieth century," he notes, "a serious interest in the art of children became as remarkably varied and complex from one artist to the next as it was pervasive. Expressionists, cubists, futurists and the artists of the avant-garde Russian movements all hung the art of children alongside their own in their pioneering exhibitions in the early years of the century" (12).

Allen's work appears more Victorian than modernist in style; a writer in the *Athenaeum* notes, for example, that her talent "is akin on one side to that of Blake, and on the other to that of Kate Greenaway," those two names registering a decidedly nineteenth-century vision of childhood ("Notices" 69). It is not unexpected, then, that Allen's drawings and paintings are framed rather infrequently as the type of child art that might appeal to the modernists, although a handful of accounts do refer to her in this way. For example, one feature on her paintings compares them to the post-Impressionists (Brastias 71).[7] Bianco's drawings, on the other hand, are much more prone to the idealisations of the modernists, likely because her style's flat perspectives and bold washes of colour more closely resemble modern art and because her work first hung on gallery walls in 1919, seven years after Allen's and more securely amid the modernists' celebration of child art. Bianco's father, in newspaper interviews, bolsters her place in modernist movements, noting that he "considers no artist in the world comparable to the Italian primitives," but "he believes that Pamela is directly in line with the Italian tradition" (Read 5), and reviewers agree. Manson compares her to "the unknown primitive man who painted the unexcelled Bison on the walls of the caves in the Dordogne in those days when schools of painting were, happily, undreamt of" (22). The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* notes that Pamela "is part of the movement, which is the term used by painters for artists who are modernistic in their tendencies. Although she has never studied or seen the works of Picasso or Derain, it is almost as if she had been taught by them, and the answer is that Pamela is a sensitive medium for the Zeitgeist, and that being of her day and generation she cannot help but use its idiom" (Read 5).

Note that Read describes Bianco's participation in "the movement" as passive or unintentional; Bianco "cannot help" her participation in modernist practices. She, like many of the children who inspired modern artists, is understood as modernist not by choice—Read does not claim that she is putting into practice a creative philosophy—but instead because, through a child's "natural" sensitivity, she communicates the spirit of a movement that sought to capture a similar artistic innocence. This difference is crucial, as it positions the child as an amateur, an unintentional inspiration and muse, and the adult as the professional practitioner. This aetonormativity[8] characterises most writing about the child and modernism to the present day. Consider Rudolf Arnheim's 1997 essay, "Beginning with the Child." Arnheim is, in fact, refreshingly attentive to the differences among child artists. "'Children's drawings,'" he writes, "are referred to as though they were a standardised product," when in fact those who have had "some experience in the field of child art" know that "its output is almost as varied as that of adults" (16). However, that attention to the child's artistic agency recedes later in the same piece, when he writes of "the difference between the intentions of the artist and those of the child." Arnheim assumes that an adult artist's turn to a childlike style signals sophisticated intention. He argues, for example, that Joan Miró produces work that "could hardly have been conceived by someone who had never seen a child's drawing." Miró's reduction of the human form to simple frontal symmetry is artistry and his use of empty ground meaningful, meant to "express solitude" (22). Yet Arnheim does not extend the same interpretive generosity to the child artist who, he argues, demonstrates not sophistication but "naïveté." The child, Arnheim suggests, essentially has no intentions, and the empty ground in her composition is not meaningful but "uncultivated space" (22). That phrase both naturalises the assumption of the child artist's innocence—her "uncultivated" work is like virgin soil—and renders her talent as potential: fodder for adult artists or a sign that she might, someday, design rather than merely draw. Arnheim's essay crystallises precisely what I would like to disrupt in my readings of Allen and Bianco.

The Young Artist as Creator

WHAT happens if we do not, as Arnheim does, assume naïveté? What if we begin instead with the assumption that the child artist is an intentional, agentic subject: an artist whose talent lies not in her youth but in her process, and who navigates the art world—its shifting standards of merit and style, its traditions and tropes, and even its marketplace—with deliberation and insight? While I could say more about the spectrum of child figures adults deploy when writing about Allen and Bianco, I prefer to wed that essential critical scepticism with a respect for both young people as creators producing art. In other words, I would like to craft a methodology that approaches child-produced culture that is not entirely bounded by cultural constructions of childhood, as that frame largely neglects children as living subjects. So where, amid all of this overdetermined language, can I at least begin to look for Allen and Bianco as embodied children?

First, I can locate disruptions in the narratives that surround them—disruptions that have the potential to reveal the arbitrary or precarious nature of what purport to be true and totalising narratives of childhood. One such fissure can be found in early accounts of Allen's depiction of the Crucifixion. According to art critic Walter D. Ellis, who contributed a preface to Allen's *A Child's Visions*, that book includes drawings selected from "the many thousands which she has drawn since she first attempted to portray the Crucifixion at the age of three" (Allen vii). Allen's precocious, three-year-old drawings are mentioned in a handful of newspaper accounts of Allen, sometimes accompanied by mentions of the Crucifixion, sometimes not.[9] This fawning and repetitive gesture toward the origins of Allen's sacred genius, after a time, grows tiresome; however, that monotony is shattered by an article published in Australia's *Express and Telegraph*. That reviewer writes of Allen that "as a child her artistic expressions took quaint forms at times. For example, she drew a picture of the Crucifixion—with a steamboat in the background" ("Artist" 4). After encountering this odd aside, I returned to my dozens of carefully collected reviews of Allen's book and found no mention of the steamboat. I flipped through *A Child's Visions* itself, searching the horizons of the two separate Crucifixion scenes included there for a telltale puff of smoke and found nothing.

This unusual blip in Allen's archive is an evocative inconsistency in the narrative that surrounds her. Perhaps the reviewer for the *Express and Telegraph*, who likely did not have access to the originals of the artwork displayed in Allen's first gallery show, was misinterpreting a poorly reproduced image of Allen's work? Or maybe the steamboat does (or did at one time) exist, and Allen's editors passed over this early drawing when compiling the first bound volume of her "visions"? The latter is a tantalizing possibility; the young artist might have drawn "without erasure," but the adults around her made this drawing, for the most part, disappear. Answering these questions would resolve the mysterious appearance of this anachronistic steamboat; however, the circumstances that led to this review in fact matter very little. It is the consequences of its publication that are noteworthy. The steamboat interrupts not only the historical integrity of a scene of the Crucifixion but also the carefully curated narrative of Allen as sacred child prodigy. This Australian reviewer, by situating Allen as a charming but bumbling toddler with a pencil, destabilises a dominant narrative of Allen as an inspired genius. His steamboat muddies the waters, both demonstrating that Allen's drawings did not always align with the sacred text and unconsciously letting it slip that the adults around her did not agree about her cultural status.

