Empire and Adolescence: Whiteness and Gendered Citizenship in American Young Adult Literature, 1904-1951

By

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DEDICATION

To Darbie, Nan, and Martha, three incredible, strong-willed women who taught me to persevere.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When I first open a scholarly monograph, one of my favorite things to do is to turn to the acknowledgements. In part, I love getting a glimpse into a scholar’s life—who did they work with? Might I know them? What kinds of intellectual lineages is this text a part of? But really, the acknowledgements section shows a very different side of academia that contradicts the Ivory Tower stereotype. Instead, I find that they illustrate incredible networks of humanity: teachers and students, mentors and librarians, friends and lovers, the family you were born to and the family you made. On difficult days, when I feel isolated and alone, researching in an archive or revising in my home office late into the night, I read the acknowledgements to both reconnect myself to the networks that sustain academic work and to remind myself that I am so grateful for the hilarious, lovely, brilliant, kind, and generous people who have walked alongside me these last eight and a half years.

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INTRODUCTION

The All-White World of Young Adult Literature: Adventures in White American Imperialism, 1904-1951

One by one, we see the other reapings, the names called, the volunteers stepping forward or, more often, not. We examine the faces of the kids who will be our competition. A few stand out in my mind...most hauntingly, a twelve-year-old girl from District 11. She has dark brown skin and eyes, but other than that, she’s very like Prim in size and demeanor. Only when she mounts the stage and they ask for volunteers, all you can hear is the wind whistling through the decrepit buildings around her. There’s no one willing to take her place.

--Suzanne Collins, The Hunger Games, 2008

After watching the hunger games preview 6 times in a row, I realized Rue is black. whaaaat?! #shocked

--Nikki Eggers, tweet, 2012

Kk call me racist but when I found out rue was black her death wasn’t as sad #ihatemyself

--jasper paras, tweet, 2012

“I was pumped about the Hunger Games. Until I learned that a black girl was playing Rue.”

--John Knox IV, tweet, 2012

Suzanne Collins’ massively popular young adult series, The Hunger Games, imagines a post-apocalyptic future of the United States; wrought by natural disasters and several civil wars, the governing body of the new nation, Panem, maintains control over its rebellious citizenry through the annual Hunger Games, a competition that pits two teens from each of the twelve remaining Districts against each other in a televised death match. The series critiques the media’s glorification of violence, totalitarian governments, and gendered performativity in young adult literature, but the fan response to Rue, a black character helps series protagonist Katniss Everdeen win the games (even though it leads to her own eventual death), created a new avenue for popular and scholarly discussion. When African-American actress Amandla Stenberg was
cast to play Rue in the film adaptation, social media platform Twitter exploded. Fans proclaimed she did not match the Rue they had envisioned—in other words, they could not believe she was not white. While the tweets ranged from surprised to openly racist, their perception of Rue as white clearly contradicted the novel’s description, which prompts the question: if The Hunger Games can imagine such a bleak future for the United States, why can’t its readers imagine this future includes black teens?

This problem is not unique to The Hunger Games. Contemporary children’s and young adult literature has struggled to diversify its offerings since Nancy Larrick wrote her seminal article “The All-White World of Children’s Literature” in 1965. Scholars have noted the dearth of stories about non-white teens. For example, a survey of children’s books published in 2015 by the Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC) shows that out of 3,200 books published in the United States, only 14% were about nonwhite cultures and only 10% were written by nonwhite authors (see fig. 1 for a more complete breakdown). Even if these books include nonwhite cultures, they often rely on problematic stereotypes, and, as Annie Schutte notes, if the protagonist is a person of color, publishers will often slap a white or racially ambiguous teen on their book cover or not show them at all. A quick trip to the local Ann Arbor library suggests that this problem is on-going: a display of historical young adult literature shows only white teens except one, M. T. Anderson’s The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume Two: The Kingdom on the Waves (2008), but, in a moment of rich but accidental symbolism, someone displayed this novel spine outward, hiding its black protagonist from view. Lee and Low argue that publishing’s current problems stem from an overwhelmingly white publishing industry, which in turn, as Ebony Elizabeth Thomas observes, leads “publishers [to] think the bulk of the reading public is just not that interested in multicultural stories (except
when for political correctness’s sake they have to be), and is most comfortable seeing minoritized children and youth in acceptable or expected roles.”

Critics and librarians have argued for decades that giving American teens young adult literature with complex, accurate representations of nonwhite adolescents and their cultures can both provide a crucial mirror for marginalized youth facing inaccurate stereotypes. Moreover, these texts can help increase “cultural competence” or “the understanding and acceptance of cultures different from their own.” With this in mind, why do so many American young adult writers, publishers, and readers struggle with nonwhite protagonists and readers?

While contemporary publishing demographics and assumptions certainly are a factor, my dissertation argues that these contemporary struggles stem from longer history of discourses around young adult reading practices that irrevocably yoked American adolescence to whiteness, or more accurately, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP), in the early twentieth century. My dissertation responds to Amanda Allen’s call to “investigate the professional field of YA,” a field
that she notes is “a system of social positions, in which agents (particularly librarians and academic critics) struggle over not only the potential definition of young adult fiction, but the ability to canonize it.”

Allen hopes to rehabilitate the junior novel, considered by many to be a predecessor to young adult novels that were typically published between 1943-1967, but a quick examination of the field suggests that these, too, present an all-white world of American adolescence. My dissertation argues we must shift our gaze even earlier to articulate how agents interested in American adolescence crafted a literary image that was WASP. I begin with G. Stanley Hall’s *Adolescence* (1904), which helped to institutionalize adolescence more broadly as a life stage in American culture. As Gabrielle Owen argues, Hall’s theories of adolescent reading were predicated upon a form of “reproductive futurism,” in which “the adolescent comes to represent the ruin we are headed for without institutional intervention.”

In this model, literature becomes a “symbolic measure of human development, a symbolic instrument that either supports ‘proper’ development or hinders it,” i.e., the right kinds of books could create the right kinds of teens.

In her focus on queer theory, however, Owen underplays the role race and gender played in Hall’s formulation of adolescence and how that logic was incorporated into the field as a norm we recognize today as American young adult literature. My dissertation situates itself amongst feminist and queer scholarship—like Gail Bederman’s *Masculinity and Civilization*, Robin Bernstein’s *Racial Innocence*, Kenneth Kidd’s *Making American Boys: Boyology and the Feral Tale*—that bring the logics of age to bear on constructs of race and gender in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Like Amanda Allen, however, I keep my focus primarily on those academic critics and librarians who began to separate adolescence from childhood in their literary recommendations and used that distinction to perpetuate a limited vision of citizenship
undergirded by American imperialist thought and military action. My dissertation questions how gendered and racialized models of adolescent duty and citizenship were both conveyed through literary prescriptions and commercialized through publishing practices as the United States entered five wars: the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. And yet, by incorporating adolescent writings (fan letters, memoirs, surveys) alongside various reports of adolescent rebellion, I hope to complicate a particular master narrative that has dominated young adult literary studies, one that assumes power in young adult literature is purely “top-down,” or adults indoctrinating teens into their political, religious, and social views. Instead, I argue that the messiness of adult/adolescent interaction often allowed young voices to be heard.

Of course, as many scholars in children’s young adult literature have argued, children’s and young adult literature is inherently didactic, even colonialist, in its intentions. Since Jacqueline Rose wrote “children’s fiction sets up the child as an outsider to its own process, and then aims, unashamedly, to take the child in” in *The Case of Peter Pan, or, the Impossibility of Children’s Fiction*, literary scholars interested in examining the possibilities of both categories must grapple with Rose’s claims that these genres rely on the “impossible relation between adult and child.” Written primarily—overwhelmingly—by adults, children’s and young adult literature developed from desires to further police the aging process and direct children and teens towards appropriate subjectivities and identities. In his article “The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children's Literature,” Perry Nodelman expands upon Rose’s argument by tying together children’s literature and psychology as “[forms] of colonialism” used to govern young lives, arguing that “[w]e may claim to study childhood in order to benefit children, but we actually do it so that we will know how to deal with children…we write books for children to
provide them with values and with images of themselves we approve of or feel comfortable with.” Both Nodelman and Rose suggest a largely static field of power in which ideological control over the child, already established through the consumption of children’s literature, extends through adolescence via young adult literature.

Adolescents, however, do not share the same “system of meanings” nor are they symbolically interchangeable with children. Certainly, there remains large amount of slippage between the two, particularly because both children and young adults have been historically marked as liminal, or as Michael Joseph and Lissa Paul define it, “the quality of being socially segregated, set apart and divested of status, and…associated characteristics and qualities: indeterminacy, ambiguity, selflessness, and becomingness.” I do not want to suggest that examining the two in tandem cannot be productive, nor do I think adolescence can be divorced entirely from constructions of childhood, especially during the early twentieth century when these distinctions were fuzzy at best. That being said, slippage between the two can obscure crucial differences in the construction of both. For example, while both children and adolescents may be defined as “betwixt and between” life stages, adolescents are under threat from a greater danger: their period of liminality is almost over. For psychologists, the end of adolescence means an end to ambiguity, and the end to revolution and change. According to Hall, “adolescence [was] a new birth,” a final stage before “maturity” set one’s characteristics in stone. Similarly, Erik Erikson would later argue that the primary crisis during the adolescent stage was “identity vs. role confusion,” the result of which ideally promoted social acceptance and community engagement to “confirm the inner design for life”. As the phrase “final identity” suggests, we perceive adolescence as the cocoon stage, the last metamorphosis before the “inner design” of adulthood has set the individual’s character and thought patterns.
Gabrielle Owen argues that this narrative of adolescence as the “final stage” implies an impending doom that G. Stanley Hall and others could use to promote increased intervention in adolescents’ lives. She writes,

If we consider adolescence as a discursive construct, like gender, the idea of adolescence exists in complex relation to cultural mythology and lived experience… Adolescence calls us into being, structuring subjectivity, instructing us as to which of our feelings belong to the past and which to our future, which of them we should disavow and which we should own. Adolescence sustains cultural beliefs about what childhood was and what adulthood should be, submerging queer ways of being while maintaining social norms.18

Encroaching adulthood makes the crucial difference between childhood and adolescence, one roughly analogous to that between the statements “I can be anything” and “who am I going to be?” In this context, young adult literature contains the blueprints designed to help teens find the answers to the latter question, providing the “idols and ideals” that will guide them to adult-approved subjectivities.

We must recognize the term subjectivity is itself loaded with raced and gendered expectations. As defined by David Lloyd in “Race Under Representation,” subjecthood is a product of “formation,” which he defines as both “socio-cultural” and “the equally important sense that it has traditionally had in aesthetic pedagogy, the sense of self-formation or Bildung.”19 Formation, which Lloyd traces back to Kant’s theories on aesthetic taste, requires that both the individual’s and the race’s judgement must become increasingly abstract, or “move from sensation to form” in order to construct the public sphere. Accordingly, the more removed from sensation, the more objective the observer and the more universal the taste or judgement.20 The ideal subject is entirely objective, “a subject formalized, if momentarily, into identity with ‘every one else,’ that is, with the Subject in general,” i.e. an abstract representation of humanity as a whole.21 Lloyd and others have argued that during the nineteenth century, objectivity was increasingly coded as white, European, and male.22 In other words, anyone perceived as non-
white, non-European, and/or non-male was marked by their bodies (i.e. sensation) and could not achieve full formation or full self-autonomy, and as we’ll see in the first and third chapters, those marked by subjectivity—at times immigrants, African-Americans, white women, Filipinos—remained adolescent, requiring either imperialist intervention or specialized pedagogical models built upon oft-eugenic lines aimed to protect white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant power in the United States.

If young adult literature functioned as one of those pedagogical models, as I argue here, then we need to track the contours of the field and how it has changed over time. As Marah Gubar suggests in her article “On Not Defining Children’s Literature,” terms like “children’s literature” and “young adult literature” can still be seen as “coherent, viable categor[ies]” if we follow the “Wittgenstein’s family-resemblance approach” in which “the concept under consideration is complex and capacious: it may also be unstable (its meaning shifts over time and across different cultures) and fuzzy at the edges (its boundaries are not fixed and exact).” Such an approach requires us to avoid creating master narratives that rely on over-simplification and erasure. Instead, Gubar asks us “to proceed piecemeal” by focusing on discrete moments of “messiness and diversity” in children’s and young adult literature and situating them in historical models of production and reception. Young adult literature, in particular, has an incredibly messy history. Alleen Pace Nilsen and Kenneth L. Donelson note that young adult literature has been classified variously as “teenage books,” “adolescent literature,” “juvenile fiction,” “junior novel,” and “literature for adolescents,” depending on individual training and preference, and as I’ll show in subsequent chapters, we should add earlier attempts, like G. Stanley Hall’s “ephebic literature” and Anne Carroll Moore’s “Books for Young People,” to the list. To rely on one pervasive definition would overly limit the scope of my analysis, cutting out terminology
previously ignored by scholars or erasing novels and comics that American teens actually do read.

It may be useful to consider young adult literature not just as a literary field or a marketing term, but a genre of literature that has, as its heart, a hidden curriculum that instructs the reader how to grow up. John Frow argues that,

far from being ‘stylistic’ devices, genres create effects of reality and truth which are central to the different ways the world is understood in the writing of history or philosophy or science, or in painting or in everyday talk. The semiotic frames within which genres are embedded implicate and specify layered ontological domains-implicit realities which genres form as a pre-given reference, together with the effects of authority and plausibility. Genre...works at the level of semiosis—that is, of meaning making—which is deeper and more forceful than that of the explicit content of the text. [emphasis in original]²⁶

If, as I argued earlier, young adult literature creates a series of blueprints for becoming, or developing subjectivities, then young adult literature as a genre pulls together all books invested in the process of becoming an adult, from Goethe’s Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre (1796) to Alcott’s Little Women (1868) to Meyer’s Twilight series (2005-2008).²⁷ Or variously, we could trace generic hallmarks of young adult literature (especially for girls) back to Richardson’s Pamela (1740) or Fanny Burney’s novel Evelina (1778), an early novel whose subtitle “the History of a Young Lady’s Entrance into the World” could easily apply to either Maureen Daly’s Seventeenth Summer (1942), Judy Blume’s Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret (1970), or even—with some tweaking—Suzanne Collins’ The Hunger Games.²⁸ In the simplest terms, young adult literature teaches teens not only how to grow up but also how to grow up into the right kind of adult.

By situating these hidden curricula in relation to nationalism, I can more clearly articulate how early young adult literature was developed to grow the next generation of Americans. I find Benedict Anderson’s theories of nationalism and Franco Moretti’s work on the bildungsroman
particularly illuminating here, as Anderson, in *Imagined Communities*, writes that the nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their members or even hear of the them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”\(^{29}\) The novel, accordingly, helped re-conceptualize time from “simultaneity-along-time” to one bound by cause-and-effect by presenting simultaneous plotlines of interconnected character, which led the audience to conceptualize a “sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous empty-time,” or a nation.\(^{30}\) My dissertation argues that early American young adult literature illustrates both how each subsequent generation is imagined and moderated by the previous and how the individual could imagine themselves fitting into the national “sociological organism.”

Moreover, according to Franco Moretti, young adult literature’s spiritual predecessor, the classic *bildungsroman* [novel of formation], places youth at the center of national modernity: “youth acts as a sort of *symbolic concentrate* of the uncertainties and tensions of an entire cultural system, and the hero’s growth becomes the narrative convention or *fiction* that permits the exploration of conflicting values.”\(^{31}\) If the *bildungsroman*, he argues, “tells us that a life is meaningful if the *internal* interconnections of individual temporality (‘the plot of all life’) imply at the same time an opening up to the *outside*, an ever wider and thicker network of external relationships with ‘human things,’” these networks, which parallel Anderson’s “sociological organisms,” typically force the protagonist to develop a sense of belonging to a “homeland” or nation (or to reject it entirely).\(^{32}\) Youth (or adolescence) becomes important *because* it represents the instability of both the individual’s and nation’s future. If the adolescent learns to belong, the nation remains stable; if the adolescent refuses to belong, the nation’s future is in
jeopardy, implying that American young adult literature is not just a narrative of becoming, but also of belonging—i.e., a narrative of becoming American citizens.