I am not the first to comment on such inconsistencies in the framing of Daphne Allen and, in fact, another way to acknowledge living children as artists while remaining attentive to the idealisations that warp our view of them is to look to the adults around them who acknowledge and challenge stifling narratives of childhood innocence or genius. One such adult is Anthony Ludovici, whose 1913 essay "Raw Material at the Dudley Galleries," published in the modernist journal *The New Age*, introduces Allen as an example of the "general tendency to admire and court the immature in England." While Ludovici certainly does not admire Allen's artwork, noting "the ridiculous prostrate attitude of the highly respectable Press" before her "nursery productions," in the course of his criticism he does consider the living girl

behind the sensation. "Why," he asks, "should I be left alone to protect this unfortunate child, Daphne Allen, and, in her person, all the more or less gifted children of England, from your deadly drooling embrace?" He sneers at the "pack of hydrocephalous and gushing adults" attached to her and laments that "we cannot unfortunately set in motion the machinery of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children—the cruelty here is too subtle, too remotely tragic and disastrous, to pierce the thick skulls of this Society's officials" (704). In this way, Ludovici veers to an entirely different figuration of childhood: the vulnerable child in peril. However, his sense of the young artist as a living girl who merits not only the adoration but also the concern of the adults around her punctures the dream of Allen as a holy genius. Moreover, his deflating description of her drawings as "nothing wonderful" swiftly brings her back to earth, and other reviewers joined Ludovici in characterising Allen as just another child with a proclivity for art. A reviewer for the *Manchester Guardian*, for example, notes that the young artist's "visions" display "most of the technical deficiencies common to artists of about that age [twelve]" ("New" 5), while the *Athenaeum* points out that "her figures are not correct; she cannot draw a hand; her line is often fumbling; and she does not understand the incidence of light and shadow" ("Notices" 69).

Inconsistent narratives also surround Bianco, and a number of publications printed contradictory assessments of her and her work. While one reviewer in the *New York Times*, as cited above, is astonished that Bianco draws without erasure, another tries to deflate such exaggerated praise, insisting that Bianco "has developed precisely *as any strong talent develops*, from the clever but weakish sophistication of her early years—in her case, of course, very early years—to a bold technique and an adequate command of her instrument" ("Art" X8, emphasis mine). This reviewer's subtle suggestion that those who admire Bianco are misplacing their admiration appears in stronger language in the *Brooklyn Eagle*. While that newspaper published a number of laudatory accounts of Bianco's exhibits, one reviewer characterises her success in New York as another example of "the infant industry of prodigy-art" in which "babe-and-suckling rivalry" puts accomplished adult artists out of business (qtd. in "Girl," *Current* 675). Other contradictions are subtler; the *New York Times*, for example, published a handful of articles in 1921 cataloguing the great financial success of Bianco's exhibit at the Anderson Galleries, celebrating the fact that the young artist found a "ready market," selling more than 100 pieces of art for prices ranging from $50 to $300 to renowned patrons such as John Galsworthy, Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, and Miss Helen Frick ("Girl" 12, "Child's" 10). The *Times* suggests many times that Bianco is disinterested in the show and her success; "Pamela Bianco," one headline explains, "takes only a casual interest in work that astounds others" ("Girl" 12). However, in the same article, Bianco's voice breaks through in a manner that might contradict this facile assumption. The reviewer, describing a "dear, quaint little sketch" of a child holding an apple and running after some rabbits, records an exchange between a patron and the artist: "'Do you suppose she is going to feed the rabbits?' some one [*sic*], seeing the picture, wondered aloud. 'Perhaps she is going to feed herself,' suggested Pamela" (12). The reviewer does not comment on Bianco's retort, a response that registers both her investment in the interpretation of her work

and her recognition—also signalled in her paintings and drawings, which I will explore below—of a desiring child, a child who is interested in profit (for Bianco can use the sale of her work to, quite literally, feed herself) and consumption (the ways viewers consume both art and artist).

Fig. 2. Daphne Allen, "Christ Crowning the Holy Innocents," from A Child's Visions, *p. 23.*

These glimpses of Allen and Bianco, however, are mediated by adults, and I am interested in how children produce culture; I therefore turn to the work the young women themselves produced. This is complicated, as it is undeniable that the venues that displayed and reproduced their drawings also were organised by adults. Yet some of these images allow us to speculate about how, to borrow Robin Bernstein's formulation, these young artists adopted and adapted the scripts that framed their early careers. For example, *A Child's Visions* is replete with images of holy childhood, represented in the Christ child, winged cherubs, and devout peasant children. This might be due in part to editors' decisions about which drawings to include in the book and in part due to Allen's own choice of subject; in any case, she was framed as a divine child, and she produced images of divine children. Perhaps this is a self-perpetuating cycle, evidence that Allen cannot escape the narrative written for her. However, it is also possible that Allen—nearly a teenager, a girl who grew up around artists and publishers—was aware that her fame was sustained by an appetite for particular *types* of child art and that this knowledge filters into her work. For example, the book includes no less than four illustrations of the Holy Innocents, the infants murdered by Herod after the birth of Jesus. One of these illustrations—Allen's image

of "Christ Crowning the Holy Innocents" (fig. 2)—bears for certain viewers all the signs of divine child art: a heavenly landscape (or should I say cloudscape), a haloed infant Jesus, naked cherubic children. However, the long queue of babies awaiting their wings and the pile of crowns secreted behind the seated Virgin also suggests the mundane nature of her genius—common enough to buy those crowns in bulk—and the unstoppable machinery of the ideologies that keep Allen's name in the press. Perhaps Allen recognised that the Holy Innocents, glorified for their purity but martyred for it, are an apt image for Allen herself, whose fame relies on her imagined innocence but who is, in a sense, obscured by it.