At the turn of the century, however, not everyone got to “become an American.” Scholars like Stephen Steinberg and Jeffrey E. Mirel argue that large waves of immigrants from Southern Europe drastically changed the demographics of what had been seen as a WASP nation, leading politicians and educators to call for Americanization programs to instruct new citizens in American (read: WASP) values. Concurrently, as Gail Bederman and Thomas Fallace argue, white women and African-Americans began to challenge white male hegemonic power through economic and educational gains; in response, Progressive Era educators like psychologist G. Stanley Hall and John Dewey channeled their energies into remaking American whiteness through recapitulation, an evolutionary model that was predicated on “ontogeny replicates phylogeny,” or the idea that as the individual develops, they follow the same developmental process of their race. This narrative allowed Hall to intertwine an adolescent’s fate to that of their race and their nation. This theory, expressed most fully in Hall’s monograph Adolescence, helped restructure institutions aimed at adolescents, rationalized discrimination based upon race and gender (i.e., not everyone could fully develop) and supported American imperialism (i.e., we must help others develop properly). Literature for adolescents, I argue, became a site to both project and contest those values, although the majority aimed to reinforce whiteness as the standard of what an American citizen looked and acted like, whether at home or abroad. These images or archetypes of adolescence provided American teens and their guardians with alternatively terrifying and comforting models, analogues to The Breakfast Club’s all-white pre-detention archetypes: “a brain, and an athlete, and a basket-case, a princess, and a criminal.” My dissertation examines their earlier counterparts—variously ephebes, new women, flappers,
delinquents, and sub-debs—how they appeared and how they were employed (or deployed) to ensure the American adolescent in the public imaginary remained white.\(^{37}\)

With this in mind, I will use “young adult literature” when referring to the field as a whole, but I want to keep my operating definition of young adult literature vague. For the purposes of my dissertation, young adult literature refers to all books connected to young adult reading practices: any literature that adolescents should or should not read. By including *should*, however, this definition explicitly assumes the stance of the parent, librarian, teacher, author or academic standing in judgement over the teen reader, directing their gaze towards more appropriate texts. It allows me to question what is at stake when critics, publishers, and consumers change their terminology and/or definition to reinforce racialized and gendered paradigms.

Moreover, if the debates I want to elaborate upon are driven by multiple, often-competing desires to guide, censor, punish, and warn adolescents, they also illustrate how young adult literature contributes to and plays with the system of meanings around adolescence, especially as an illustration of ideal or non-ideal subjectivities. As Owen argues elsewhere, marking adolescents and their books as *good or nice* often relies upon an implicit erasure of the bad; however, I argue that this erasure is never quite complete.\(^{38}\) These authors, publishers, academics, and librarians rely upon images of bad boys and girls—most commonly framed as juvenile delinquents, sexual deviants, and drugged-up drop-outs—as an Other, representations of an adolescence poorly lived. Even in the blandest juvenile romance, bad teens stalk the edges of the plot; in others they stand center-stage, offering both protagonist and audience another life trajectory. My dissertation explores this binary by examining discrete moments of judgement in both academic discourse and early young adult literature, asking how each moment shifts the
system of meanings swirling around our expectations of “adolescence.” What constitutes bad (read: non-ideal) or good (read: ideal) behavior? How do particular reading practices or reading materials shape these definitions, especially along lines of race, class, gender, and most importantly, nationality?

Simultaneously, by including those books that are not approved, I can track when and where adolescent reading practices in the early twentieth century began to deviate from approved models or when they are perceived to need correction. As Marah Gubar writes, while tracking youth agency can be difficult (how do we define agency for individuals who, by age, by circumstance, by parental influence, may be forced to read one text rather than another?), it may help to conceive of children as actors who are simultaneously scripted and scripting. This way of thinking about what it means to be a child has significant benefits. It accords children agency without denying that they are shaped by a classification that pre-exists their arrival in the world, one that has spawned a matrix of adult-controlled discourses and practices that affect how young people perceive themselves and their relationship to the world they inhabit.  

Granted, Gubar goes on to note “children are more scripted and less scripting” vis-à-vis grownups, but as my dissertation shows, adolescents are in their own liminal space that provides—if not increased awareness of those scripts—increased agency to act on them. My dissertation attends to various moments where American adolescents engaged in disruptive reading and writing habits, from nineteen-year-old Mary MacLane’s memoir, *The Story of Mary MacLane* (1902), which courted controversy by foregrounding her expansive (and often deeply sexual) fantasy life, to immigrants in the New York Public Library who rejected the literary standards advocated by their librarians, preferring trash novels that more closely reflected their own interests and needs. Girls in the forties wrote into the *Ladies’ Home Journal* to share their problems and their slang, encouraged by Maureen Daly, whose novel *Seventeenth Summer,*
written in her late teens, sought to create a more authentic image of teenage love (even though much of her subsequent work did the exact opposite). By foregrounding archival materials and engaging in contemporary studies of fan studies, I too articulate how children and young adults engaged with the materials they read and the “scripts” they received and, at times, tossed aside.

In my first chapter, “Reading the Ephebic Way: G. Stanley Hall’s Adolescence, Anti-modernism, and Literary Prescription for White American Boys,” I examine how Hall’s theories of adolescent development heightened the stakes of adolescent reading practices. Based upon neo-Lamarckian theories of evolution, Hall accorded the United States’ future to WASP teens, particularly young boys, who he argued were the only ones currently capable of taking up the burdens of citizenship. This construct, in turn, justified American imperialist action, as Vincent Raphael argues, against nonwhite populations deemed uncivilized. Robin Bernstein argues in Racial Innocence that

childhood innocence—itself raced white, itself characterized by the ability to retain racial meaning but hide them under claims of holy obliviousness—secured the unmarked status of whiteness, and the power derived from that status, in the nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries…what childhood innocence helped Americans to assert by forgetting, to think about by performing obliviousness, was not only whiteness but also racial difference constructed against whiteness.  

White American adolescents benefited from that presumed innocence because it implied proper moral and social development (according to Hall, precocity was the worst offense); as children grew into teenagers (and could no longer claim innocence), literature could help maintain racialized and gendered boundaries, rewritten into an American imperialist future. As my dissertation argues, Hall’s proposed genre of young adult reading material, which he called “ephebic literature,” constructed a literary repository of idealized adolescence, a “how to become the right kind of American citizen” that connected whiteness and imperialism to American logics of reproductive futurism.
My second chapter, “From NYPL to the World: Anne Carroll Moore, Imperialism, and the Creation of an International Teenage Marketplace” turns to Anne Carroll Moore, the New York Public Library’s Director of Work with Children, and her booklists for adolescents in her column for The Bookman. Moore argued that, to increase cross-cultural connections after the devastation of World War I, American publishers must expand the quality and quantity of children’s literature beyond dime novels and series fiction like those published by the Stratemeyer Syndicate. These novels, she worried, would not only turn children and teens in the United States away from reading, but also give the wrong impression of the American character to other nations, thereby weakening any gains United States had made during the war. I turn to her recommendations for adolescents (enmeshed, as they often are, in her recommendations for children) to examine how the novels she advised teens to read were based upon Hall’s theories, which constructed a global market bounded by whiteness. I use archival evidence from the New York Public Library archives to establish that Moore’s image of “American character” distinctly contradicted, and did not serve, the diversity of patrons she saw at the New York Public Library.

In the third chapter, “The Fault in Our (Literary) Girls: New Women, Modern Girls, and Excessive White Desire in Literature for Teens, 1904-1928,” I use Hall and Moore’s reading prescriptions for young women as a framework to explore adolescent expressions of fandom, both fictional and non-fictional, and how particular kinds of white feminine desire (both sexual and pedagogical) were sharply policed as antithetical to national progress. I turn to one of Hall’s targets, the aforementioned Mary MacLane and her memoir The Story of Mary MacLane to argue that her manipulation of the texts she loved and her authorial persona provided a dangerous model of reading for young girls. MacLane, who openly admitted her desire for fame, for literary acclaim, for both women and men, became representative of the dangers of women’s
education, if only for a short period. While Moore wanted to encourage teens to become life-long readers, she too feared that reading the wrong material might teach young white women to explore their own sexual desires. I compare three novels she discussed in her article “Books for Teens,” May Sinclair’s *Mary Olivier: A Life*, Booth Tarkington’s *Seventeen: A Tale of Youth and Summer Time and the Baxter Family Especially William*, and Fannie Kilbourne’s *Betty Bell* to parse out the boundaries of white respectability, especially as the flapper, as a model of conspicuous consumption and sexual desire, became increasingly ubiquitous on the stage, the screen, and the written page.

My final chapter, “Are You There, America? It’s Me, Maureen: Maureen Daly, the Catholic-American Community, and Commercializing White American Adolescence,” traces Maureen Daly’s career from the publication of her novel *Seventeenth Summer* (1942) through her years writing advice columns for both the *Chicago Daily Tribune* and the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. I examine how both her novel and her advice columns represented WASP youth in the 1940s and 1950s through to her ability to perform American adolescence as divorced from her Irish-Catholic heritage. Simultaneously, the inclusion of a Catholic scene in *Seventeenth Summer* inspired the wider Catholic-American, who not only wrote to her asking for additional novels about Catholic-American youth, but also used that scene to read Catholic values into her subsequent work. Finally, I examine how her work for the Sub-Deb column at the *Ladies’ Home Journal* commercialized the adolescent performance she perfected in her previous columns, which took the WASP and stripped it for salable parts.

My dissertation ends with a short coda, “Imagining Adolescents at War: María Cristina Mena’s *The Two Eagles*, Janet Lambert’s *Glory Be!* and the White Imperialist Gaze,” that compares two junior novels published in 1943. Both novels explore adolescent responsibility in
the midst of World War II, but while Lambert’s prioritizes adolescent WASP perspectives, Mena provides a critique of said stance, one that create a new potential trajectory for young adult literary history.


2 Larrick critiqued the limited representation of African-American children in children’s literature, but this introduction will expand on her analysis to incorporate Asian-American, Latinx, and First Nation populations, as broken down by the Cooperative Children Book Center of Education. Nancy Larrick, “The All-Nations Authors and Illustrators,” Cooperative Children’s Book Center, March 16, 2016, http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp.


5 M.T. Anderson’s two novels are a pastiche of eighteenth century memoir about a young African-American slave who, given a classical education to determine whether African had the same intellectual capabilities as Europeans, struggles to find a community in the turmoil of the Revolutionary War. The first novel, which won the National Book Award, showed an image of Octavian’s face covered by an iron mask—symbolic of the cultural and historical erasure he experiences in the experiment; the sequel shows Octavian, mask removed. For more, see M. T. Anderson, The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: The Pox Party (Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2006) and M. T. Anderson, The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume II: The Kingdom on the Waves (Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2008).


Amanda Allen, “Forgotten Canon Wars: Postwar Junior Novel Critics and the Struggle to Define YA,” (conference paper, Longwood University, Richmond, VA, June 20, 2015).

Junior novels, published between the mid-30s to mid-60s, focused on romance, sports, or developing careers, like Helen Dore Boylston’s Sue Barton: Student Nurse. They were generally considered little better than dime novels. For more on the junior novel, please see chapter four.


Rose argues that intergenerational power disparities inherently short circuit real communication between adults and children because of the many ways children and young adults are systematically removed from power on both institutional and individual levels. Children’s literature, as one such form of communication, facilitates those boundaries by “[setting] up a world in which the adult comes first (author, maker, giver) and the child comes after (reader, product, receiver), but where neither of them enter the space in between.” It’s perhaps unsurprising that Rose uses words with biblical connotations like “maker” and “giver” to describe adults as for her, they appear almost god-like in their power, using children’s literature to remake each child in their image and rendering the pleasures of reading like the pleasures of worship, a form of indoctrination that introduces children to “language, sexuality, and the state.” Jacqueline Rose, The Case of Peter Pan, Or the Impossibility of Children’s Fiction. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993. PDF e-book. 1-2, 8.

Using Edward Said’s Orientalism as his model, he argues that discourses used to structure European engagement with “the Orient” bear a striking resemblance to those structuring childhood studies, writing, “[a]s Orientalism is primarily for the benefit of Europeans, child psychology and children's literature are primarily for the benefit of adults.” [emphasis original] Perry Nodelman, “The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children’s Literature.” Children’s Literature Association Quarterly 317, no. 1 (1992): 30. doi:10.1353/chq.0.1006.


Erik Erikson argues that “the sense of ego identity, then, is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and congruity prepared in the past will match the inner sameness and congruity of one’s meaning for others, as evidenced in the tangible promise of a ‘career.’ By matching internal values with those of society, Erikson posits, an adolescent can resolve its crisis and contribute to society successfully, most obviously in the form of a career, a marriage, and an acceptable number of children. Otherwise, if the identity crisis is left untreated, the adolescent risks ‘role confusion,’ which could lead to ‘delinquent and outright psychotic episodes.’ Like Hall, Erikson saw adolescence as a period in which ideologies are formed and the true birthplace of delinquency. For more information, please see Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1950.) 227-229.


Ibid, 252.
Ibid, 250.


24 Ibid., 212.


30 Ibid., 26, 22


32 Ibid., 18.


37 While the term *ephebe* was used to identify Athenian youths preparing to take the citizen, or *ephebic* oath in third and fourth centuries B.C.E., turn-of-the-century American pedagogues applied the term to young adults. Please see chapter one for more on the *ephebe* as both Grecian and turn-of-the-century American concept or Charles W. Hedrick Jr., “The American Ephebe: The Ephebic Oath, U.S. Education, and Nationalism,” The Classical World 97, no. 4 (July 1, 2004): 384–407, doi:10.2307/4352874.


40 Robin Bernstein, Racial Innocence, 8.
CHAPTER ONE

Reading the Ephebic Way: G. Stanley Hall’s Adolescence, Anti-modernism, and Literary Prescription for White American Boys

We Americans have many grave problems to solve, many threatening evils to fight, and many deeds to do, if, as we hope and believe, we have the wisdom, the strength, the courage, and the virtue to do them. But we must face facts as they are. We must not surrender ourselves to a foolish optimism, nor succumb to a timid and ignoble pessimism. Our nation is that one among all the nations of the earth which holds in its hands the fate of the coming years. We enjoy exceptional advantages, and are menaced by exceptional dangers; and all signs indicate that we shall either fail greatly or succeed greatly. I firmly believe that we shall succeed; but we must not foolishly blink the dangers by which we are threatened, for that is the way to fail.

--Teddy Roosevelt, “True Americanism,” 1894

Never has youth been exposed to such dangers of both perversion and arrest as in our own land and day. Increasing urban life with its temptations, prematurities, sedentary occupations, and passive stimuli just when an active, objective life is most needed, early emancipation and a lessening sense for both duty and discipline, the haste to know and do all befitting man's estate before its time, the mad rush for sudden wealth and the reckless fashions set by its gilded youth—all these lack some of the regulatives they still have in older lands with more conservative traditions.

--G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence, vol. 1, 1904

A new affliction has recently been put upon an American public, which, for want of a better name, might be called “the Little Lord Fauntleroy mamma”...a fond mother got on at Eighty-first-street to come down town--a little, consequential woman, rather prettily dressed, leading by the had a big, overgrown boy of eight or nine years. “My little pet” was the endearing term by which she addressed him. Some people might have seen in that boy the signs of a brilliant future, as an Alderman or Congressman; but his appearance certainly would not justify a general use of his mother’s fond appellation, for he walked sheepishly along...his lank body was covered with the regulation Little Lord Fauntleroy jersey, the waist having a rolling sailor collar that exposed half of his chest.

-- “Fun for All but the Boy: Young America’s Sufferings as the Victim of a Popular Craze,” 1889

Around the 1890s, young white boys in the United States were haunted by a menace.1

Swathed in lace, velvet, and a striking red sash, his long blonde lovelocks trailed behind him, a literary ghoul stalking the streets, snatching up young, impressionable mothers and infecting
them with images of luxury and European splendor. Once contaminated, these misguided women could not help themselves or their sons; they simply had to recreate the ghoul in real life, dressing their sons in the Fauntleroy jersey and curling their hair to match their new boyhood ideal. This was a common narrative recounted by articles commenting on the literary craze set off by Frances Hodgson Burnett’s 1886 novel *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. Initially serialized in *St. Nicholas: an Illustrated Magazine for Young Folks*, *Little Lord Fauntleroy* described the adventures of an eight-year old American boy named Cedric Errol after he discovers his new identity as the grandson, and only remaining heir, of the British Earl of Dorincourt. Immensely popular, the novel gave literary form to new androgynous vision of Victorian boyhood; however, as “Fun for All but the Boy” illustrated, Fauntleroy quickly stepped into the real world, leading to a nationwide panic that little boys, led by their mothers in both fashion and thought, would be unable to grow up into “real men.” After the anonymous author observed the embarrassed young man, for example, he concluded that boys were “as good or as bad to-day as they ever were, and under half decent training make just as good men; but what can be expected of a youngster pampered and restricted as that one is?” In short, this over-civilized and unmanned boy could no longer hold the future of the United States in his hands; he was, instead, a laughingstock.

This article was one small part of an on-going national conversation about American manhood that worried that white male power was slowly eroding. Gail Bederman argues that, by 1890, changing political and economic climates, along with challenges from feminist movements and “working class and immigrant men” undermined white middle-class men’s “[ability] to “wield civic authority, to control strife and unrest, and to shape the future of the nation.” Protecting white male authority meant a radical revisioning of national culture that remade the concept of “manhood” by simultaneously tying it distinctly to racial superiority and
severing it from “excessive femininity” through a series of ideological shifts, e.g., castigating mothers’ sartorial choices for their boys. For some, like Theodore Roosevelt, it was about casting off European (read as over-civilized, feminine, unpatriotic) influences in favor of a new masculinity tested and tried against the wild American frontier. In his 1894 article “True Americanism,” Roosevelt castigates his Euro-friendly compatriots as “overcivilized, oversensitive, over-refined, [who] ha[d] lost the hardihood and manly courage by which alone he c[ould] conquer in the keen struggle of our national life.” Redemption, according to Roosevelt, could only occur if Americans focused on creating and celebrating their own unique culture, as such a model would reinvigorate both their young men and their national life.

For child study psychologist G. Stanley Hall, the solution could be found in scientific principles and evolutionary models. This meant documenting and regimenting youth adolescent development, a project which culminated with the publication of Adolescence in 1904. He argued that young American adolescents were developmentally unbalanced, simultaneously over-educated and physically and spiritually malnourished, which in turn manifested through a number of social and psychological ills that he diagnosed along gendered lines. Hall believed that boys suffered from neurasthenia and effeminacy, while girls were in danger “of declining from [their] orbit...of lapsing to mannish ways, methods, and ideals.” In other words, Hall feared America’s overcivilized environment would lead to increased androgyny, a blending of gender roles that he argued would “virify women and feminize men, and would be retrogressive” to the race and the nation. In turn, he worked to reinforce gendered and racialized norms in Adolescence and in its abridged, educator-friendly edition, Youth, and as many scholars have noted, he succeeded. Adolescence galvanized American pedagogues and helped institutionalize adolescence as a life stage, as Steven Mintz notes, “by convinc[ing] many parents and educators
that young people were growing up too fast, that adolescence needed to be prolonged, and that the early and mid teenage years needed to be spent in specialized institutions designed to meet adolescents’ special psychological needs.”¹³ His voice, although controversial, would become one white, patriarchal standard by which many early scholars of adolescence (and teachers of adolescents) measured their work.

And yet, when talking about Hall’s scholarly work and achievements, few contemporary scholars address Hall’s relationship with literature or to the literary world.¹⁴ In psychology, Hall stands as one of the great, albeit criticized, minds of the late nineteenth century, an important historical footnote but one whose influence feels distant and whose ideas are markedly dated.¹⁵ For those scholars like Sally Shuttleworth and Susan Mizruchi who are invested in the intersection of science and literary discourse in the late nineteenth century, Hall’s work on childhood development informs various literary movements (realism and naturalism in particular) but his own methods stay strictly in the realm of “surveys and statistics.”¹⁶ Alternatively, in childhood studies, scholars like Gabrielle Owen downplay Hall’s reputation as the “father of adolescence” and instead use him and his scholarly oeuvre as a lynchpin around which previous definitions of adolescence coalesced.¹⁷ As such, Hall becomes a reference point for advancements in psychological discourse that laid the foundation for young adult literature (or YAL) to develop, but Hall was deeply invested in literature. In his biography, Life and Confessions, he owned to a lifelong “taste for the lurid and melodramatic” reading material (one he developed in his early teens) and he even published a collection of short fiction and autobiographical pieces entitled Recreations of a Psychologist (1921).¹⁸ More importantly, Hall devoted an entire chapter of Adolescence, entitled “Adolescence in Literature and Biography,” to
finding adolescent examples--historical or otherwise--that would back up his theories on this newly coalescing life stage, naming his new genre “ephebic literature.”

In this chapter, I examine Hall’s attitudes towards adolescent literary engagement in *Adolescence* to argue the following: first, that the generic label he used, *ephebic* literature, helped create the context that lead to young adult literature almost forty years later. Second, since the term *ephebe* or *ephebic* originally referred solely to young men who, of the right lineage and training, could become citizens of Athens, Hall’s reliance on the term *ephebic* privileged white teenaged readers, particularly American boys, as an audience in desperate need of their own reading material (an audience still considered standard in American young adult literature publishing.) In a nation that was becoming increasingly diverse thanks to a burgeoning immigrant population, Hall, a proponent of eugenics, worried that too much reading and intellectual development would weaken young white men to the point of failure. Once their physical prowess disappeared, they would be unable to support, much less lead, the subsequent generations of “Anglo-Saxon” America to national, and international, domination. Hall imagined that small doses of the right kinds of literature could provide a countermeasure that would model the types of subjectivities he found most suitable for racial success on a global scale. I argue that “ephebic literature” articulates a moment in which imperialist discourses in literature, child psychology and government policy collide and subsequently influence, in significant ways, the development of young adult literature as a genre.

As such, this chapter will investigate how Hall positioned literature both as evidence for his theories and as a tool to keep white adolescents, whom he equated with both race and nation, on track. I argue that, if Hall’s theories of adolescent development relied on what Gail Bederman calls complicated constructions “of race and manhood, nationalism and civilization”
to identify “good” and “bad” teens, “ephebic literature” could foster those constructs in the next generation of Americans. Moreover, since he argued that ephebic literature could provide a corrective for delinquents, he implied that it could also function as a tool to reimagine the future of the United States. To argue this, I explain how Hall attached the stakes of adolescence to national progress by using neo-Lamarckian evolution and recapitulation theory, an evolutionary model that preached “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.” I build upon Gail Bederman’s argument in *Masculinity and Civilization* articulate how recapitulation, paired with Hall’s strong belief in humanism, marginalized non-normative (not middle-class, white, probably male) Americans in service of a eugenic agenda. Hall believed selective reading could provide a partial solution to young boys made effete by sentimental literature like *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, emphasizing military might over intellectualism. I focus on Hall’s attempt to define adolescent literature, or “ephebic literature” as he termed it, to illustrate he sought to establish certain reading practices as acts of citizenship for young boys. If Nancy Lesko argues that Hall’s general “curriculum…looks to the past and the future to administer present youth,” Hall’s vision of the past was structured according to the values of what T.J. Jackson Lears calls the anti-modern movement, which found sought to reorient Victorian cultural around medieval and Asian cultural expressions. And yet, as “ephebic literature” suggests, I argue that Hall’s literary prescriptions were equally, if not more so, influenced by Greek ideals of citizenship which limited their application to the general American population.

**Visions of Adolescent America(s): Neo-Lamarckism, Imperialism, and White Masculine Redemption**

Although Hall was not the first to use recapitulation theory to link child study to the study of savages, his recapitulation-based theories were surely among the most ambitious. He believed that by applying Darwinism to the study of human development, he could do for psychology what Darwin had done for biology: he could bring psychology out of the rigid formal categories of the nineteenth century and make it more dynamic.
Adolescence is a new birth, for the higher and more completely human traits are now born. The qualities of body and soul that now emerge are far newer. The child comes from and harks back to a remoter past; the adolescent is neo-atavistic, and in him the later acquisitions of the race slowly become prepotent. Development is less gradual and more saltatory, suggestive of some ancient period of storm and stress when old moorings were broken and a higher level attained. --G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence, 1904

One of the reasons Adolescence became so influential was the manner in which Hall intertwined adolescents’ fate with that of the United States. While Adolescence aimed, in the most basic sense, to provide a comprehensive theory of a new life stage, Hall believed his text held a greater purpose: to prepare American youth, “aged fourteen to twenty-four” for “the great problems of [modern] reality.”

As we see in the opening quote, Hall argued that adolescence is a period of Sturm und Drang [storm and stress], a crucible of human development in which each individual could crack, for “the momentum of heredity often seems insufficient to enable the child to achieve this great revolution and come to complete maturity, so that every step of the upward way is strewn with wreckage of body, mind, and morals.”

Hall based this prophecy of wreckage on a Lamarckian model of evolution, a non-Darwinian theory first developed by Jean Baptiste de Lamarck in his 1809 text, Philosophie Zoologique. Winlow argues that neo-Lamarckians like Hall primarily relied upon the following two “elements” of Lamarckian theory:

- first, the theory of acquired characteristics, which incorporated the notion of adaptive evolution; and second, the belief that all organisms progress to higher forms of organization. In relation to the latter point, Lamarck emphasized the ideas of separate lines of descent for different biological species, thus incorporating the preexisting ideas of a progressionist hierarchy of biological forms. In Lamarck’s system, the stress on progressive evolution meant that species never became extinct but simply progressed to higher (and more complex) stages of development.

In short, Hall believed that, if the standards he articulated in Adolescence could become institutionalized, humanity, or at least Americans, could speed up the rate of evolution. Moreover, if genetic evolution could change over decades rather than millennia, then it was
incumbent upon each generation of adults to push themselves physically and mentally in order to speed up humanity’s race towards perfection. Conversely, if each generation did not follow his standards, or worse, encouraged those he disapproved, Hall suggested Americans--and humanity more broadly--could easily fall into degeneracy.

Since he conceptualized adolescence as the final stage before adulthood, Hall argued that adolescents required careful guidance that, from his standpoint, the United States was ill-prepared to give on either systemic or individual levels due to three reasons. First, as Gabrielle Owen notes, in contrast to other nations, Hall diagnosed the United States as old before its time. He wrote that the nation had “neither childhood nor youth,” nor “a normal development history” because it was saddled with a constitution appropriated from other models and a culture “imported ready-made from Holland, Rome, England, and Palestine.” In short, the United States could not create a uniquely American culture of adolescence because it had skipped the stage entirely, resulting in the worst kind of child, the one most prone to fail: it was precocious. Second, Hall feared the ramifications of a nation made increasingly diverse through expansive immigration--in particular, he argued that the “old American stock” (i.e., White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) that supposedly dominated the ethnic landscape of his youth had become an endangered species, which he blamed on a reduced birth rate and a growing preference for city life. Their replacements, America’s rapidly growing immigrant population, were equally unprepared in Hall’s eyes, for Hall argued that the majority arrived too old and too attached to their homelands to easily assimilate (i.e., precocious). In contrast, Native Americans, African-Americans, and other people of color could not contribute to the overall improvement of American culture or educational systems because, as we’ll see later, he argued they were too developmentally immature.
Third, Hall argued that contemporary Victorian values were stifling, particularly for young men. In his monograph *No Place of Grace*, Lears contends that Hall was one of the more prominent figures in a transatlantic movement that rejected many of the central tenants of Victorian culture at the *fin-de-siècle*. In what Lears calls the Victorian “ethic[s] of self-control and autonomous achievement, its cult of science and technical rationality, its worship of material progress,” Hall and his compatriots saw a sterile future filled with decadence and escapism. Particularly troubling examples of these failings were found in plays and novels like *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, cultural texts that were divorced from spiritual development or fulfillment. As antimodernists questioned Victorian paradigms of “modernity,” or intense self-control and adherence to the rigid structure of the “bourgeois family,” they searched for authenticity, or intense experiences, which they found in artifacts and constructs taken from historical cultures or contemporary cultures perceived to be trapped in the past. By consuming a carefully-curated mixture of goods and experiences from medieval and Asian sources, American and British antimodernists believed they could both develop their spiritual and artistic expression and heal the emotional wounds caused by overcivilization. According to Lears, Hall expressed his adherence to antimodernist principles by utilizing recapitulation theory, a variant of neo-Lamarckism, to provide a theoretical backbone for *Adolescence*. Recapitulation theory, developed by Ernst Haeckel, argued that “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny,” or “that the biological development of the individual retraced the evolutionary history of the human race.” In other words, if Lamarckian evolution structured human development as a series of linear steps moving from “primitive” to “civilized,” then recapitulation theory posited that childhood development--from infancy to adulthood--could be mapped upon those same steps. Accordingly, as they grew up, children would not only display signs of previous stages of civilization, but for
proper growth, they should also be in an environment where they might *emulate* each stage. Such an evolutionary paradigm, Hall theorized, would grant a sort of “primitive vitality” that would provide American youth with the physical and mental strength to push the next generation forward, but it would also require educators to supply developmentally appropriate cultural artifacts and experiences.

As Bederman argues, however, recapitulation theory assumed a racial hierarchy in which full development “could only come to members of advanced races whose forebears had ascended to the top of the evolutionary ladder, and thus added the most advanced stage to the end of their particular phylogenetic path.” While Hall argued that all races have equal access and claim to his developmental model, his construction in the “Preface” suggests otherwise; he writes,

> we must go to school to the folk-soul, learn of criminals and defectives, animals, and in some sense go back to Aristotle in rebasing psychology on biology, and realize we know the soul best when we can best write its history in the world, and that there are no finalities save formulae of development. The soul is thus still in the making, and we may hope for an indefinite further development. Perhaps other racial stocks than ours will later advance the kingdom of many as far beyond our present standpoint as it now is above that of the lowest savage or even animals.

Here Hall provides a theoretical framework that strips away particulars in favor of a universal “truth” he argued could be found in the “formulae of development,” and establishing these formulae would take up the bulk of his academic endeavors. *Adolescence*, once complete, provided one such formula; his work in child study, another; his penultimate book *Senescence, the Last Half of Life* (1922), which covered old age, a third.

With this in mind, if we can read adolescence and childhood as unfinished subjecthood--as discussed in the introduction--while senescence is subjecthood under threat of dissolution, then Hall’s vision of adulthood can be read as the culmination of individual maturation *and* evolution. And yet, if *Adolescence* was both a description of pre-subjecthood and a manual for
constructing subjecthood, the term “man-soul” is illustrative of the limits he set around subjecthood. An abstract representation of the best of humanity, the soul sat at the developmental apex of a linear progression, one that he argued began with “the animal, savage, and child-soul” and then transitioned into adolescence; however, a quick examination of Adolescence chapter titles shows how this racial hierarchy was embedded in Hall’s theories. The second volume of Adolescence contains three chapters on education in quick succession: the first entitled “Intellectual Development and Education,” the second, “Adolescent Girls and Their Education” and the third, “Ethnic Psychology and Pedagogy, Or Adolescent Races and Their Treatment.” Implicit in front of “Intellectual Development and Education” is the normative white male, and since Hall separated his pedagogic prescriptions according to gender and race, we can read his chapter titles as a hierarchy of bildung that placed white males at the top and women of color at the bottom, although in his intersection of gender and race, race was clearly the more damning of the two. Placed side-by-side, these chapters embody how Hall constructed full subjecthood as the birthright for white adolescents, and more frequently, for white middle-class boys, since they solely capable of evolving past adolescence.

This is not to suggest that Hall’s theories made it impossible for non-Anglo-Saxons to achieve subjecthood. In his preface, he argued that, “other racial stocks than [Anglo-Saxon]” could help develop “the kingdom of man.” By situating his remarks in the context of American imperialist thought at the turn of the century, however, we can see how such speculative logic helped to shore up his construction of white masculinity. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Hall became a staunch anti-imperialist; as Bederman writes, he was particularly horrified by the extreme violence that characterized King Leopold’s actions in the Congo, and in Adolescence, he rightly characterized Western imperialist action as catastrophic for native
His critique, however, rested on methods rather than impulse, based upon his interest in racially-based pedagogy, or those educational paradigms that advised separate pedagogical models for different races. Hall, for example, heavily favored Booker T. Washington’s theories for African-American education; however, while I will discuss his treatment of Washington’s theories as an American educational paradigm in my final section, I want to first address how his interest in racial pedagogy more broadly reinforced, as opposed to undermine, imperialist paradigms. Deeply invested in the civilizing (and Christianizing) mission, Hall used recapitulation as a rationale to simultaneously infantilize non-white populations as children in need of the right guidance towards Christianity while condemning imperialist violence, like that of King Leopold II, as illustrative of white racial degradation or the remnants of previous developmental stages of civilization, i.e. savagery.

Hall’s response to American imperialist action in the Philippine-American War was, perhaps, most illustrative of his vision of paternal colonialism. While he characterized the United States as ill-prepared for colonial rule (“from our experience with Indians our soldier has learned severity, and from contact with the negro we have learned contempt for dark skins”), he still called for American intervention to develop the best indigenous languages, help gather traditions and myths... reject at first no native custom not physically immoral or unhygienic, emphasize every native industry and teach better methods and technic, and strive to develop good Fili-pinos who will make the most and best of life in that environment. We should teach them respect for their own heroes and patriots as well as for Washington, Adams, and Jefferson, and incubate not only self-respect but pride rather than shame of their own race.”