Bianco's art often exhibits a parallel sense of overproduction: some of her drawings and paintings cram the frame with flower-bedecked, naked cherubs, displaying a surfeit of Romantic children. However, Bianco gestures towards this common visual trope only to manipulate it. Many of her child figures meet gaze for gaze, aware of the adults looking at them. The heavy lashes of her children (including herself, in a self-portrait) frame eyes that communicate a self-consciousness about being looked at, perhaps even consumed (figs. 3 and 4). That self-consciousness

Figs. 3 and 4. Pamela Bianco, "Bitter Waters," from Flora, *p. 19, and self-portrait, from* Flora, *p. 43.*

unfolds into an awareness of *why* the child is the subject of the adult gaze, as a number of Bianco's drawings make forcefully apparent the sexual undertones of Romantic childhood—the tantalizing possibility that innocence can be ruined.[10] Consider "The Strong Child," an image hung in her gallery exhibit, published in her collection *Flora*, and later singled out by the reviewer in *Art and Life* as a notable example of the "exquisite, joyous tenderness" of Bianco's work (fig. 5). This child stares out of the page aggressively, her head crowned by an elaborate coif that features, it seems, horns—a gesture towards the animalistic or even savage Romantic child—and her face framed by boughs of a pomegranate tree, one fruit bursting open. While the pomegranate was (notably among the Italian primitives, to which Bianco is often compared) a common religious motif to signify the fullness of Christ's suffering, it also suggests a rampant fertility and sensuality.[11]

Fig. 5. Pamela Bianco, "The Strong Child," from Flora, *p. 23.*

The sexuality of Bianco's child subjects ranges from the suggestive, as seen in "The Strong Child," to the explicit, as seen in her illustration "The Path," also published in *Flora* (fig. 6). Like many of Bianco's drawings, this illustration's style recalls simultaneously religious iconography and the erotic line drawings of Decadent

artists such as Aubrey Beardsley, and the tension between sacred and profane extends to its subject. The dominant female figure resembles an angel or protective guide; the fronds splayed behind her back form wings, and her hand is pressed to her breast in

Fig. 6. Pamela Bianco, "The Path," from Flora, *p. 13.*

a gesture that might suggest reverence, love, or concern. However, that reading of this image is troubled by the child reclining below her, bottom exposed and ready to be slapped. If the angel is a guide, the viewer cannot help but wonder towards what. The titular path behind the figures winds towards a church, but the angel's tutelage leads toward sexual knowledge, not religious epiphany. The child's suggestive smile, arched eyebrows, and direct gaze—as well as the pattern of her dress, which reproduces in miniature that of the angel's, and the ripe cherries dangling from her wrist—imply that she is all too happy to follow, although her innocence is likely already lost.

However, if the child's steady gaze demands the viewer engage with her, not everyone is willing to do so. Walter de la Mare, in the poem he composed to accompany Bianco's drawing, ignores this evocative adult-child pairing completely and focuses instead on the small building nestled into the right corner of the image. "Is it an abbey that I see / Hard-by that tapering poplar-tree, / Whereat that path hath end?" the poem begins, before nostalgically describing, over the course of four stanzas, "the timeworn, crumbling roof," "the turret slim" and its bell's "faint notes," and the "gemlike" glow of stained glass. In the poem's final lines, the abbey's candles beckon the poem's speaker inside: "'See stranger; come! / Here is thy home; No longer stray!'" (12). This closing petition—the exhortation to keep to the path and re-enter the spiritual home—is the only note of discipline in the poem, and it is of a decidedly different sort that that played out between the angelic figure and child. In fact, de la Mare's lines seem intentional in directing our attention *away* from the playful sexuality of Bianco's drawing. The questioning structure of his first lines—what do I see?—invites readers to follow his gaze, to ignore the image's central elements and instead hunt out what they might otherwise dismiss as ancillary detail.

The dissonance between de la Mare's text and Bianco's drawing foregrounds the power of Romantic constructions of childhood and just how cannily the child artist can identify and exploit the fissures and tensions in those constructions. Yet despite (or perhaps because of) the discomfort drawings like "The Path" can generate among the adults around her, Bianco created many illustrations like this one—images that demand recognition of the desirable, and perhaps desiring, child and communicate just how greedy the child-besotted adult can be. The adults Bianco imagines cradle, grasp, and grab children, often enveloping young people within their larger frames. Was Bianco registering her awareness that she, like the young people she drew, was an object of discipline and desire? If so, it seems that, as a savvy artist, Bianco sought to translate the adult's desire into the child's power and profit.

Methodology

I DO NOT advocate approaching child artists such as Allen or Bianco as real, unmediated children *or* as pure constructions. We cannot neglect the discourses of childhood and art that inflect our view of them; however, all representations of Allen or Bianco, I argue, are also haunted by the real children who gave rise to them. This is not a bind but instead an opportunity to explore the traffic between embodied

children and abstractions of them. Others have dismantled the binary between real and imaged childhood. Marah Gubar's proposed kinship model of childhood, for example, recognises that children and adults are kin "in that from the moment we are born (and even before then) we are immersed in multiple discourses not of our own making that influence who we are, how we think, what we do and say"—and that this is not a reason to abandon the project of "theorising in new ways about what it means to be a child" ("Risky" 454, 450). Gubar and others—including Bernstein, Richard Flynn, Karen Sánchez-Eppler, David Rudd, Anna Mae Duane, Katharine Capshaw, and Rachel Conrad—have demonstrated, from different perspectives, the dividends of understanding both adults and children as simultaneously situated by discourse and contributors *to* it.