In this formulation, American savagery stems from cross-racial interaction, which he implied pulled American soldiers into a more barbaric stage of civilization and ran contrary to what Hall deemed the United States’ original “humanitarian motive.” That being said, this “humanitarian motive” was symptomatic of what Vicente L. Rafael calls “benevolent assimilation,” a rhetoric
promoted by President McKinley that directed U.S. involvement in the Philippines.³⁹ Benevolent assimilation both assumed that Filipinos needed American intervention to become civilized and that such a process “demand[ed] the indefinite submission to a program of discipline and reformation requiring the constant supervision of a sovereign master.”⁴⁰ For such discipline to work, natives must “become visible and therefore accessible,” whether through official census documents, or as Hall advised, a more anthropological approach that required intense scientific observation and categorization. Unsurprisingly, Hall argued Americans should “adop[t] a long-ranged policy that does not forget a century with a race is no more than a year with an individual,” one that would allow Americans (read: white) to direct Filipino culture and governance for an unlimited period of time.⁴¹

Observing and cataloging native populations, moreover, held a secondary benefit for the American public. Hall argued,

The customs, institutions, and beliefs of primitive peoples are related to ours somewhat as instinct is related to reason. Our civilization is a novelty, full of artificialities and therefore more or less superficial. It rings hollow when subjected to strain and test...If primitive races become extinct, they will take out of the world with them so much power of sympathetic appreciation of youth in its yearly stages that we may well be appalled for the future of the young.⁴²

Antimodernists like Hall needed to consume the products of previous ages to both revitalize their society and their young; however, according to their logic, cultural products created by white people were in short supply because they were constructed in the past, i.e., either by medieval monks, knights, or as we’ll see in the third section, Grecian philosophers. Attempts to recreate them, like in the Arts and Crafts movement or with adaptations like Howard Pyle’s The Story of King Arthur and His Knights (1903), were just that—adaptations and recreations, not quite authentic enough to be truly therapeutic. In contrast, non-white, non-Western cultures could still create (and were still creating) cultural products best suited, according to recapitulation
principles, to innervate American youth because these so-called “primitive races” had yet to attain full subjection themselves. As such, violent imperialist action would not only destroy the populace but also their cultural artifacts.

Conversely, paternal colonialism would appreciate and maintain the original cultures so that future generations might access these materials as developmental tools. This was especially important as, for Hall, the adolescent was representative of both the nation and its ideal, but developing racial subjects, writing,

the very fact that we think we are young will make the faith on our future curative, and we shall one day not only attract the youth of the world by our unequaled liberty and opportunity, but develop a mental, moral, and emotional nurture that will be the best preparation for making the most and the best of them and for helping humanity on to a higher stage.  

Once American adolescents were given the proper cultural, pedagogical, and social development through recapitulation models, Hall argued, the cycle of precocity would be broken, and the United States could become (and stay) a colonial leader, pushing human civilization forward towards a glorious unnamed future.  

But herein lies the great contradiction of Hall’s Adolescence: white American culture, while precocious, is read as dynamic and capable of changing itself whereas other races and ethnicities remain static. In other words, in spite of their shared “adolescent” status, the Philippine natives need American involvement to tap into that same dynamism (seen previously in Hall’s advice to teach racial pride alongside myths of the American founding fathers.) Therefore, when he argued in the preface that other races could take up the burden of progress, his language took on futurist, even utopian overtones, which suggests that he saw this event occurring many years, even centuries later, if ever.

As such, it was perhaps Hall’s ability to craft a narrative of racial development that made his work so compelling to his turn-of-the-century audience. Owen notes “Hall created [the link
between adolescence and civilization] through a series of interrelated narratives that structured
history, civilization, and human development in correlating, linear lines of progression...offered
a rationale for the surveillance and control of young people...towards Hall’s particular vision of
progress.”46 By pulling almost all of human nature and culture into a relatively simple, although
deeply flawed and Eurocentric, developmental narrative, Hall tapped into and heightened
contemporary fears of modern decline, of juvenile delinquency, and, most importantly, of
national and racial decay, which he argued were deeply intertwined.47 By threatening his
audience with narrative breakage--i.e. the ramifications of such decline--Hall could subsequently
provide prescriptions for adolescents’ every ill and soothe their parents’ every fear. And in many
respects, he succeeded. A 1916 U.S. Bureau of Education bulletin cited Hall’s work, alongside
sociologists Frank Lester Ward and Franklin Giddings, as crucial to American pedagogical work;
all three relied upon variations of recapitulation to undergird their educational models, thereby
entrenching, as Thomas Fallace argues, “the ideology of White Supremacy” in progressive
education.48

**Fighting off Fauntleroy: Fixing Neurasthenia Through Gendered Reading Practice**

Nervousness is strictly deficiency or lack of nerve-force. This condition, together with all the
symptoms of diseases that are evolved from it, has developed mainly within the nineteenth cen-
tury, and is especially frequent and severe in the Northern and Eastern portions of the United
States...The chief and primary cause of this development and very rapid increase of nervousness
is modern civilization, which is distinguished from the ancient by these five characteristics:
steam-power, the periodical press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of women.
Civilization is the one constant factor without which there can be little or no nervousness, and
under which, in its modern form nervousness in its many va-rieties must arise inevitably. Among
the secondary and tertiary causes of nervousness are, climate, institu-tions--civil, political, and
religious, social and business--personal habits, indulgence of appetites and passions.
--George Miller Beard, *American nervousness, its causes and consequences; a supplement to
Nervous exhaustion (neurasthenia)*, 1888

It is almost impossible for adults to realize the irresponsibility and even moral neurasthenia
incidental to this stage of develop-ment. If we reflect what a girl would be if dressed like a boy
and leading his life and exposed to the same moral contagion, or what a boy would be if corseted and compelled to live like a girl, perhaps we can realize that whatever role heredity plays, the youth who go wrong are, in the vast majority of cases, victims of circumstances or of immaturity, and deserving of both pity and hope.
--G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence, vol. 1, 1904

If American men were supposed to become the fathers of the world, they would first need to address the neurological plague that Hall and his peers believed was destroying adolescents: neurasthenia, or “nervous exhaustion.” In 1881, George Beard argued that nervousness, the initial stage of neurasthenia, developed from “a lack of nerve force,” a physiological source of energy based in the nervous system that could affect both mental and physical health. He believed that each person had a limited amount of nerve-force available to them at any given moment, explaining that an individual’s supply was similar to that of a bank account or a battery. If an individual pushed themselves (physically or mentally) too hard, their nerve-force would continue to dwindle until they were effectively bankrupt. Therefore, Beard argued, treatment should aim to “widen the margin of nerve-force, and to teach the patient how to keep from slipping over the edge.” Both Hall and Beard, who knew each other, argued that neurasthenia was the side effect of an over-educated populace stifled by convention and propriety; although the disease itself was, Tom Lutz argues, “a mark of distinction, of class, of status, of refinement,” they argued that neurasthenia afflicted Anglo-Americans in higher numbers and could lead to race suicide. That being said, Hall’s theories about recapitulation and adolescent development created “a way to allow boys to develop into adult men with the virility to withstand the effeminizing tendencies of advanced civilization.” By connecting them to the aforementioned “primitive vitality,” educators could develop and expand the amount of “nerve-force” at the young man’s disposal before he entered adulthood.
Adolescents were particularly susceptible to neurasthenia because Hall tied puberty to intense mental turmoil. Deep passions, according to Beard, could not and did not lead to neurasthenia, but Hall suggested that the seeds of the disease certainly were planted as adolescents oscillated through various emotional and mental states. Hall wrote, “young people weep and sigh, they know not why; depressive are almost as characteristic as expansive states of consciousness.” Likewise, other adolescents could fall prey to “the inert moods and types, which are apathetic, which can not be profoundly stirred, that regard passionate mental interest as bad form, and cultivate indifference, that can not and will not admire.” Even worse, adolescents could learn apathy; he argued that apathy was often “an affectation, mental posing provoked by fashion or environment and unconsciously imitative.” For the latter, he encouraged adults to watch over the apathetic youth with a careful eye; if their apathy were to originate from “dissipation,” he wrote, “they should be drastically treated.” If moody teens were left to their own devices, Hall feared they would develop a tendency towards neurasthenia; therefore he advised a pedagogical path that would account for and accommodate for these shifts.

Simultaneously, Hall advised parents and teachers to avoid rearing children in ways that could reduce their child’s bank of nerve-force, i.e., they should avoid those elements of contemporary civilization that could lead to neurasthenia. Influenced by Romantic thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Hall feared that literature embodied one such over-civilizing force. In Émile, or On Education, Rousseau argued that the best education involved direct interaction with the natural world, whereas literature could only provide a second hand, and therefore lesser, form of engagement. Like Rousseau, Hall posited literature distinctly in opposition to nature (constructed here as simultaneously more authentic and more savage), and while he did advise some restricted reading for both younger children and adolescents, he argued that adolescents
were naturally unsuited for literary engagement, writing that “books and reading are distasteful, for the very soul and body cry out for a more active, objective life, and to know nature and man at first hand.” Hall was not the only one worried about the effects of too much reading. Barbara Sicherman writes that as literacy became an American “cultural imperative” before and after the Civil War, publishing rapidly grew to meet demand; however, many cultural, academic, and religious leaders viewed this explosion of print material with deep suspicion. In particular, she writes, “the commercialization of what had once been a sacred activity and the loosening of reading from its earlier patriarchal and institutional mooring raised the specter of reading as an uncontrolled--and uncontrollable--activity.” Leisure reading, or reading for fun, drew the greatest ire, in part because such reading practices were seen as unproductive and in part because the texts consumed often contained “dreadful” material, putting many of its most susceptible readers, particularly women and children of both genders, at risk of moral and mental degradation. With these models of reading in mind, if antimodernists like Hall desired an intensely EMOTIONAL engagement with the natural world around them, then literature provided an incredible road block, as any emotions derived from literature were deemed derivative and any learning was a shallow copy of the original.

Moreover, in the late Victorian age, much popular contemporary literature was doubly-damned by its association with sentimentality, which I argue combined the two values that Hall feared most: effeminacy and “civilized” emotions. Lear claims that towards the turn of the century, American literature prized “a sentimental vision of mutually dependent social relations” that was “tied to domestic values by banality.” By presenting a heightened vision of “reality,” or the daily lives and emotions experienced by their (middle- to upper-class) readers, sentimental literature functioned as an escape from the difficulties of modern reality. If Hall wanted teens to
experience genuine emotional engagement with the world around them, then sentimental literature could only fail them, for as June Howard writes, sentiments were not read as genuine, but instead as performative, “either affected and shallow or as excessive.” Sentimental literature’s inauthenticity was further highlighted by its reliance on, as both Lears and Howard write, the interior of the civilized home, the site of female-dominated domesticity.

And yet, in No Place of Grace, Lears paints Adolescence, to a certain extent, with the same brush of domesticity, arguing that the text constituted a “revitalization of domestic values” in which androgyne and femininity was celebrated and “the exposure of male adolescents to feminine values was only a temporary, vitalizing preparation for adulthood.” Alternatively, Kenneth Kidd characterizes Hall’s stance on adolescence as “a [feminine] stage to be suffered through and then surpassed,” citing Hall’s statement that “adolescent boys normally pass through a generalized or even feminized stage of psychic development.” While I have already discussed how Hall thought androgyne was particularly dangerous to the nation, I would argue that by looking at Hall’s prescriptions for adolescent reading, we can see that Hall did not universally support “feminine values” for both boys and girls, and he actually aligned with those writers and pedagogues Kidd cites who wanted to separate boys from feminine influence. Not only did Hall advise that boys and girls, upon hitting adolescence, should be educated separately, but also, as we shall see, he used literary prescription as another such method to counteract the conflation of gender roles in Victorian society. I will break down Hall’s pedagogical theories concerning young women in the third chapter; however, for the rest of this chapter, I will articulate how Hall utilized reading to expand young men’s nerve force and reduce their effeminacy.
Before I get into Hall’s prescriptions, however, I want to further unpack, as June Howard writes, how sentimentality combined “emotion, domestic ideology and commodification,” and explore why that particular combination of traits would give Hall reason to pause. As June Howard contends in *Publishing in the Family*, sentimentality “is mapped onto a sweeping array of binaries, correlated with women as opposed to men, the private as opposed to the public, emotion as opposed to reason.” For example, by situating their stories in the home, the mostly-female authors of sentimental literature reframed relationships through “narrow confines of middle-class family,” which in turn, marked the genre as distinctly feminine. For middle-class, white women, sentimental culture could be particularly empowering, but their reliance upon excessive (read: inauthentic) emotion not only highlighted “the socially constructed nature of emotion” but also commodified it, pushing the marketplace into the home and adding an additional layer of unreality for their readers to work through. Subsequently, many of the foremost literary critics and authors, like Henry James, defined themselves against sentimental literature in their attempts to remake literary scholarship and “prestigious writing” masculine. Howard is right, however, to remind us that the binaries that constituted sentimentality can *not* be separated, and as such, the very rules that gave women dominion in the home also structured men (and boys’) roles.
within said space. With this in mind, we can see that when Hall advised both boys and girls to grow up in nature, he not only reinforced Romantic and anti-modern visions of childhood but he also encouraged young boys to avoid an upbringing marked by effeminacy and commercialism, especially if we read commercialism as the most exploitative, and therefore problematic, form of civilization.

The dangers of domestic rule were illustrated in no clearer terms than in the reception history of Frances Hodgson Burnett’s 1886 novel Little Lord Fauntleroy. As alluded to in the introduction, Burnett’s fantasy of an American aristocracy was global best-seller, producing plays and merchandise, and inspiring countless Fauntleroy mammas to dress their young boys in velvet and curls. To be fair, as Anna Wilson argues, the novel not only celebrated the effects of domesticity on young men, but that “Fauntleroy is his mother’s creation, the product of a regime of construction through sentiment.” Raised by his mother, Mrs. Errol, and a female servant after the death of his father, Fauntleroy makes his entrance wholly within the domestic sphere, a fact not lost upon his neighbors, his peers, and his readers. Under his mother’s influence, Fauntleroy developed “a great many quaint little ways which amused and interested people greatly. He was so much of a companion for his mother that she scarcely cared for any other. They used to walk together and talk together and play together.” Such maternal influence expressed itself not only on Fauntleroy’s character, but also on Fauntleroy’s body. Dressed in “his bit of a black velvet skirt made out of the misthress’s ould gownd [sic]” and “his bright curly hair which waved over forehead and fell in charming love-locks on his shoulders,” Fauntleroy straddled the lines between masculine and feminine, the very image of androgyny.

Moreover, after he moves with his mother to his ancestral home and takes up his title, it is those same domestic influences, in addition to his great naivete and charm, that redeem both
his miserly grandfather and his future property, which had fallen into disrepair. His grandfather, still angry that his son chose an American wife, separates Fauntleroy from his mother upon their arrival, but she refuses to tell her son why, knowing that her influence would taint any possible relationship between grandfather and grandson. However altruistic this act may seem, other characters, like the Earl’s lawyer Mr. Havisham, recognize the implicit threat to traditionally masculine sources of power (i.e. the money and privilege bound up in a landed title). When the Earl complains about his daughter-in-law, Mr. Havisham warns him “...I think you will succeed better with [Fauntleroy] if you take the precaution not to speak slightingly [sic] of his mother...he has spent those seven years at his mother’s side...and she has all his affection.”

The following pages transform the relationship between the Earl and Mrs. Errol—or Dearest, as Fauntleroy calls her--into a one-sided battle for Fauntleroy’s affection. Dearest, as the name implies, easily wins thanks to her emotional power over her son: not only does Fauntleroy repeatedly call his mother his “best friend,” but his mother also subtly directs Fauntleroy’s philanthropy (often against the Earl’s wishes). When she begins to work with the local poor, she describes their difficulties to her son while “the tears ran down her cheeks.” Impressed by the depth (and, one could argue, the performance) of her emotion, Fauntleroy immediately speaks to the Earl (already enamored of his young heir) and advocates for change, a request the Earl immediately--albeit disgruntledly--approves.

Whereas Wilson reads Dearest’s influence, particularly in the context of Fauntleroy’s visual representation, as simultaneously feminine and queer, I am more interested in how her characterization functions to recenter the white American mother in politically and socially powerful positions. In the process, however, Burnett marginalizes both white fathers and non-white mothers as the former are not “manly” while that latter are “too emotive,” read as racially
suspect. For example, while Fauntleroy may have looked androgynous, Burnett repeatedly applied the adjective “manly” to the young boy.\textsuperscript{78} As Bederman notes, \textit{Little Lord Fauntleroy’s} very middle-class audience would have understood the term as reference to the best of Victorian manhood, or as “the mingled honor, high-mindedness, and strength stemming from [a] powerful self-mastery [of the will].”\textsuperscript{79} And yet, these values, in Burnett’s narrative, are primarily tied to American motherhood, not fatherhood. Not only is the Earl cruel and entirely self-serving, but his older sons, depicted as ugly and boorish, are so hated that no one mourned their respective deaths. Fauntleroy’s father, called the Captain, could be an ideal model for Fauntleroy; bright, handsome, and dedicated to his family, he pulls himself up by the bootstraps after the Earl disinherits him for marrying an American woman. Fauntleroy barely remembers him but their connection is not fully severed, since many characters remark on their striking resemblance. Most of the American men, like Dick or Mr. Hobbs, are capable, working-class businessmen, but they function more as supplicants who receive Fauntleroy’s boundless, upper-class generosity.\textsuperscript{80}

Dearest’s affective power becomes even more clear when another American woman claims to have borne the actual heir. Her rival, described variously as “an American of the lower class--an ignorant person” and “she was part Itali-un… ’n’ it made her queer,” attempts to trick the Earl into believing her son from her second marriage (to Dick’s shopkeep brother) was actually the product of the first (the Earl’s first son, Bevis).\textsuperscript{81} Although Dearest’s background is equally vague—before her marriage to the Captain, she was merely a “rich old lady’s pretty companion”—her emotional performance aligns itself with white American, middle-class values (I avoid using Anglo-American values here, as the narrative suggests England has become corrupt). While the narrative frames Dearest’s emotional performance as deriving from her compassion for those without power, the challenger’s violently emotional outbursts and moral
corruption as unfit and unworthy as a mother, for when the truth is revealed, her son is sent away to live with his father on the American frontier. By the end of the novel, not only does Dearest become the source of Fauntleroy’s manliness, but her emotional guidance becomes politically revolutionary in its reach. When reflecting upon his growing fondness for Dearest, the Earl “began to see [in her kind and gentle manner] why the little fellow who had lived in a New York side street, and known grocery-men and made friends with boot-blacks, was still so well bred and manly a little fellow that he made no one ashamed of him,” and at his eighth birthday celebration, his American friends stand together with his new English family, both symbolically healing the wounds of the Revolutionary War and implying, Beverly Lyon Clark suggests, “America is legitimate heir to Britain.”