In approaching texts, images, and other cultural artefacts generated by children, then, I suggest that we abandon a model that understands the relationship of actual child to imagined child as a binary and adopt, instead, the model of a spectrum, an always-negotiated scale between total idealisation and child-in-the-world. Using that spectrum as a critical tool to examine historical and contemporary examples of child-produced culture allows small pieces of evidence to be read as resonant rather than anomalous. Consider, for example, the fleeting reference to Allen's steamboat. If I assume the real child and the child-figure are opposing categories, I must interpret the Australian reviewer's reference to the steamboat in one of two ways: it is either evidence of a fictionalization of Allen as naïve child artist or an unassailable trace of her real-childness. However, if I instead situate the steamboat reference on the spectrum between real and imagined Allen, thinking about it alongside other representations and understanding it as part of both imaginings of her and her own agency, I find that the steamboat complicates simple narratives of Allen. I begin to develop a keener sense of fluctuating ideas about and experiences of childhood from one pole to another, across space and time. The goal of this method is not to place a piece of evidence at a precise and correct point on the spectrum. Instead, we can work to approach representations of real children with curiosity rather than scepticism. This allows us to take advantage of the indeterminacy of any evidence of childhood by sliding it up and down this spectrum, gauging the impact of reading it as more or less constructed or true.[12]

Every time an adult praises, dismisses, or even merely describes Allen or Bianco, I consider this evocative play between the child as a construction and the child as a living subject. For example, one reviewer notes that Allen "was astonished when told of the exhibition which was going to be held, and that a book was to be published containing some of her drawings. 'Very nice? Oh, yes, but rather tiresome'" ("Genius" 4). I might assume this is more fiction than truth. The dialogue in this passage is not explicitly attributed to Allen, and the reviewer might have crafted it to reinforce the image of a young artist uninterested in the marketplace. The review is then an example of the ways adults fictionalize children to support popular ideas of childhood. However, if I slide this piece of evidence toward the centre of the spectrum between imagined and real childhood, I might imagine the sentiment is accurate but its representation is not; perhaps this conversation took place, but the reviewer reworked Allen's words to align with what adults think (or hope) a child would say. I also could

imagine that the review is truly quoting Allen, in which case I might consider how her words align with or trouble the purposes to which they are being put. Is Allen revealing an innocence toward the status of her work? Boredom with the prospect of being trotted out for the adoration of adults? Something else? Considering these possibilities together defamiliarises my assumptions about how representations of childhood work and keeps me open to potential new narratives or unsought-for avenues of inquiry.

We need those avenues in thinking about child artists—and in considering child-produced culture as a whole. In recuperating and interpreting the work of children, scholars of juvenilia are destined to encounter many figures whose critical traditions are just as overwrought as Allen's and Bianco's, but juvenilia studies has proven that the density of discourses surrounding childhood need not completely obscure our views of young people as contributors to culture—that such discourses pose rich and generative challenges. Scholars such as Laurie Langbauer, Angela Sorby, Christine Alexander, and Juliet McMaster have documented the role young people have played and continue to play in literary and cultural history. As Alexander and McMaster explain, "the child as creator of culture has been subsumed within the child as mere consumer," and yet "The child's expression of his or her own subjectivity is there and available for us, if we will only take the time to pay attention" (1). Langbauer's work in particular breaks the critical frame of juvenilia, a term that suggests the immature work of a writers who later establish themselves as well-known authors, to consider instead a "juvenile tradition" that "recasts literary history," requiring us to recognise previously understudied forms and redefine seemingly well-known literary movements and periods (3–4). While Langbauer's work focuses on late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century children, we might locate new juvenile traditions elsewhere, in other cultural moments. Allen's work, for example, might revise our vision of Romantic childhood and children's participation in creating the contours of that paradigm, and situating Bianco as an artist, rather than an inspiration, within the modernist tradition demands a reassessment of young people's agency in the face of the totalising narrative of the "innocent eye." I am therefore grateful for the challenges that young people such as Allen and Bianco—who are both exhibits and exhibitors, child-figures and children—pose. Their work makes clear that in untangling the dynamic between real and imagined child, we can be surprised by evidence that even the most freighted examples of child-produced culture might refract into many shades of meaning.

NOTES

1. *The Cradel of Our Lord* was published by Headley Brothers.
2. Margery Williams Bianco would later write *The Velveteen Rabbit* (1922). Pamela Bianco illustrated some of her mother's children's books, including *The Little Wooden Doll* (1925) and *The Skin Horse* (1927). For a novelisation of the lives of both mother and daughter, see Laurel Davis Huber's *The Velveteen Daughter* (2017).
3. James Holt McGavran, Jr. and Jennifer Smith Daniel argue that Wordsworth's holy child has enjoyed undeserved dominance in our understanding of Romantic childhood, "since posterity

has not sufficiently recognised Wordsworth's concomitant awareness of the toils and dangers children—and their parents—have always had to face" (ix).

4. Allen's editors departed from this religious focus when they published her second book, *The Birth of the Opal*. That volume, subtitled "A Child's Fancies," features illustrations of what one reviewer in *The Book Monthly* calls "nature fantasies," or fanciful creation stories with titles such as "How the Pearls First Came" and "The Story of the Wind," written by Allen herself ("Personal" 831). *The Cradel of Our Lord*, as its title suggests, resituated Allen as primarily an artist of religious subjects.
5. This *Good Housekeeping* article, titled "Making the Most of Childhood," references Allen as one of many talented children whose parents encouraged their natural interests and promises that such "marvelous development" is "possible in all normal children" (332).
6. While here I discuss the innocent eye primarily in the context of modernism, Ruskin famously referred to it in his manual *Elements of Drawing* (1857). There, he characterises the creative impulse of successful adult artists as childlike. "The whole technical power of painting depends on our recovery of what may be called the *innocence of the eye*," writes Ruskin, "that is to say, a sort of childish perception of ... flat stains of colour, merely as such, without consciousness of what they signify.... A highly accomplished artist has always reduced himself as nearly as possible to this condition of infantine sight" (22–23).
7. Notably, M. T. H. Sadler refers to Daphne Allen in the introduction to his 1914 translation of Kandinsky's *The Art of Spiritual Harmony*, but he does so to *challenge* rather than affirm "the analogy ... between the neo-primitive vision and that of a child" (xiv). He recognises that the former sometimes tends toward "definitely religious picture[s]," but that "It is not often that children draw religious scenes." He acknowledges as an exception "a book of such drawings by a child of twelve," Allen's *A Child's Visions*, but notes that her "religious drawings have the graceful charm of childhood, but they are mere childish echoes of conventional prettiness" (xv).
8. See Nikolajeva, pp. 8–9.
9. See, for example, Cox's "Sacred Visions of a Child" in *The Antiquary*, "News of Books" in the *New York Times*, and "Genius at Thirteen" in the Adelaide *Express and Telegraph*.
10. See Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, and Gubar, "Innocence."
11. For an example of the pomegranate in the work of the Italian primitives, see Botticelli's *Madonna of the Pomegranate* (1490). Bianco also includes a pomegranate as a sensual, suggestive image in the frontispiece to her illustrated edition of Oscar Wilde's "The Birthday of the Infanta," published by MacMillan in 1930, when Bianco was in her mid-twenties.
12. In taking this approach, I am accepting Gubar's challenge to explore evidence of real children with a "cautious humility" that recognises the limitations of what we can know about children's experiences but does not allow the inevitably tentative and fractional nature of our knowledge to paralyze inquiry ("*Peter*" 479). I am also following her lead in looking to Rita Felski's *The Limits of Critique*, in which Felski encourages scholars to examine critically their field's "hypercritical style of analysis" and to adopt "alternative forms of intellectual life" (10).