During its initial serialization, fans expressed some ambivalence over Fauntleroy’s feminized persona. Certainly, there were plenty of young readers who celebrated his feminine appearance in fan letters to St. Nicholas; as one girl, a Fauntleroy mamma in training, wrote, “‘Little Lord Fauntleroy’ is too lovely for anything. I can hardly wait until next month. Among my lovely Christmas presents was a beautiful boy doll.” Others, however, qualified their language more carefully. For example, one girl, who went by Yum Yum, wrote, “I have just fallen in love with ‘Little Lord Fauntleroy,’ and I wish the ‘small boy’ of the present day would copy after him, but I fear that would be too ‘pretty a state of things.’” In short, by calling Fauntleroy “too pretty,” Yum Yum identified exactly where Burnett went wrong in her characterization, at least for those who experienced his “pretty state” in real life. Fauntleroy’s suit of lace and velvet, as Anna Wilson writes, made “its wearer a liminal figure, the male set about by the symbols of the domestic,” and much of the initial outrage was not in response to the book but instead to those boys forced to wear it. These boys, she argues, represented:
The bridge between private and public sphere, the route whereby sentimental power can reach out beyond the bounds of the domestic. It is maternal power both literalized—she as the power to clothe her son—and externalized. The boy wearing the velvet suit is both marked as the site of his mother’s influence and carries that influence elsewhere, onto new field...the boy becomes girlish in order to represent and enact his mother.

Once dominated by his mother in childhood, the boy subsequently ran the risk of never becoming a man. And yet, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the backlash, by the time Hall wrote *Adolescence*, the image of Lord Fauntleroy with his lovelocks and velvet suit, dwarfed by his massive chair, was one of the defining archetypes of American boyhood.

The Fauntleroy figure haunted the American subconscious for years after Burnett and Hall wrote their respective magnum opuses. In 1924, to distinguish the modern boy from his overly-mothered predecessor, the *New York Times* published an article entitled “Boy of Today is Not a Fauntleroy,” that juxtaposed images of a virile boy scout “of today” enjoying the outdoors with his dog against the immature, effete boy reading indoors alone. To illustrate the boyhood stereotypes that characterized Hall’s generation, the author utilized literary characters Huck Finn and Fauntleroy, castigating the latter for producing an “army of little lords” dressed and styled by sentimental mothers. An American Fauntleroy was a political contradiction for a democratic nation since “the young American lord in the book, was, after all, an aristocrat by blood,” one who never returned to his homeland. Subsequently, the “taunting army of Huck Finns,” along with mothers who encouraged more masculine pursuits, policed both erroneous forms of political and gender expression, thereby paving the way for the modern Boy Scout to finally arrive. Of these three models (Huck Finn, Fauntleroy, Boy Scout), Fauntleroy was the only model American boys had to actively avoid to save the superiority of the nation: “But [little boys] were in-in sashes and big collars and cuffs—and there was nothing for it but to fight their way out. They did. The eternal boy erupted from these starched confines. It’s lucky he did, else America
today would be abased by an inferiority complex such as the world has never seen.” In other words, little boys had to literally rip apart the signs of their mother’s influence, to physically prove their worth (read: masculinity) so that the United States could take its place among nations of note.88

Moreover, to highlight the dangers of overly intellectual stimulation to the American boy, the article’s accompanying illustration of Fauntleroy, although similar to Reginald Birch’s original art, made several key changes, each of which I argue better “sissify” the already effete boy. First, in Borchard’s illustration, Fauntleroy was depicted leaning back into his chair, passively enjoying his book instead of writing orders from his desk, an arguably more active and more masculine activity. The switch from writing to reading, moreover, suggested that Fauntleroy had no intention to leave the confines of his home, that he was perfectly content to read for the rest of the day. Second, Fauntleroy’s dog in the Birch illustration, either a large English Mastiff or bullmastiff, would have suggested an active outdoor life, as both breeds were developed in England to fight, hunt and protect their owner’s properties.89 Subsequently, Fauntleroy’s mastiff was transformed into a less-obviously English breed and given instead to the aggressively-striding boy scout, leaving Fauntleroy bereft of all traditional signs of masculinity. Therefore, as a source of much-derided cultural baggage, it is unsurprising that, while *Little Lord Fauntleroy* remained nominally classified by a *New York Times* article under the “gleaming pageant of children’s tales” in 1933, it was a “relic” from a “happy procession of bygone ‘juveniles’” beloved by the children of “yesterday.”90

In his chapter on “Intellectual Development and Education,” Hall appeared to attack the Fauntleroy stereotype as another overcivilized, adult-driven fantasy of boyhood. Although he
did not name Fauntleroy specifically as his model, the description rang true to much of Burnett’s characterization of the young earl. He wrote,

The more we know of boyhood the more narrow and often selfish do adult ideals of it appear. Something is amiss with the lad of ten who is very good, studious, industrious, thoughtful, altruistic, quiet, polite, respectful, obedient, gentlemanly, orderly, always in good toilet, docile to reason, who turns away from stories that reek with gore, prefers adult companionship to that of his mates, refuses all low associates, speaks standard English, or is pious and deeply in love with religious services as the typical maiden teacher or the à la mode parent wishes.91

By deriding “good,” adult-approved behavior instead of general misconduct, Hall’s language suggests that good boys (and Fauntleroys) were unnatural, that he feared such a boy, as he went through the stages of recapitulation, would be doubly-damned by his early emotional repression and sentimental upbringing—the prime target of neurasthenia. Therefore, to rescue boys from drowning in swathes of lace and velvet provided by domineering mothers and maiden teachers, Hall aligned his ideals with the Huck Finn model of boyhood, advocating for a limited term of delinquency or savagery.92 In short, much like Huck Finn, bad boys should grow up in primarily homosocial groupings where they should, in his estimation, be naughty, “should have fought, whipped and been whipped, used language offensive to the prude...been in some scrapes, had something to do with bad, if more good associates, and been exposed to and already recovering from as many forms of ethical mumps and measles.”93 Hall believed such delinquent behavior would give them the nerve strength, to survive and thrive in his vision of the United States.

Concurrently, as Kenneth Kidd writes in his book Making American Boys: Boyology and the Feral Tale, the Bad Boy texts, like the aforementioned Adventures of Huck Finn, arose to provide a literary representation of Hall’s delinquent boy. Following recapitulation theory, these texts “celebrat[ed] the pre- or early pubescent boy as irrational, primitive, fiercely masculine, and attuned to nature,” while promising that “he would eventually outgrow and incorporate his
variously primitive tendencies.” For example, in one of the paradigmatic texts, Thomas Bailey Aldrich’s *The Story of a Bad Boy* (1869), begins

This is the story of a bad boy. Well, not such a very bad, but a pretty bad boy; and I ought to know, for I am, or rather I was, that boy myself...I call my story the story of a bad boy, partly to distinguish myself from those faultless young gentlemen who generally figure in narratives of this kind, and partly because I really was *not* a cherub...I did not think the missionary tracts presented to me by the Rev. Wibird Hawkins were half so nice as *Robinson Crusoe*; and I failed to send my little pocket-money to the natives of the Feejee Islands, but spent it royally in peppermint-drops and taffy candy. In short, I was a real human boy, such as you may meet anywhere in New England, and no more like the impossible boy in a story-book than a sound orange is like one that has been sucked dry.

Although the text predated Hall’s work by almost ten years (and *Adolescence* by thirty), we can see the seeds of Hall’s vision for bad boys in the introduction. Aldrich was careful to mitigate his naughtiness as not truly destructive, but instead as the result of some selfishness and some adventurous spirit (i.e. *Robinson Crusoe* and later battles with neighborhood boys). Moreover, such naughtiness becomes natural, even beneficial for the young boy, as his fond tone alerts the audience that Aldrich [the adult narrator] bore no damage from those years (Hall would even cite the text as an example of masculine development in *Adolescence*). Bad boy novels, moreover, tended to separate their male protagonists from female influence and follow recapitulation models that “designate[d] the Other as permanently primitive.” In short, they provided a model of boyhood almost diametrically opposed to the Fauntleroy angel favored by sentimental mothers.

Much like their narrative doppelgangers, Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer, Hall argued that “bad boys” should be interested in stories with gore but not “be bookish,” nor should they know more than “a few dozen well-chosen books.” Like the Boy Scout of the 1920s, the antimodern boy had better things, more *masculine* things to do than read. Bad boys, however, could not stay bad forever, nor could they avoid literature if they hoped to enter civilized society; therefore, I
argue that Hall recommended that they read books that, in the right dose, could turn bad boys towards a greater calling, one better suited to maintaining national interests in an increasingly global world. As we shall see in the final section, *ephebic* literature, as Hall called his new genre, would function as a corralling mechanism, a method of helping bad boys recover from their “ethical mumps and measles” and turn towards “the kingdom of man well-equipped for man’s highest work in the world.”

“A School of Its Own”: Reconstructing (Authentic) Young Men Through Greek and Medieval Culture

At the dawn of adolescence I am convinced that there is nothing more wholesome for the material of English study than that of the early mythic period in Western Europe. I refer to the literature of the Arthurian and the Sangrail, the stories of Parsifal, Tristram, Isolde, Galahad, Gawain, Geraint, Sieg-fried, Brunhilde, Roland, the Cid, Orlando, Lancelot, Tann-hauser, Beowulf, Lohengrin, Robin Hood, and Rolando. This material is more or less closely connected in itself, although falling into large groups. Much of it bottoms on the Nibelungen and is connected with the old Teutonic mythology running back to the gods of Asgard. We have here a vast body of ethical material, characters that are almost colossal in their proportions, incidents thrilling and dramatic to a degree that stirs the blood and thrills the nerves. 

--G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, vol. 2, 1904

The regenerative powers of chivalric romances made them appealing to moralists alarmed by overcivilized childrearing. Many of the psychologist G. Stanley Hall’s contemporaries shared his belief that medieval legends and folk tales, like “primitive” literature generally, would enlarge and elevate the adolescent imagination. Contemporary juvenile fiction seemed inadequate to those tasks.”

--T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 1981

If gory or bad boy literature helped recreate the “savage” stage of recapitulation, then what reading material would work for adolescents? As discussed earlier, antimodernists preferred products from “medieval or Oriental cultures” to gain access to what they saw as “premodern character,” and Hall and his peers were especially inspired by medieval chivalric romances like those of King Arthur and the Round Table. In particular, Hall’s language, as

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seen in the description above, evoked fears of the nerve force so badly needed by early adolescents; by combining circular (“blood”) and nervous systems (“nerves”), Hall implied that these texts could help inoculate boys against modern mental degradation through secondary stimulation. Moreover, he believed these stories contained the same emphasis on physical and fraternal development so central to the bad boy genre but replaced the gore and insubordination with moral and spiritual development. In turn, these stories could be realized (read: made more authentic) through various clubs for boys. For example, in one recommended boys’ club, the Knights of King Arthur (K.O.K.A.), each member would model himself on a famous knight or contemporary hero, and under the guidance of their supervising adult or “Merlin,” the boys would go on quests to perpetuate kindness, develop their intellect, and engage in various social activities. Ultimately, by prescribing medieval texts to young boys, Hall could literally re-create the stages of recapitulation through various reading practices.

While medieval romance certainly provided a strong backbone to Hall’s literary recommendations, I want to turn to the term “ephebic literature” in order to highlight a third cultural resource both Lears and Bedermen either dismiss or leave unaddressed: classical Greek images of adolescence. To start, Hall believed ancient Greece constituted the first step out of humanity’s childhood. Not only did he depict the period as a Golden Age for adolescents themselves in the preface but later, he called ancient Greek civilization the “eternal adolescence of the world,” rendering it paradigmatic for his theoretical model. While neither scholar misinterprets Hall’s developmental theory, their erasure of classical Greek influence provides an incomplete picture of Hall’s inspiration for adolescent recapitulation. If Bederman argues that Hall equated adolescence with savagery and Lears argues that Hall read adolescence primarily through medieval culture, I would argue that he, to some extent, fused all three (“savage,”
medieval, and classical Greek) to construct his image of the ideal youth. Simultaneously, to suggest that these three cultural sources of adolescence were, for Hall, symbolically interchangeable would be equally reductive. Therefore, my goal here is not simply to establish ancient Greece as another cultural resource, but instead to articulate how its inclusion augmented Hall’s nationalist reading objectives while simultaneously limiting their application (and possible appeal) to a small portion of the American population.

While references to Greek culture are strewn throughout Adolescence, the term “ephebic literature” appears only once at the conclusion of “Adolescence in Literature and Biography;” however, I would argue that the inclusion of the term occurred at a particularly germane moment. Hall’s eighth chapter offered the reader a Eurocentric cultural model of recapitulation’s adolescent stage, beginning, of course, with Hellenic sources like Plato and Aristotle, then moving on to early Christian and medieval saints and chivalric culture, and finally finishing with more modern examples from literature and biography, including Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the previously mentioned Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Booker T. Washington, and Helen Keller.  

While Hall’s goals were descriptive in nature for most of the chapter, towards the end his language turned prescriptive, perhaps in an attempt to tie his diverse collection of texts together. Hall wrote,

It is, I believe, high time that ephebic literature should be recognized as a class by itself, and have a place of its own in the history of letters and criticism. Much of it should be individually prescribed for the reading of the young, for whom it has a singular zest and is a true stimulus and corrective. This stage of life now has what might also be called a school of its own. Here the young appeal to and listen to each other as they do not to adults, and in a way the latter have failed to appreciate.

His description, albeit limited in scope, bore a marked resemblance to modern rationales for contemporary young adult literature. Ephebic literature, like its more modern incarnation, aimed to instruct adolescents by example, providing a nominal form of peer-to-peer tutelage written and
selected primarily by adults. In other words, *ephebic* texts should instruct teens on model subjectivities *without appearing to instruct.*

While this passage established a precedent for a new classification of texts for the young distinct from children’s literature, since the term *ephebic literature* was used to encompass literature spanning from ancient Greek to Hall’s contemporaries, I argue that it carried additional symbolic weight: citizenship. In ancient Greece, particularly in Athens during the fourth and third centuries B.C.E., the term “ephebe” identified potential citizens, in particular, young men above eighteen who could both verify their age and their parentage. Subsequently, these ephebes would go through two years of military training under the guidance of respected citizenry, capped off by an oath dedicating oneself to the nation-state (commonly referred to in contemporary scholarship as the *ephebic oath*). While both training and oath were required to attain citizenship, once completed (usually around the twentieth year), ephebes transitioned to *neoi*, a term implying more informal organizations bound less to state than to brotherly bonds. With this in mind, Hall’s language in the passage above (in particular, his reference to adolescence as “school of its own”) takes on a more nationalist tone, one suggesting that a gentle application of such texts construct better citizens for the United States.

Pedagogues at the turn of the century were already mining ancient Athenian political structures for democratic pedagogical models that could guide adolescents into proper nationalist subjects. As Charles W. Hedrick notes, the *ephebic* oath grew in popularity as a model of citizenship in the early twentieth century and “the link between militarism and education that we find in the ephebia and in the oath of the ephebes as administered in schools and college was an issue with wide resonance in America at this time.” *Ephebic* literature could provide the same emotional and social training as their Athenian counterparts, one that would help them not only
develop a love of country but also a desire to defend it. Unsurprisingly, when Hall returned to reading practices in “Social Instincts and Institutions,” he expanded his previous point by suggesting that literature for adolescents should “secure the largest measure of social service, advance altruism and reduce selfishness, and thus advance the higher cosmic order,” and that the primary textual message teens should receive is “the good is victorious.” What little reading Hall prescribed is further circumscribed within social interactions, preferably in the context of military-style clubs like K.O.K.A or other activities that resemble the *ephebic* orders from Athens. Active, independent interpretation of literature was verboten, for bad reading could encourage bad behavior, and bad behavior could lead to bad Americans.