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Reviews

Juliet McMaster. *Jane Austen, Young Author*. Ashgate (now marketed by Routledge), 2016.

187 pages. Paperback, USD 41.95 / Hardcover, USD 160.00.

"Lovers of Jane Austen, and there are many of us, have long been waiting for a book devoted to her early writings." So begins Peter Sabor's "Foreword" to Juliet McMaster's *Jane Austen, Young Author*, a groundbreaking, important book. Sabor is certainly right. Austen scholars have long lamented that the juvenilia—sometimes called her youthful writings or, more recently, determinedly, and anachronistically, her "teenage writings"—had not inspired book-length critical treatment. (As Sabor notes, there has been but one collection of essays on the subject, *Jane Austen's Beginnings* [1989].) In setting out to provide extended insight, McMaster more than answers the wishes and hopes of Austen lovers, while also providing much food for thought to scholars of children's literature. *This* is the book on Austen's juvenilia that we have been waiting for, one that sets out to understand and to weave Austen's childhood writings into our understandings of the "mature" author and into literary history.

McMaster is uniquely situated to write this book on Jane Austen (1775-1817). As the founding former director of the Juvenilia Press, and its long-time illustrator, McMaster has guided student editors through the textual and paleographic minefield, annotations, and introductory materials required to bring Austen's juvenile writings into new print editions. Her and their work stands on its own, as scholarly accomplishment and proof of McMaster's putting her money where her mouth is in taking first-time authors and editors seriously. These collaboratively produced, beautiful volumes reprint Austen's youthful writings as serious scholarly subjects and treat new scholars as capable experts. Indeed, several chapters of *Jane Austen, Young Author* describe the ways in which McMaster's Juvenilia Press has been (and still is, under the directorship of her successor, Christine Alexander) a field-changing powerhouse, serving as a textual training ground and a teaching tool. McMaster's book's chapter five, "'Love and Friendship' in the Classroom," and chapter two,

Journal of Juvenilia Studies 1 (2018), pp. 83-91. DOI: 10.29173/jjs128

"Jane's Juvenilia Illustrated," discuss how she approached the major texts of Austen's juvenilia through her work with students and at The Juvenilia Press.

But *Jane Austen, Young Author* is important not only for its showing us how juvenilia might most effectively be brought to classrooms, to print, and to new readers. McMaster persuasively documents, through accessible, original, informative, and joyful close readings, how Austen's three fair-copy manuscript volumes of writings of the late 1780s and 1790s offer a sophisticated response to novel culture and literary history. McMaster shows us how the juvenilia made its mark on the "mature" novels, which were published some twenty years later, between 1811 and 1818.

Chapter one, "Energy Versus Sympathy," discusses the juvenilia as prelude and inspiration of the fiction that would come later. McMaster describes the juvenilia as its "own separate place of dizzy raptures, … offering intimations of the immorality that is to come" (2). Her readings show us the important roles of excess, motion, and gender reversal, as well as how the narratorial voice takes over "traditionally male territory" (6). Noting how few of the works include punishment meted out to misbehaving characters, McMaster concludes, "Young Jane does not want to turn her fictions into moral tales," leading to "the pattern of the moral tale … [being] resoundingly rejected." McMaster also shows continuities between the juvenilia and the later novels, including things such as syllepsis or "incongruous yoking of the literal and figurative application of an idiom" (14). The chapter is compelling in showing the juvenilia to be a remarkable body of work of literary experiment and mastery, predating and standing apart from, not to say predicting, her later genius. After the juvenilia, as McMaster both celebrates and laments, "some of the best fun will be over" for readers of Austen (15).

The pleasures of close reading continue in chapters three and four, "Self-conscious Author" and "Greazy Tresses, Base Miscreants, and Horrid Wretches: Teenage Jane Does Dialogue," which offer close readings of significant juvenile texts. These chapters illuminate its use of alliteration, irony, mischief, dialogue, tone (which McMaster cleverly identifies as "tonal oxymoron" [108]), letters, parody, humor, drama, conversation (again cleverly rebranded as "unconversation" [113]), and narration. In chapter four, McMaster uses the later plots to cleverly telescope out the likely endings of some of the unfinished juvenile writings, with their well-timed introductions of heroes and anti-heroes and their frequent three-marriage groupings.

The juvenilia are inspired by previous literary works, as McMaster shows. Chapter six, "'Love and Freindship' and its Targets" (which McMaster earlier declares "the best single work of the juvenilia" [9]), shows the ways in which it may have grown out of earlier novels by other authors: the anonymous *Laura and Augustus* (1784) and Frances Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague* (1769). McMaster's speculations and connections will leave you wanting to know more about Austen's early reading. Chapter seven, "Partial, Prejudiced, and Proud: *Pride and Prejudice* and the Juvenilia," heads in the other direction, describing how the juvenilia, rather than texts that were left behind as the young author aged, also came forward in specific ways in Austen's second published novel.