More importantly, however, *ephebic* literature implied a gendered and to a lesser extent, racialized reading practice, Helen Keller and Booker T. Washington’s inclusion in the biographical section notwithstanding. Hall made his preoccupation with adolescent boys’ well-being most explicit when he introduced the chapter, a preoccupation that took on homosocial and even homoerotic overtones. Arguing that Platonic dialogues were an ideal pedagogical model, he suggested “some of the best of them owe much of their charm to the noble love of adolescent boys.” In the following ten pages celebrating Hellenic culture, non-aristocratic men or women have little to no place in the texts discussed—they are the subject of Homer’s poetry or Socrates’ discourse, but almost never actors or interlocutors—whereas noble youth are prized because “they bear that stamp of breeding” that allows them to be “free from concern as to their own reputation” and “have no thought of concealing the ‘wonder’” that characterizes a “philosophical mind.” Read through a contemporary feminist lens, these wealthy adolescents simply have too much privilege to realize that one *could* be punished for an intellectual inquiry. Regardless, considering only young men with the right lineage could become ephebes, Hall’s reliance on the
term replicates white male subjecthood as normative reading material, a trend that continues, for the most part, throughout the rest of the chapter. The section on the medieval saints and chivalric culture is comparatively more diverse. For saints he includes thirty-three men and nineteen women, the majority of whom came from nations around the Mediterranean Sea, and for sources of chivalric culture, including Shakespeare, he described fifteen men and seventeen women (although this does not include the Knights of the Round Table, who he does not address by name). This relative equity, however, likely stems from two sources: first, Hall’s focus on early Christian figures stems from his belief that this time period was an extension of humanity’s adolescence. Second, as I will explore more in the third chapter, Hall believed that women were inherently “more generic” than men, and thus more likely to remain adolescent in mind, if not body.

In his examination of more contemporary biographies and literary works, the numbers shift dramatically. The latter half of the chapter is split into four parts: a general introduction, “men of science,” “literary women” and “literary men.” Of those listed, Hall included one hundred and six biographies and twenty literary examples of notable Western men and eighteen biographies and twelve literary examples of Western women. Only two African-American men, the aforementioned Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass, appear in autobiographical form, and Hall includes one Bengali novel, Peary Chand Mitra’s Alaler Gharer Dulal, or The Spoilt Child, described by one contemporary child study bibliography as “an interesting picture of a Hindu child made bad by faulty education, but finally reformed.” Only white women authors are included in this chapter, a fact that I argue not only illustrates the double disenfranchisement of race and gender offered by recapitulation models of evolution, but also highlights how the few white women and men of color Hall did include made themselves (or
were made) visible in ways Hall could recognize. Since I will address white women and autobiography in the third chapter, the rest of my analysis here will focus on the three examples about men of color.

Before I do so, however, I want to address the salient generic reverberations that exist between the biographical and literary material Hall cite-d in the chapter, reverberations that I think might be illuminating when applied to the label “ephebic literature.” Like many others in the child study movement, Hall privileged biographical over literary subjects in “Adolescence in Literature and Biography,” in part because his primary goal for the chapter was to create a chorus of “representative types” of adolescence, types that he could then rely upon when making conclusions in later chapters. fictional characters, therefore, were too distant from reality, as “many of the literary characterizations of adolescence are so marked by extravagance, and sometimes even by the struggle for literary effects, that they are not always the best documents, although often based on personal experience.” What few contemporary models he did include typically came from authors invested in variations of realism, e.g., Maggie Tulliver and Gwendolen from George Eliot’s “types of adolescent character,” and almost every teenaged character in Dickens. In contrast, the genre of biography, with its irresistible combination of real experience and psychological revelations, foregrounded the authenticity Hall thought appropriate for developing subjectivities. When combined with the emotional depth he thought indicative of adolescence, biography embodied the antimodern telos of passionate engagement, thereby transcending the limitations of reading to become an ephebic training ground.

And yet, both genres, i.e., biographical material as used by social scientists, and fictional material as written by realists, were invested in the production of knowledge or types (I’m using the term genre loosely here, but bear with me for a moment). If social scientists in the late
nineteenth century, as Susan Mizurchi argues, replaced religious universals with “a new order of rational universals: universals that were capable of confronting cultural variation and value relativity in a manner designed to recover what was uniform about them,” then types, in the Max Weber tradition, could function as a form of experimental control. Subsequently, literature and biography, when read as individual instances influenced by subjective experiences, could be compared against as “deviations from what might be expected if those performing it had behaved in a fully rational way.” Adolescence, as a scholarly work, certainly fit within the Weberian mold, as Hall frequently noted (or complained) that individual adolescents could and did deviate from his theories; however, he reassured his scholarly audience that,

Every generalization of heterogeneous persons suppresses facts concerning individuals, and to seek a cause for every variation from an average is folly. A type, on the other hand, is a norm to which every individual in a really homogeneous group tends to approach or to vary from, and in a pure race the average persons should be most frequent, and around them others should be grouped closely as well as symmetrically. Any individual, although far from a miscellaneous average, may represent a type and illustrate some tendency away from the average in some new direction, or may even be a sport leading to a new type. Still again, race, climate, pov-erty or riches, which are known to cause difference for the same age, would almost violate the law of social type; and the theory of least squares has suggested many more or less complicated and interesting modes of treating statistics to determine their real significance so as not only to present, as e. g., by percentile grades, but even to evaluate, the different degrees of departures from the mean. It is not strange, therefore, that some of the most valuable measurements are those made upon a single child or upon a very few.

While Hall was specifically addressing physical growth, this passage allows for two distinct approaches to deviation from the “type,” whether taken from statistics or from more literary models: first, to disavow it (as Shuttleworth argues James Sully, another notable member of the Child Study movement did). The second would be to recognize the deviation as a new “type,” a sort of proto-intersectional model that accounts for “different degrees of departure.” This dualist model allows for endless variation and endless categorization--there are always new ways of categorizing difference, which means there are always new ways of rationalizing the
observation of one’s subject, but these rationales are often driven by the needs, interests, and more importantly, biases of the researchers.

Moreover, the “types” here constructed acceptable bodies for consumption, determining which bodies get disavowed and which bodies become new types. In realism, as Christopher Prendergast notes, “the deep ambiguity of the project of realism [is] predicated on a desire for stable knowledge while encountering the conditions of its impossibility...Whether as drive to master or encounter with the unmasterable, realism is involved in the production of knowledge regimes across the body as an economy of the knowable and the unknowable, each reinforcing each other.”118 Thus, in Hall’s chapter “Adolescence in Literature and Biography,” we can read biography as a variation on realism, especially since Hall frequently asserted that certain biographies straddle the line between the knowable and unknowable, i.e., the tension between truth or fiction.119 With this in mind, Hall’s desire to avoid “effect” meant less than his desire to find those texts that fit within his theoretical model and those subjectivities most disavowed were those subjectivities that are most marked by their bodies, i.e. white women, men of color, and women of color. This disavowal stems from an anxiety about adolescent instability, or in other words, if Adolescence the text is frequently faced with adolescence as a great “revolution,” one that could lead to wreckage before the final stage before the supposed stasis of adulthood sets in, then those bodies which are most experimental (i.e. most subjective) are likely to lead to the greatest deviation, and should, as we’ll see in chapter three, be repudiated. Therefore, ephebic literature is the process by which Hall makes adolescence, particularly white male adolescence, visible, knowable, consumable and controllable.

If we turn to those texts based upon nonwhite subjectivities, for example, we can see how these bodies are altered into recognizable or readable forms (à la benevolent assimilation) by
engaging with the respective genres of autobiography (Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington) and realism (Mitra’s *The Spoilt Child*). For autobiography, it meant stepping into the self-consciousness typically reserved for white men, whereas *The Spoilt Child* “offered a cautionary tale grounded in the precise and substantial representation of material existence,” a critique certainly amenable to Hall’s antimodernist thinking. The novel’s inclusion in child study bibliographies, moreover, placed it in that middle ground between realist fiction and biography, as the anonymous compiler not only read it as equally informative as studies on child labor and “the early training of blind children,” but also read the protagonist, Matilall, as representative of a Hindu “type.” In other words, Matilall is still an *ephebe* due to his upbringing but with a “degree of difference:” his cultural and racial background as a Hindu boy.

When Hall turns to Booker T. Washington, however, the limitations of Hall’s “types” comes to the fore. Upon first glance, one could argue that Booker T. Washington’s inclusion in the chapter is altogether unremarkable Washington first appeared in an article summary on the failure of contemporary education; however, considering he was not included in the original article, this suggests Hall wanted to highlight his archetypal potential as a racial pedagogue. As a fellow educator invested in pedagogical models separated by race, Hall was familiar with both Washington’s work and his autobiography; Hall even celebrated Washington’s methods as a colonialis
t model in the chapter on “Ethnic Pedagogy,” noting

> The future of the entire black race is to-day more hopeful than ever before, chiefly from the work of one negro, Booker Wash-ington, who is perhaps solving not only our negro problem but that of the Dark Continent, as well as providing object-lessons for colonial statecraft the world over. As autocrat of the Philippines he would probably accomplish what armies and white pedagogues and Congress can never do.”

These “object-lessons” take on another valence in the context of Du Bois’ critique in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) that Washington’s focus on financial security was “submissive” and
required a triple disavowal for African-Americans, i.e., “political power,” “insistence on civil rights,” and “higher education of Negro youth.”¹²⁴ Read this way, Washington’s pedagogical goals certainly correlated with Hall’s own imperialist aims that forced colonial subjects to wait for subjectivity to be bestowed upon them.

Moreover, Du Bois’ own absence from Adolescence is particularly notable, especially since the 1903 journal issue containing the very article that Hall interjected Washington into also contained a relatively positive evaluation of The Souls of Black Folk under “Book Notes:” “[Du Bois] is perhaps the most prominent leader of the colored men who, differing rather radically from Booker Washington, would see them given every opportunity and allowed every privilege open to the whites. To us it is the most interesting discussion of men, traits and problems, which show what being black to-day really means.”¹²⁵ While it would be impossible to tell whether Hall wrote those notes personally, as this part of the journal is left anonymous, it is equally unlikely that, as the founder and sole editor of The Pedagogical Seminary, he would have been unfamiliar with DuBois’ work. As such, he likely knew of DuBois’ and Washington’s philosophical differences (as outlined by his own journal a year before the publication of Adolescence.) In part, Hall’s likely approbation of Washington’s work over DuBois stems from his fear that black social and educational uplift would incite racial hatred in poor whites; however, his rationale pitted poor whites against poor African-Americans, thereby reinforcing white needs and subjectivities as paramount.¹²⁶ Du Bois’ project, albeit absent from this narrative, translates as a radical, too dangerous option for adolescents (i.e. too likely to lead to wreckage for both black and poor white bodies alike). Giving colonialist subjects, whether African-American or Filipino, political power or higher education is something that can wait interminably, or as Hall puts it, as “dreams of a possible new type of higher civilization.”
Archival material shows that Hall wrote to W.E.B. Du Bois in late 1904 in hopes of purchasing a collection of all his articles—his phrasing suggests that he found Du Bois’ through his “monograph on the church” [The Negro Church, 1903]—likely in preparation for another article The Pedagogical Seminary entitled “The Negro in Africa and America.”

Published in 1905, this article maintains Adolescence’s celebration of Washington’s work while incorporating Du Bois’ emphasis on higher education. While Hall suggested that the success of Washington and Du Bois meant that African-Americans could now take up the study of themselves, the article ends ominously:

[The negro] has capacities for friend-ship, loyalty, patriotism, piety, and industry in regions where white men cannot work, which in some respects, perhaps, exceed ours and which the country sorely needs. If he can only be made to accept without whining patheticism and corroding self-pity his present situation, prejudice and all, hard as it is, take his stand squarely upon the feet of his race, re-spect its unique gifts, develop all its possibilities, make himself the best possible black man and not desire to be a brunette imitation of the Caucasian, he will in coming generations fill a place of great importance and of pride both to himself and to us in the future of the republic. The chief fact in the present situation is the at last rapidly growing tendency to commit the problems of his race more and more into the hands of its own members. If this is not done gradually and wisely enough, and if the present promise of leaders within the race is fulfilled, all will come out best for both races in the end.

If Du Bois and Washington wanted African-American control over defining what it meant to be African-American, Hall’s response was “soon, but not yet,” preserving the imperialist rationale of benevolent assimilation.

These imperialist subjectivities become even more trenchant once we examine his own attempt at ephebic literature, his 1922 autobiography, Life and Confessions of a Psychologist. Should be included as a form of ephebic literature because, on multiple occasions, Hall described himself as the next step of humanity, even including a rough outline of his own adolescence as evidence for his theories in the same chapter he defined ephebic literature. His description contains all the hallmarks of adolescent turmoil—passionate obsession with music, (chivalric)
romance, grandiose plans topped by a hilltop proclamation of his future success in “a frenzy of resolve, prayer, idealization of life.”129 In short, Hall believed that—as an adolescent—he epitomized the spiritual struggles central to the adolescent stage, although clearly, at the time, he was uncomfortable proclaiming himself as such, perhaps due to the undercurrent of inadequacy in his description. By the time he published his autobiography almost two decades later, Hall had no such qualms. Near the end of his life, Hall became increasingly aware of his slipping hold on the field, especially after the horrors of WWI. His troubled tenure as the founding president of Clark University had tarnished his reputation, and, thanks to the popularity of Freud’s theories and the growing dismissal of neo-Lamarckism, his position as a preeminent scholar of American psychology and pedagogical practices--its foremost historian, philosopher, and citizen--was threatened. As such, he wrote Life and Confessions to redeem his good name, although, as a psychologist interested the inner workings of his own mind, he noted he wasn’t afraid to expose the darker moments in his life, whether his adolescent struggles with excessive masturbation, his failures at Clark University, or the death of his wife and child. In fact, he argued that he wrote Life and Confessions to be “stripped to the buff of all disguises” in the hopes of “influential immortality,”130

One could argue that, according to his autobiography, Hall failed miserably in keeping with traditional Greek ephebes. Hall had the right parentage for an American ephebe (his WASP heritage included several ancestors that came over on the Mayflower), but he had no military experience and was particularly ashamed that his father had purchased a surrogate for him during the Civil War.131 However, where he failed as a soldier, he succeeded as a scholar, devoting his life to public scholarship as a civic duty.132 As such, by the end of his autobiography, Hall developed a clear stance on his own life: he was an American prophet. He wrote,
In the views I have attained of man, his place in nature, his origin and destiny, I believe I have become a riper product of the present stage of civilization than most of my contemporaries...I love but perhaps still more pity mankind, grooping and stumbling, often slipping backward along the upward Path, which I believe I see just as clearly as Jesus or Buddha did, the two greatest souls that ever walked this earth and whom I supremely revere. If my intellectual interests have been in the past and present, my heart lives in the future and in this sense I am younger than youth itself, the nature of which I would chiefly understand and appeal to. Thus I find even a kind of second childhood in age more charming than the first ever began to be. Hence I believe I have achieved another new birth superimposed on that of adolescence.

In placing himself alongside Jesus and Buddha, Hall re-wrote his life as formative, which not only privileged his own judgement as a public scholar of psychology. In short, if ephebic literature were a corrective, then Hall’s autobiography becomes redemptive both for himself and his adolescent readers, who may have found solace in his mistakes and subsequent success as both psychological scholar and literary man. More importantly, his life, like Jesus or Buddha, might become inspirational, leading the subsequent generations to follow and spread his teachings.

That being said, *Life and Confessions of a Psychologist*, and by extension, ephebic literature, was not for everyone. While one could argue that, in revering religious figures from different racial backgrounds, Hall demonstrated a more equitable racial model; however, only thirty pages previously, Hall reiterated the eugenic ethos of *Adolescence*, writing “never was there such a need an opportunity for developing the higher powers of man as now and in this land...to realize the hegemony to which the Anglo-Saxon race, and particularly our own beloved land, is called to assume.” Hall reframes the teachings of Buddha and Jesus as an older stage of civilization whereas his psychological discourse (the product of Anglo-Saxon breeding and a university education) would surpass to ensure the success of both the United States and the white race.
Even as his professional reputation began to fade, however, Hall still was a towering force in the field, and, as Arnett and Cravens note, *Adolescence* was influential enough to be “widely regarded ever since as initiating the scientific study of adolescent psychology.”¹³⁶ In founding that path, Hall set the terms, which, as we’ve seen here, assumed imperialist models of thought built upon white supremacy. Moreover, while *ephebic* literature as a genre never caught on in popular or academic parlance, Hall’s work was important enough that, when Anne Carroll Moore discussed his work in her 1926 article “Entering the Teens,” she only looked to *Adolescence* as her model. She wrote,

> The great explorer of adolescence, G. Stanley Hall, recorded such documentary evidence as was obtainable in his lifetime, but its subject he regarded as inexhaustible as life itself. Therein I think lies the strength of such a work as *Adolescence*. The subject was not closed. Dr. Hall knew too much about youth to recognize its full power of resistance to classification, analysis, and repression—its escape from a fixed environment in any age.¹³⁷

As we shall see in the next two chapters, Anne Carroll Moore’s own work overlapped significantly with Hall’s—not only was he an early mentor, but Moore was equally invested in an antimodernist viewpoint that privileged (and normalized) white voices. In other words, with Moore’s words in mind, perhaps we can see that, although *Adolescence* was not the first study of adolescence proper, it set the model of pedagogical and psychological practice, one that, for better or worse, would inspire literary scholars and librarians for years to come.