McMaster's book is remarkable and delightful, not only for its copious, raucous, funny quotations from and explications of Austen's juvenile writings. There are also regular delights in the book's well-crafted sentences. As McMaster argues, Jane Austen "famously considered *Pride and Prejudice* 'too light & bright, & sparkling," but "earlier the young author felt no need to hide her sparkle under a bushel" (95). McMaster's amusing and well-crafted line here serves as an example of the many pleasures of this book writ small. Although McMaster writes of Austen's "gleeful delight in her medium" in the juvenilia, *Jane Austen, Young Author* evidences the literary critic's gleeful delight in her medium as well. Brilliant flashes of wit await not only those who are discovering or returning to Austen's juvenilia, through McMaster's fine eye, but also the readers of McMaster's illuminating book. This is a tour de force book, treating a surprisingly neglected subject, brought to us by one of our foremost, pioneering, and accomplished scholars of Austen and children's literature.

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Pamela Nutt with others, editors. *Tales from* "The Parthenon," by Ethel Turner. Illustrations by Naomi Harris. Juvenilia Press, 2014.

162 pages. Paperback, AUD 15.00.

Pamela Nutt with others, editors. *That Young Rebel*, by Ethel Turner. Illustrations by Jacqueline Meng. Juvenilia Press, 2015.

105 pages. Paperback, AUD 15.00.

PAMELA Nutt, together with two small teams of year 11 students from Presbyterian Ladies' College in Sydney, Australia, has carefully edited and annotated two volumes of Ethel Turner's juvenilia: *Tales from* "The Parthenon," which collects the future best-selling author's shorter contributions to the monthly magazine for young people that Ethel, along with her co-founder and sister Lillian, published from 1889 to 1891; and *That Young Rebel*, the serial Ethel wrote for the final year of the *Parthenon* (1891–92). Whether you are interested in Australian literature or literary juvenilia, these volumes

should not be absent from your collection, as they offer invaluable insights into a young Australian woman writer's literary goals and creative skills. The editors' impressive undertaking also offers us a closer look into a young woman's development as a professional writer, casting light on some of the struggles Ethel encountered in her literary quest.

It is clear that, right from the start, Ethel's aim was to challenge Victorian beliefs regarding gender roles and find her own voice in modern Australia. As the editors inform us in the Introductions to both volumes, Ethel Turner was born 24 January 1870 and emigrated with her mother and three sisters to Australia in 1880, supposedly at the age of six. (Who has not lied about their children's age to get a transport fare reduction?) They settled in Sydney, a rapidly developing urban world. It was while still a pupil in Sydney Girls' High School that Ethel showed her interest in the writing business, developing her skills with the intention of becoming an adept professional: she was involved in the production of the school newspaper, the *Iris,* which paved the way for her subsequent newspaper work, with the *Parthenon*. In both of their well-researched Introductions, Nutt and her co-editors offer illuminating selections from the author's personal diary that show how Ethel was determined to gain financial independence and stability.

Ethel and Lillian's aim, in co-founding the *Parthenon*, was to support themselves as professional writers while contributing to the future education of Australia's youth. The sisters wrote most of the articles in the *Parthenon*, with Ethel also in charge of the "Children's Page," a section dedicated to short serials, puzzles and various competitions. As Nutt and her co-editors demonstrate in their Introductions to both volumes, the sisters' project was initially handled with great care and attention to detail. They understood the hard work and commitment that founding and maintaining a successful business entails. Nonetheless, as the editors also reveal, the constant search for new contributors, material, and sponsors eventually took its toll on the magazine's creators. They were involved in a lawsuit after accusing a child of cheating in a competition, and towards the end of the magazine's existence the sisters showed signs of "careless editing" (Introduction to *That Young Rebel* xvi) and struggled to find new material to keep the serials going. In the Introduction as well as in the endnotes to *That Young Rebel,* Nutt and her co-editors highlight a number of editorial mistakes and inconsistencies as well as spelling and punctuation errors: evidence of the impact of Ethel's circumstances on her work. The young author herself, we learn, claimed in her diary, "I'm not sorry the Parthenon has gone, it is such a relief. Forced writing is bad I am sure" (4 April 1892). It is this raw honesty on the writer's part that helped to make her the responsible author and editor of a successful magazine, which attracted many young readers and received a favourable review from the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Also valuable to our understanding of Ethel's development as a writer is the Introduction to the *Tales from* "The Parthenon," in which Nutt and her co-editors showcase Ethel's writing process, aptly documented with passages from the author's diary. These analyses of Ethel's evolution as a professional writer constitute a welcome contribution to juvenilia studies.

Ethel's early preoccupations also receive thoughtful treatment, as the editors document her emerging abilities to engage and entertain her young readers through

tales adapted to an Australian setting. The short serial "Gladys and the Fairies" (January 1889), one of the stories included in *Tales from "*The Parthenon," includes references to emu eggs, grasshoppers and cicadas, which young Australian readers would easily recognise. The numerous references to public transport taking characters in and out of Sydney also point to the new Australian context of Ethel's tales, as do the mentions of the entertainment choices in *That Young Rebel* (the Cyclorama theatre, the Sydney Zoological Gardens, the Coogee beachside and Aquarium). One of the most helpful aspects of these editions is the editors' analysis of the ways in which Ethel "consciously presents the world and experiences of her young readers as the subject for fiction, rather than the settings of the English world from which many of their parents may well have come" (Introduction to *That Young Rebel* xix). Victorian England is not Ethel's world, and her stories celebrate this fact.

The main characters in the *Parthenon* tales, all girls (Gladys, Midge and Bobbie), come from affluent middle-class families with the means to provide their children with governesses and private education. Yet in some of her tales, Ethel also chooses to explore another side of Sydney, one in which poverty prevails, in some ways resembling the London of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. This concern is most evident in "A Dreadful Pickle" (October 1889), in which Midge takes the tram to one of Sydney's poorer neighbourhoods and goes on a somewhat conventional quest to find and help "the poor people." However, Nutt and her team of student co-editors point out that Ethel also breaks away from the "stereotypically didactic" treatment of the "reformed child trope" that characterised Victorian literature (Introduction to *Tales* xxxii). Although she writes "in the tradition of the reformation of the naughty child," argue the editors (Introduction to *Tales* xxix), it is the naughtiness, rebellion and mischievousness of her characters, more than their admirable qualities, that make them appealing and loveable.