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For an overview of Hall’s current reception works and ideas in the field of psychology, please see Stewart H. Hulse and Bert F. Green, Jr., eds., One Hundred Years of Psychological Research in America: G. Stanley Hall and the Johns Hopkins Tradition (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) or the History of Psychology’s special issue on G. Stanley Hall and Adolescence, particularly Jeffrey Jensen Arnett’s article “G. Stanley Hall: Brilliance and Nonsense,” History of Psychology 9, no. 3 (August 2006): 186–97, doi:10.1037/1093-4510.9.3.186.
The Supreme Standard of Life and Conduct

For example, Michael Cart describes Hall as the inventor of “a whole category of human being;” however, there’s no mention of Hall’s own opinions about literature. Michael Cart, *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism.* Kindle. (Chicago: American Library Association Editions, 2010), loc. 125. That being said, I do not want to suggest that no scholar has ever examined Hall’s thoughts on literature; however, these tend to be brief and often in passing. For one such example, please see Gabrielle Owen. “Queer Theory and the Logic of Adolescence.” Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 2011, 15. http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations/docview/908422930/abstract/7B704D1071564B43PQ?accountid=14667.


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21 Lasko, *Act Your Age!*, 64.

22 Ibid., vol. 1, xix, vi.

23 Ibid., xiv.

24 Winlow, “Lamarch[ian]ism,” 99. Although many social and evolutionary theories relied upon the Lamarckian model throughout the eighteenth century, it would gain major traction in the 1890s, when the neo-Lamarckian movement, of which Hall counted himself a member, spread through the United States and Europe.

25 Ibid., 99.


29 Ibid., 147.


31 Bederman, *Masculinity and Civilization,* 93

32 Hall, * Adolescence,* vol. 1, viii. At no point, however, did Hall attempt a full, systematic, and multidisciplinary description of adulthood along the lines of *Adolescence or Senescence,* an absence made more conspicuous by his almost obsessive cataloguing of the other stages. *Senescence: the last half of life* was published in 1922 as a long awaited compliment to * Adolescence.* Having completed his psychological examination of human development, he breaks down the stages of development into five distinct parts, although he believed the last two overlapped immensely (and are, combined, the subject of this book) (Hall, *Senescence,* vii). He writes, “These more marked nodes in the unity of man’s individual experience are: (1) childhood, (2) adolescence from puberty to full nubility, (3) middle life or the prime, when we are at the apex of our aggregate of powers, ranging from twenty-five or thirty to forty or forty-five, and compromising thus the fifteen or twenty years commonly called our best, (4) senescence, which begins in the early forties, or before in women, (5) senectitude, the post-climacteric or old age proper” (Ibid., vii). Although he states that he has studied adulthood extensively, most of his work on the stage was heavily influenced by World War I, including his book *Morale: The Supreme Standard of Life and Conduct* and was not nearly as systematic in its approach as *Adolescence or Senescence.* Consequently, it is unsurprising that his definition for “middle-life” is the latter to be the most descriptive. For more, please see G. Stanley Hall, *Morale: The Supreme Standard of Life and Conduct.* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1920),


34 I will address how women were framed as more “generic” and thus less able to achieve full maturation in my third chapter.


41 Ibid., 726.

42 Ibid., vii.

43 Ibid., viii.


50 Ibid., 7. Beard would use the term “nervous force” in 1869, but he only alludes to a potential reduction in “quantity and quality” in the case of neurasthenia. In other words, “nervous force” had yet to become the backbone of Beard’s theory on nervous diseases. In coining the term, Beard combined the Greek terms for “a nerve” and “strength,” so that neurasthenia literally meaning a “want of strength in the nerve.” Beard, “Neurasthenia, or Nervous Exhaustion,” 217, 218.


55 Ibid., 86.


57 Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *Rousseau’s Émile: Or, Treatise on Education*. Translated by William H. Payne. International Education Series. New York: D. Appleton, 1892. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015005734820. Rousseau argued that the ideal state of man is the “natural man,” who he argued is “complete in himself...the absolute whole, who is related to himself or his fellowman” (5). In contrast, the “civilized man,” in constant relation with his brethren, was only partially constructed. Rousseau does acknowledge one text as “the happiest treatise on natural education” and thus, would be the first and only book his subject would read. This text, which would set the child’s standard for taste and function as a “test for the state of judgement,” was Daniel Dafoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. Rousseau championed the novel because it asked the reader to “put [themselves] in the place of an isolated man, and to judge of everything as this man must judge of it.” (162-63).

58 Hall, *Adolescence*, vol. 1, xi.

reading in the antebellum period, “the evangelical, the civic, the self-improving, and the cultural/cosmopolitan;” however, in Gilded Age, pleasure reading became increasingly popular (and increasingly classified as dangerous).  

60 Ibid., 289.


62 Lears, No Place of Grace, 17.


64 Lears, No Place of Grace, 249.


66 Ibid., 625.

67 Howard, Publishing the Family, 218.

68 Ibid., 240.

69 Ibid., 239. Ann Douglas distinguished sentimental literature from the Romantics due to the former’s “commercialization of the inner life,” and like Hall, she connects this commercialization primarily to the “feminization” of periodical literature, or the growing popularity (and subsequent influence of the women’s magazine. The Feminization of American Culture, 308.

70 Ibid., 242-3.


74 Ibid., 9-10.

75 Ibid., 71.

76 Ibid., 94.

77 Ibid., 158.

78 Ibid., 29, 78.

79 Bederman, Masculinity and Civilization, 12.

80 For example, Mr. Hobbs, a shopkeeper, is described as not particularly intelligent while Dick is a caricature of a boot-black accent and all. For both, seven-year-old Fauntleroy is a benefactor, and they model themselves after him.

81 Burnett, Little Lord Fauntleroy, 183, 197.


85 Wilson, “Little Lord Fauntleroy,” 251, 252-3. “The Fauntleroy Plague,” written by John Nicholas Beffel in 1927, described a bit of an authorial showdown, recounted a story from the mid-1890s in which a belligerent Stephen Crane, author of The Red Badge of Courage, gave money to boys so that they could shear off their unwanted love locks. Moreover, Crane took umbrage at any comparison between his works and Burnett’s, writing, “If the Whilomville stories seem like Little Lord Fauntleroy to you, you are demented and I know you are joking, besides. See here, my friend, no kid except a sick little girl would like Little Lord Fauntleroy, unless to look at Birch’s pictures for it. The pictures are all right.” John Nicholas Beffel, “The Fauntleroy Plague,” The Bookman; a Review of Books and Life 65, no. 2 (April 1927), 133, 134.


87 The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) would not be founded until 1910, six years after the publication of Hall’s Adolescence, but as Jay Mechling writes in his history/ethnography of the BSA, the organization began “largely in response to the 1890s crisis of masculinity,” one that functioned during its early years as “a nineteenth-century solution to the cultural trauma experienced as a result of the twentieth century’s assault on traditional understandings of what it meant to be a boy and a man.” Jay Mechling, On My Honor: Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010): xviii. As we’ll see shortly, Hall supported similar organizations developed in the late 1890s, although he distinctly preferred ones modelled upon medieval myths and fables.

88 Unfortunately, Fauntleroy’s ghost could not be so easily exorcised, as the subject would be addressed in a second article for the New York Times in 1929. Written by Eunice Fuller Barnard and entitled “A Composite Portrait of the Boy of Today,” the article takes up the same argument as its previous iteration, i.e. that Fauntleroy “type” has been replaced by the harder and more developed Boy Scout. Unlike the previous article, however, Barnard ties the Boy Scout’s development to that of the modern mother. While Fauntleroy’s mother is characterized as a delicate flower who “had headaches and spent her time mainly indoors, making sofa cushions and knicknacks for the living room” and surrounded her son in “kindness, embroidery and gentle manners,” the modern mother is depicted as more modern and better educated, and Barnard implies that she has cast off the chains of domesticity and sentimentality; as a result, her “rule is a Spartan one,” which Barnard argues creates a more practical and masculine boy. New York Times. (New York, NY). July 21, 1929. http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/104958541/abstract/DBCBAAF39FBC47E8PQ/4?accountid=14667.

89 As an 1873 article entitled “English Mastiff” in The Aldine notes, “The mastiff is essentially an English dog, having been bred to the highest degree of perfection in that country.” It goes on to note that, although no longer as popular with the English, the breed was traditionally associated with the aristocracy, making the breed particularly appropriate for the newly-made heir. Moreover, the iconic breed would have signaled to the audience Fauntleroy’s adoption of his ancestral lands. “English Mastiffs,” The Aldine 6, no. 11 (November 1, 1873): 223. For more on the history of the mastiff in both England and the New World, please see Mark A. Mastromarino’s article “Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks: The English Mastiff and the Anglo-American Experience,” Historian, 49.1 (Nov. 1986): 10-25.


91 Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 453. While Hall may have disapproved of Fauntleroy-like figures, he included Burnett’s autobiography of her childhood, The One I Knew the Best of All: A Memory of the Mind of a Child, in his chapter “Adolescence in Literature and Biography,” the latter of which will be discussed in the following section. Frances Hodgson Burnett, The One I Knew the Best of All: A Memory of the Mind of a Child (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1893), http://archive.org/details/oneiknewbestofal00burn.

92 As Gail Bederman notes, Hall’s “savage” model of childhood was not always well-received; in 1899, when he proposed this model at a kindergarten teacher’s convention in Chicago, local newspapers revolted, condemning his ideas as uncivilized and backwards. Masculinity and Civilization, 78.

93 Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 454.


96 Kidd, Making American Boys, 53.

97 Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 452. Such reading could be consumed by young girls, as he wrote, “I incline to think that many children would be better and not worse for reading, provided it can be done in tender years, stories like those of Captain Kidd, Jack Sheppard, Dick Tur-pin, and other gory tales, and perhaps later tales like Eugene Aram, the ophidian medicated novel, Elsie Venner, etc., on the principle of the Aristotelian catharsis to arouse betimes the higher faculties which develop later, and whose function it is to deplete the bad centers and suppress or inhibit their activity.” As we’ll see in the third chapter, however, young women couldn’t continue with such novel reading for long. Hall, Adolescence, vol. 1, 408.

For more on bad boys, please see Bederman and Kenneth Kidd’s Making American Boys.

98 Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 461.

99 Lears, No Place of Grace, xv, 5, Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 432-442. Notably, Hall’s prescriptions here seem addressed primarily at boys, who he hopes will learn proper chivalry towards women. Hall would briefly mention


101 Lears alludes to Hall’s Greek obsession when he discusses Hall’s use of recapitulation, writing, “adolescents, in particular, should imaginatively relive the deeds of Homeric and medieval heroes;” however, in order to make Hall better fit his antimodern model, Lears minimizes the influence of Greek paradigms in Hall’s theorization of adolescence. *No Place of Grace*, 147.

102 Hall, *Adolescence*, vol. 1, 203.

103 Ibid, 513.

104 Ibid, 589.

105 John Wilson Taylor, “The Athenian Ephebic Oath,” *The Classical Journal.* 13.7 (Apr. 1918): 495-501, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3287904. This source uses Aristotle’s more comprehensive record of Athenian political structure as its primary text, which was a relatively recent discovery during Hall’s time, I have not been able to establish his familiarity with Aristotle’s records, as opposed to other older, albeit more widespread, records. For more on Aristotlian record of the ephebic oath, please see P.J. Rhodes’ *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaios Politeia.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).


109 Ibid., 513. Hall’s discussion of this “noble love” frequently referred to the physical act of love-making, although Hall would later disavow any intertwining of the sexual and the pedagogical when he describes Socrates, noting “in a land and age of unnatural lust, he passionately strove to seduce youth only to wisdom and to discourse solely of high themes, striving to do and suffer nothing base, knowing that to love boys is the key to their education. Their presence and the duty of adults to inspire and set noble examples turn the discourse to high thoughts and glorious deeds.” Ibid., 518-519.


111 In collating these numbers, I included only those names that were direct references to the text and/or the “adolescent” him/herself. There were some instances of overlap between sections (for example, Burnett was noted twice, once in the introduction to the biography section and in the subsection, “literary ladies,” but I kept repetitions in to account for the overall presence/appearance. Hall also frequently switched between literary and autobiographical texts, rarely distinguishing between the two, and since he almost never characterized figures included based upon race, I am distinguishing “race” here in terms of Western (read: white American/European) and non-Western.


113 For more on how the child study movement used biographical texts as evidence for their theories, please see Shuttleworth, *The Mind of the Child*, 291. For more on how and why biography was prescribed as an alternative to novels, especially as a form of self-improvement, please see pages 49-88 in Alison Booth, *How to Make It as a Woman: Collective Biographical History from Victoria to the Present* (University of Chicago Press, 2004). https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0226065464.

115 For example, Hall notes Pierre Loti’s Story of a Child, “contains hardly a fact, but it is one of the best of inner autobiographies, and is nowhere richer than in the last chapters, which bring the author down to the age of fourteen and a half.” Hall, Adolescence, vol. 1, 588.


118 In the chapter, Hall simply wrote, “Booker T. Washington, at about thirteen or fourteen (he does not know the date of his birth), felt the new meaning of life and started off on foot to Hampton, five hundred miles away, not knowing even the direction, sleeping under a sidewalk his first night in Richmond.” He would also refer to Washington biography to rationalize taking Latin out of Hall, Adolescence, vol. 1, 543. For the original article, please see Edgar James Swift, “Standards of Efficiency in School and in Life,” The Pedagogical Seminary 10 (1903): 3–22. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015024299607.

119 This parallel prevailed in his interactions with his students. Lorine Pruette, a former student and feminist, would publish a hagiography disguised as biography, entitled G. Stanley Hall: A Biography of the Mind. Pruette’s biography, prone to romanticism, draws multiple parallels between Hall and Jesus, echoing the language in Hall’s own autobiography. In the introduction, for example, she quotes one student as saying “I only touched the hem of his garment, and yet it was a healing touch.” Lorine Pruette, G. Stanley Hall: A Biography of a Mind (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1926), 7.


CHAPTER TWO

From NYPL to the World: Anne Carroll Moore, Imperialism, and the Creation of an International Teenage Marketplace

By 1922, the movement known as child guidance had experienced impressive growth by several means: the popularization of its method, the creation of a professional culture with distinct language and rituals, and the philosophy that all children required psychological intervention. The subsequent “medicalization” of children was sharply at odds with the beliefs of traditional child professionals, like bookwomen, who viewed children more sentimentally. Through the 1920s and 1930s, battle lines in the popular press were sharply drawn between scientifically minded guiders and individuals such as librarians and teachers, many of them women, who continued their observance of the gender line vis-a-vis “natural” knowledge of children.

--Jacalyn Eddy, Bookwomen: Creating an Empire in Children's Book Publishing 1919-1939, 2006

How fares it now with the imagination? Who is concerned with its need? Is it being better nourished and cherished, more wisely exercised in our own time, or is it taken for granted, or forcibly fed with theoretical and commonplace substitutes for the dreams and visions of childhood?

Jacalyn Eddy’s Bookwomen describes an on-going debate in the interwar period about which literary genres were best suited for children’s psychological development, debates she charmingly dubs the “Fairy Tale Wars.”¹ On one side stood members of the child guidance movement, an outgrowth of G. Stanley Hall’s child study movement, who, like Hall, preferred “reality based books...because they grounded children in the exploration of their immediate, tangible surroundings, thus orienting them to ‘normal’ roles in the social order.”² On the other side stood bookwomen, as Eddy calls them, a group of East Coast women interested in children’s literature—including librarians, booksellers, and publishers—who not only helped revive children’s literature during these turbulent years but also grew powerful enough to set the
groundwork for an explosion in children’s literature publishing after World War II. Influenced by late-Victorian literary trends, the bookwomen believed that children relied on fairy tales and other fantastic genres to develop their imaginative powers. Although the Fairy Tale Wars were ostensibly about reading material, considering the child guidance movement associated bookwomen’s (and even parents’) instincts with an ‘antimodern’ perspective that was ill-suited for modern children, the stakes were much higher: who gets to speak for, and to, children?