Bobbie, the titular heroine of the last of the three stories included in *Tales from "*The Parthenon," takes her naughtiness even further than Gladys and Midge—the heroines of the two earlier stories collected here—take theirs, and yet she does not end up entirely reformed. As the editors observe, the playful and witty "Bobbie will remain recognisable for her own particular qualities, not for those that would be thrust upon her" (Introduction to *Tales* xxxiii). Those of you with an interest in women's studies will find the editors' discussion of "The Evolution of Bobbie" particularly thought-provoking (Introduction to *Tales* xxxiii-xxxix). They argue convincingly that Bobbie, like Ethel herself, mirrors important changes in late-nineteenth-century Australian society, especially regarding women's roles: both character and author are in the process of breaking with restrictive conventional Victorian attitudes. The heroine is "an image of the emerging young woman in Australia and her independence is unassailable"; she is both boyishly adventurous and educated in the "virtues of young womanhood" (Introduction to *Tales* xxxviii). Who would not want to become acquainted with such a likeable character?

If after meeting Bobbie you are curious to see how Ethel continued to evolve as a writer, you will definitely enjoy *That Young Rebel*, a serial written by nineteen-year-old Ethel Turner under the pseudonym of Princess Ida and originally published in the *Parthenon*, running from January 1891 to March 1892 (when the newspaper ceased

its activity). The main challenge for Turner was, as the editors point out in their Introduction to this edition, to sustain the narrative for such a long period of time. In other ways the narrative recalls Ethel's earlier tales for the *Parthenon*. The protagonist is a thirteen-year-old orphan boy (Keith Farndon, or Taffie), who spends his time between boarding school and his uncle's home. Taffie is described for us by a tolerant, youthful narrator, writing for a similarly young and tolerant audience; his rebellion is not punished but rather cherished and celebrated by the narrator and other characters alike.

The narrator herself admits not writing the typical moral tale whose purpose is to instil proper behaviour:

> Alas, and again alas! I shall never be able to write moral tales, I am sure. Such a tale as this will never be allowed by the authorities into a Sunday-school library; it will never be placed into a child's hands, with a view to improve him by showing what haps [*sic*] to bad boys. (*That Young Rebel* 56)

Instead, she is keen to encourage the character's mischievousness and allow him to escape any form of discipline or punishment:

> Now, I suppose, were my story of the same highly moral nature as that in which disobedient children were eaten up by bears, I should go on to tell you how this boy was picked up either dead or with a broken back, to act as a perpetual warning to other children naughtily inclined. But no such thing happened. (*That Young Rebel* 40)

In fact, it is the adult characters (teachers, parents, relatives, guards, governesses, etc.) in both *Tales from* "The Parthenon" and *That Young Rebel* who, typically, appear unkind, insensitive, silly and ignorant. (Some of the scenes guarantee readers a good laugh!) It is the rebellious characters we are meant to feel sympathy towards. The adults are often mocked by other characters, whereas the narrator often steps in to invite the young audience's compassion for Taffie, despite his naughty behaviour. Such exclamations as "poor little Taffie" (42) and "Alas poor abandoned Taffie" (78) are ones we might imagine hearing from a younger sibling—or a loyal friend.

No wonder, then, that Nutt and her co-editors argue that Ethel is not interested in writing in the tradition of moral and didactic tales; in fact, as she matures as a writer in a journey chronicled by these two volumes, she moves away from them, increasingly choosing to celebrate the (Australian) child, rebellious, independent, and lively as she (or he) might be. Turner has long been acknowledged as a prolific and popular writer: her books (e.g., *Seven Little Australians* [1894] and its sequels, *The Family at Misrule* [1895] and *Little Mother Meg* [1902]) have been placed in millions of children's hands worldwide, providing them with entertaining tales and delightful characters many readers have identified with. In her juvenilia as with her mature writing, Turner shows herself a writer for and about children, who emphasises those qualities that she admires in them: determination, stubbornness and mischievousness.

It is with the juvenilia collected in these two volumes that she begins to depict (Australian) children as attractive figures because of their rebellious nature rather than in spite of it. As Taffie's narrator proudly announces, her "young rebel[s] came off scot free" (*That Young Rebel* 85). And perhaps even more importantly, by the time she has ended her *Parthenon* project, this young woman writer has challenged Victorian stereotypes in order to find her own literary voice in a rapidly changing Australia.

Both of these Juvenilia Press editions offer invaluable insights into Ethel Turner's literary ambitions and creative abilities. They make a strong case for the artistic quality of her juvenilia. What is more, they contribute to the ongoing project of establishing the value of studying juvenilia as literature in its own right and not merely as a starting point for subsequent works. Whether your chief interest is Australian literature or juvenilia studies, you will appreciate Nutt and her co-editors' presentations of young Ethel Turner's impressive commitment to a professional career and to her unconventional stories about wicked, albeit loveable, and entirely Australian, characters.

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Laurie Langbauer, *The Juvenile Tradition: Young Writers and Prolepsis, 1750-1835*. Oxford UP, 2016.

300 pages. Hardcover, USD 95.00 / Oxford Scholarship Online,
DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198739203.003.0001

> Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken …

We all know how Keats's poem continues and concludes, and to what class of travelling and discovery it truly refers. Readers of Laurie Langbauer's *The Juvenile Tradition*—like those watchers of the skies—will similarly be left feeling that something quite remarkable has just swum into their ken. Langbauer's study is erudite and hugely informative. It is also admirably comprehensible, beautifully written and (most impressively, given the subjects it touches upon) refreshingly free of any stylistic opaqueness.

Langbauer, Professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a specialist in the long nineteenth century, has notably worked on the novel, with publications such as *Novels of Everyday Life: The Series in English Fiction, 1850-1930* (1999), and *Women and Romance: The Consolations of Gender in the English Novel* (1990). But she is very well placed to develop this current monographic study, having also written a number of works on children's literature.

The Juvenile Tradition sets out what appears to be a highly engaging discussion; indeed, the dust-jacket blurb promises us that the author "rewrites one of the most important periods in British literature." For once, the blurb is not mere hype: this book most certainly makes good on its promises. And those promises are raised, I would say, from the very outset; the subtitle (*Young Writers and Prolepsis, 1750-1835*) points to an original argumentative framework on which the six individual studies within the book will be constructed and which accords this work its distinctiveness and its special worth. The term *prolepsis* will probably send many of us scuttling for our dictionaries, if only to *remind* ourselves of what it refers to. As Langbauer indicates, its meaning is somewhat complex:

> The *OED* defines prolepsis first through anticipation—"the action of representing or regarding (esp. as a rhetorical figure, originally in speech or writing) something in the future as already done or existing; anticipation." Gérard Genette calls this "narrating or evoking in advance an event that will take place later." (4-5)

Langbauer argues that prolepsis can also do more than anticipate or evoke; it can in fact become a means—attained through the very act of writing—of bringing into existence an authorial status and validity by asserting it to be so. Langbauer's compelling thesis throughout this book is that, through the trope of prolepsis, the young writers considered here (Thomas Chatterton, Henry Kirke White, Robert Southey, Leigh Hunt, Jane Austen and Felicia Hemans, primarily, in addition to the young Byron, Mary and Percy Shelley, Keats and others) empowered themselves to stake a claim for their contemporary significance and—additionally—to avouch their literary legacy in the future. In rewriting this period (as the blurb would have it), *The Juvenile Tradition* essentially aims to recover these young voices that have in many cases been lost but that were, at the time, anything but lost. In parts of this period, unlike in our own senior-oriented demographic triangle in the West, around 50% of the population in Britain was under 19 years of age. This sizeable group vigorously took advantage of whatever literary opportunities were available to it through a range of means and media so as to present itself in print to a readership, one that responded in turn by eagerly devouring the literature these writers offered and, at one and the same time, vociferously judging its qualities and marvelling at (or doubting) its originality. This is the lost juvenile tradition that Langbauer so ably recovers; and

further, by focussing on the proleptic character of this juvenilia, she does indeed present us with a rewritten account of the period.

The book is structured into five main chapters: a review of the juvenile tradition followed by four chapters each focussing primarily on specific authors; a conclusion both summarises and points forward through an assessment of the work of Hemans. Langbauer's sensitive and insightful reading of her authors—supported by a spectacular array of footnotes, in themselves worthy of a separate review—clearly establishes the historical parameters within which the authors were working and deftly reveals their individual approaches towards literary creativity. I find particularly commendable those moments in which Langbauer brings to the fore the perennial critical problems familiar to many of us who work in this ambit, namely the crushing tendency of the world at large to dismiss this literature as marginal, trivial, derivative, or simply inferior, and shows us how these young authors faced up to such obstacles, transcending them time and again. For instance, in the first chapter (on "Backgrounds and Traditions"), she points out that "juvenile writers used their juvenility to refuse others' attempts to define them" (51); clearly, prolepsis also implies counting on a healthy dose of authorial self-belief when staking claim to a future reputation. This much we have perhaps always instinctively known about such authors; Langbauer shows that it actually forms a part of an entire rhetorical strategy.

The book's chapters cover issues as diverse yet clearly interconnected as the technology of newspaper and journal publication; the tradition of juvenile writing (including the ever-controversial notion of *child genius*); education; the subsuming of the juvenile tradition into Romanticism; and the recalibrating of what *juvenile writing* actually means. In all of this, however, the overriding thrust of the study is towards emphasising the ways in which these writers proactively take control of the cultural factors of influence and importance in their world and, in doing so, make for themselves a plausible present through which to project an equally plausible future. Speaking of Henry Kirke White, though in terms applicable to all these writers, Langbauer reminds us that "the importance to juvenile writing of prolepsis" is as "a trope that yokes immediacy to the future …. Future fame will validate the poetic identity that his contemporaries doubt, but that fame can only come because the young poet already asserts himself as poet in the face of disbelief that anyone so young could possibly write" (110).

As a means for approaching literary juvenilia, and of understanding both its underlying rhetorical *modus operandi* and the very particular qualities that this produces, I believe that this book is a most significant contribution to juvenilia studies.

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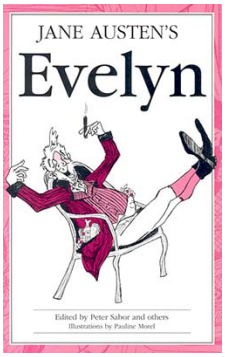

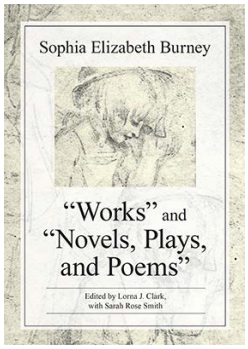

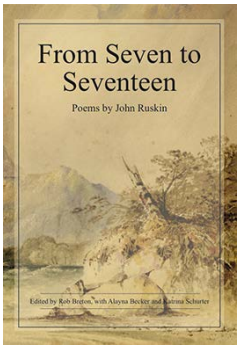

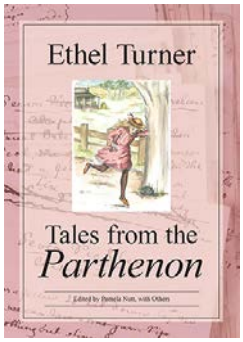

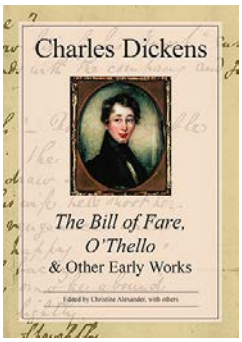

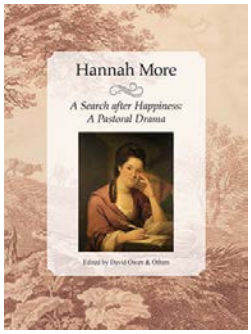

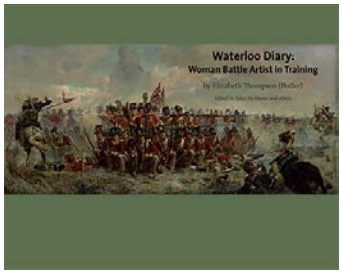

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ISSN 2561-8318 (Print)
ISSN 2561-8326 (Online)