Leading this charge was Anne Carroll Moore (1871-1961), the first superintendent of the New York Public Library’s Office of Work with Children, a position she would hold from 1906 until her retirement in 1941. During a library career that spanned six decades, Moore became the premier American children’s literary critic after WWI, writing a series of popular columns for The Bookman and later The New York Herald Tribune. These columns, compiled respectively into her book series Roads to Childhood and The Three Owls, were a combination of book recommendations, memoirs, and proclamations on the state of the children’s book industry; in both their pages and in her work at the NYPL, Eddy argues that Moore rejected the premises of the child guidance movement (and science more generally) and instead, focused on “performing the role of ‘women’” in which “‘niceness,’ ‘mannerliness,’ and ‘civility’ set the boundaries of [Moore and other bookwomen’s] language and social behavior.” This performance, she argues, culminated in the form of Nicholas, a small Dutch doll that Moore used to speak to friends, coworkers, and children who came to the NYPL. She writes:

Nicholas, for Moore, symbolized all children. Like children, Nicholas had no position or voice except as Moore gave it to him; without her, the doll was mute and opinionless. Moore nevertheless chose to speak through Nicholas, just as she spoke on behalf of children. As their spokeswoman, she paradoxically gave voice to them and silenced them since hers was ultimately the opinion that mattered. By consorting with Nicholas the child-doll as a peer, furthermore, her speech could remain safely childlike. Speaking through the doll allowed Moore, however transparently, to evade responsibility for opinions and attitudes whose popularity was waning and to avoid rising to the level of...
linguistic maturity demanded by expert discourse. As competitors developed new language about, and acquired authority over, children, Moore might have felt anxious about the fate of bookwomen’s “spiritual” language among scientific and business experts who refused to base their understanding of children on “foremotherly adages” and anachronistic metaphors.⁶

In short, Moore’s professional self was that of a child, or as several critics have suggested, the “enfant terrible” of the interwar children’s publishing empire.⁷

That being said, if the Fairy Tale Wars were about adults using children to jostle for power, I argue that such posturing allowed for moments of slippage that, as Gabrielle Owen suggests, can create genuine dialogue about what it means to be a child or teenager, whether real or imagined.⁸ If we assume that those invested in researching or directing childhood routinely silenced both children and adolescents, we run the risk of repeating their actions: i.e., we risk erasing children’s and teen’s voices from the archive. As such, like Eddy, my interest in Moore’s work stems largely from her desire to control how children’s and adolescent literature developed as a field and the complex negotiations and self-positioning she underwent to ensure her success (and successful she was). Nevertheless, I argue that these negotiations opened up a space, albeit a limited one, for children and adolescents to speak back and direct Moore’s work.

My argument here builds on two main points: first, since children’s literature had little cultural capital in the early twentieth century, I argue that Moore frequently adopted the stance of the expert in both her essays and her library practice—often moving between various disciplines depending upon what the occasion called for. This is not to suggest that she did not rely on “spiritual language” and “metaphors;” on the contrary, Moore deployed them frequently, but I argue that this was simply one rhetorical move amongst many. For example, in a 1914 interview published before Moore began writing for The Bookman, Moore framed her work in the
children’s room of the NYPL as an ongoing social experiment that required intense observation and frequent adjustment. In discussing the impact libraries have on children, she stated

Two of the biggest things…are the spontaneity of their coming and going and the training in discrimination and judgment which they acquire by choosing their own books. Even their unwise choices help. The sociological aspect of it always interests me—the way the children come together and love to be together, the way one comes because others come. The community of interest is what unconsciously appeals to most of the children. It is the exceptional child who loves to get off into a corner alone, or come in when other children are not here. And out of this develops a distinct educational value, a something that would be entirely lost if the comings and goings of the children were regulated or formalized in any way. A library for children should be quite separate from the formal part of his day, school and studying and set hours. The library is the only testing ground of the reality of the interests aroused at school.

Moore’s language here is striking as she switches between sociologist and pedagogue, using her extensive experience observing children and their both “wise” and “unwise” literary choices to lend credit to her thesis: that libraries were not only a crucial component in the child’s educational life, but the pedagogical zenith, the space in which children could pursue their own interests and take agency over their own creativity and growth.

Moreover, although this interview occurred early in her career, before the perhaps-influential invention of Nicholas, I will argue in this chapter that Moore frequently used such disciplinary code-switching to allow for a surprising amount of space for child and adolescent resistance or intergenerational dialogue. In Moore’s case, her columns, particularly in The Bookman, were littered with short scenes of her interactions with her patrons, and although they were remarkably positive, lest anyone accuse her of misrepresenting her subjects, they were not always sweet-faced cherubs begging for their next book (although, to be fair, they sometimes were). Regardless, by framing herself as a librarian cum sociologist cum anthropologist, I argue that Moore used these direct and daily interactions with teens to subsequently give her the same ethos accorded to Hall and other scientists, who were two or three sources removed from their
subjects. These interactions, subsequently, allowed her to advocate for more dialogue between librarians and their young patrons. If the adults caught up in the Fairy Tale Wars erased child and adolescent voices in their attempts to gain control, I will show how Moore, contrary to her contemporary representation, actually found space to promote those voices onto the national (and international) stage. This becomes increasingly important as I trace the effects of World War I, which left a distinct stamp on her recommendations in *The Bookman* essays she started writing in 1918. As the United States set aside isolationist policies, her essays took on a political tone, one that argued that the right books and the right reading practices would prepare America's children for their new place as citizens of a powerful nation. In particular, by creating an international exchange of books (led, of course, by a revitalized publishing industry), the United States could encourage cross-cultural understanding and respect, and in turn, could help the global community avoid another war, and yet, as I will show, her recommendations often ignored those children most marginalized.

With this in mind, this chapter will examine how Moore’s interdisciplinary approach to literary prescription allowed her to construct a new path for American youth, especially the burgeoning immigrant population, one that advocated reading books as a daily practice. To do this, first, I will begin by examining how Harlem children’s librarians—under Moore’s guidance—dealt with their immigrant and non-white clientele from 1907-1910. These women, who believed that libraries could function as a social and cultural equalizer, worked hard to draw in immigrant and non-white children and their families who represented the new international community Moore hoped to train into the “right” American values; however, these interactions could produce shifting, divisive allegiances, particularly because the books they advocated conflated “American” with Anglo-Saxon values. Second, I will show how Moore used the
contemporary state of children’s literature and its supposed decline to call for a children’s literary market that was explicitly nationalist in its aims because she feared that trash literature would provide the wrong image of the United States to both its own citizens and to other nations, weakening any major gains made after World War I.\textsuperscript{11} Utilizing Laura Wexler’s concept of “domestic images,” I articulate how the narratives Moore promoted were intended to teach children how to act American (both in and outside the home) while legitimizing American imperialism overseas.\textsuperscript{12} In the process, I will examine, in detail, how Moore used her network of librarians and patrons to bolster her criticism, a rhetorical move that allowed her the appearance, if not always the reality, of intergenerational dialogue.

On a final note, I choose to primarily focus on Moore’s earliest writing, i.e., her articles for \textit{The Bookman} (1918-1924), for the following reasons: first, she wrote these articles when children’s literary production in the United States had changed drastically from the late nineteenth century, thanks in part to war rations and an explosion in so-called trash fiction. During these years, Moore felt her life’s work was under attack, and therefore, she often spent more space defending and rationalizing children’s literature as a viable field than reviewing books.\textsuperscript{13} In contrast, by the time she transitioned to \textit{The Three Owls}, her column for \textit{The New York Herald Tribune}, in 1924, Moore’s essays took on a significantly more complacent tone. A burgeoning children’s literary market had given Moore significantly more material to cover, while her reputation had grown to the point where she could demand total control over the column’s content, including art and guest writers. Moreover, while \textit{The Bookman} (1895-1933) was a literary journal aimed primarily at publishers, book-sellers, and American bibliophiles, the audience of \textit{The Three Owls} was broader in scope and education.\textsuperscript{14} As such, \textit{The Three Owls’} conversation shifted towards more traditional--and much shorter--reviews for a buying public.\textsuperscript{15}
Second, Moore only wrote two articles directly addressing adolescent reading practices in detail, “Books for Young People” and “Entering the Teens,” the first of which appeared in The Bookman, and the second in one of her compilations, Cross-roads to Childhood. There is no evidence for why she stopped framing teens as a separate market in the late twenties. It is possible that she felt their needs were being adequately addressed by other reviewers or that she felt her own contributions needed no revision, but the lack of teen presence in The Three Owls suggests they became less of a concern as the war receded in her memory. With that in mind, I want to note that there is significant slippage in this chapter between children and adolescents, slippage that pulls from the indeterminate ways in which Moore and the NYPL addressed age differences. In The Bookman, Moore distinguished between younger children, “middle-aged children” (aged eleven to thirteen), and teenagers, giving each age-grouping at least one individual essay; however, her other essays did not always maintain those divisions, in part because the boundaries, despite whatever Hall might say, were still fuzzy at best. Moreover, according to institutional records, while the NYPL began to differentiate their own booklists between adolescents and children as early as 1928, for decades, the institution only separated their shelves between adult and child, that latter of whom were directed to the children’s section, where they would stay until the children’s assistant determined whether they were ready to move onto “more mature reading” in the adult section (typically when they reached 14 years old). As such, this chapter tries to track both moments of slippage and distinction to better articulate those fuzzy edges and how they could be deployed for nationalist aims.

“The Foreign Children Have Not Failed Us:” Finding Books for an Immigrant Nation

As a matter of interest, you will be glad to see the following table which I had kept since the second week of November. The record is of registrations: 82 Americans
While [my purpose “to bring the books I thought were good to the attention of the youngsters”] has been more or less uneven and often, I am afraid, pretty terrible, it has had one purpose and that was to make the boys and girls of New York love their own city and the whole American scheme of living.

--Claude Leland, Superintendent of Libraries of the Board of Education of the City of New York (1903-1943), Letter to Anne Carroll Moore, 1943

When Moore stepped into her new role as the first Director of Work with Children in 1906, she was joining a massive (and rapidly growing) institution. In five years, the New York Public Library reported that, in addition to the central branch on Fifth Avenue, the system had forty other branches, and they could count almost two million volumes in their collection with a yearly circulation of 7.75 million. To manage the sheer amount of material, the system had nine-hundred and two people on its payroll, not including janitors or groundsmen. It catered to three boroughs, Richmond--later known as Staten Island--Manhattan, and the Bronx, and for those outside the reach of the branches, they provided a travelling library or smaller book collections that could be sent to homes, churches, schools, or even “commercial institutions such as department stores and factories.” Moreover, the library system was keen on providing
materials accessible to New York City’s population, with a range of reading material in various foreign languages and “embossed” texts for the blind. Children’s books accounted for “one third of the [library’s] total circulation.” Considering each branch had its own children’s section, this meant Moore not only oversaw a massive staff (at least one assistant per branch) and a huge collection of reading material.

Subsequently, to manage her workload, Moore used monthly meetings and branch visits to create a shared staff ethos and required monthly reports to track the needs and progress for each branch’s children’s room. Although Frances Clarke Sayers, Moore’s biographer, employee, and eventual replacement as superintendent, suggested these reports were “informal” in nature, they were highly standardized, addressing how the library handled the following: monthly circulation totals, reference work, reading room use, problems with dirty hands, fines, and damages, book repairs, bulletins and displays, story hours and clubs, popular books requested, parental involvement, and important visitors. Although each librarian differed in the amount of detail they provided, this systematic approach allowed them to identify major trends in library patronage and, for the most part, quickly address particular needs. Moreover, the reports created a sense of connection and community between Moore and her staff members, who were strewn throughout a massive city, although Sayers noted that Moore’s response to them, or lack thereof, occasionally caused professional jealousy or frustration.

And yet, Sayers’ description of said reports, “those small essays that recorded the daily life of the children’s rooms, often with moving effect,” evoke the same anthropological approach to librarianship that Moore advocated. According to the monthly reports, the children’s librarians at the Tompkins Square branch in Harlem, Laura Claire Foucher, Mary E. Ehle, and Leonore Power, took particular pleasure in describing monthly incidents, perhaps in part
because, thanks to a new library building, 1909 was an especially busy year. In January, Ehle spent pages exulting over the new space, which she noted had “almost everything for the children to help them in their work and for their comfort,” including a roaring fireplace and various exhibitions and displays to encourage repeat visits. Both local and librarian communities responded accordingly, and the library was swamped by visitors excited to take a peek at the doll display, re-register for their library card, or to speak with the staff. Despite the beautiful surroundings, however, the branch was plagued with problems. For example, the reference room was missing the majority of their texts, which, according to the librarians, severely hampered those children trying to finish their schoolwork and hurt their ethos with the community. Moreover, their supply of novels for older children was “inadequate,” leading many to request access to the adult collections. It took months for the new books to come in, and in the meanwhile, the librarians needed to complete their daily tasks, including registering new children, creating book exhibits, tracking down lost or missing books, repairing damaged books, and cleaning the library shelves, which were often marked by sticky or dirty fingers. By November, however, Laura Claire Foucher added another task: tracking the nationality of their registrants and reporting them to Moore.

Although there is no clear record of what first inspired Foucher to begin her list, its presence, particularly at this moment in Harlem’s history, and American history more broadly, is not surprising. Between 1890 and 1930, the United States’ immigrant population exploded due to fewer legal restrictions to immigration for certain populations. Over 22 million immigrants, mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe, crossed the borders during these years. While immigration was initially encouraged for the cheap labor it provided burgeoning industries, as we saw in the first chapter, figures like Theodore Roosevelt and G. Stanley Hall worried that
these new citizens would undermine the United States’ solidly WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) population.\textsuperscript{30} As Sarah Chinn writes, “between 1890 and 1920, the number of children born to immigrants grew from 11.5 million to almost 19 million, about half of them under the age of fifteen,” and the majority of them would be found in larger cities; she notes that their desire for fun, in dance halls, nickelodeons, and movie theaters, or reading dime novels, panicked both their parents and figures like G. Stanley Hall.\textsuperscript{31} In response, politicians and pedagogues at the time formulated Americanization education, a “catch-all term that included a wide variety of goals ranging from learning English and becoming a citizen to...celebrating Mother’s Day, eating cornflakes, and ‘living beyond one’s income’” as a method of assimilating these new citizens and getting them to, as Claude Leland hoped, love their new home.\textsuperscript{32}

This process was heavily influenced by Progressive Era politics (approximately 1898-1912), a time when, as Rogers M. Smith argues in his book \textit{Civic Ideals}, much of the groundwork for 20th century political thought on citizenship was developed.\textsuperscript{33} As I noted in the previous chapter, G. Stanley Hall certainly fit the model of Progressive politics, which relied on science to not only construct a new model of citizenship but a new and expanded infrastructures, i.e. new organizations and professions like the public library system, to enforce it. As Smith argues, Progressive Era politics can be split into centrist and left progressive thought, in which the former, championed by Theodore Roosevelt, focused on entrenching WASP hegemony while leftist progressives, spearheaded by John Dewey and Horace Kallen, on the whole favored “more tolerant, inclusive, and pluralistic conceptions of civic identity,” one that eschewed racism, among other discriminatory hierarchies, and argued that “Americans should see themselves as ‘trans-national’ citizens or ‘citizens of the world.’”\textsuperscript{34} Kallen argued that American citizens belonged both to the nation and to their kind, or as Smith explains, their \textquoteleft\textquoteleft ethnocultural
communities,” in hopes of combatting assimilation, although his rhetoric often “naturalized” those same characteristics in a manner that “verged on endorsing ‘segregation.’”35 Foucher’s list shows in stark relief how the librarians in the NYPL were beginning to formulate their own role in the Americanization process.

With this in mind, I argue that, in the Harlem branch reports, we can not only see the stamp of the Americanization debates but also how the library space became a site of negotiation between white, middle-class librarians and the oft-impoverished immigrants and minority children (and families) that they worked with on a daily basis. Considering New York City’s population almost quadrupled between 1890 and 1920 due primarily to increased immigration, it makes sense that the Harlem branch librarians would be at the frontlines.36 Harlem itself began as a Dutch settlement in 1658, but by the early 1900s, the borough became home to an increasingly diverse immigrant population, including “southern Italian and Eastern European Jewish immigrants, blacks from the deep South and the West Indies, and Latinos from the Spanish Caribbean,” along with large German and Irish populations.37 In short, Harlem’s inhabitants were, for the most part, “trans-national citizens,” and the reports show that the local library branch became a living diorama of Harlem’s diversity. For example, in the April 1909 report, Mary Ehle noted multiple visits from both librarian and teaching programs, including a Miss Hermies who was “interested in the Hebrews.”38 Although Miss Hermies herself left disappointed, these visitors seemed to have encouraged Ehle to make her own observations about their demographics, as she later wrote, "It is interesting to note the children who use the library. About one-fourth of our readers are Roman Catholics from the parochial school-we have some colored readers but the majority of the children are reformed Jewes [sic]." While many of their visitors likely came to inspect the new building, we can see that, in the emphasis on the ethnic
and religious diversity of their population, the Harlem staff reports not only gave a picture of the communities they served in almost ethnographic detail, but also suggest that their library had become a sort of field site, a testing ground for working with ethnic and religious populations.

In contrast to their patrons, most public librarians during this time, including those at the Harlem branches, tended to be white women from middle-class backgrounds, and these replicants of Moore and the other bookwomen saw their work in the library space as engaged with two goals: first, to help Americanize their diverse clientele and second, to provide social uplift by helping educate those in the poorer classes.39 These two goals often intersected since many of their clients experiencing poverty were immigrant and/or minority children. Since high schools were still plagued by low enrollment, the library provided, as Moore and other librarians argued, a structure-free learning environment, one that anyone, regardless of class, race, or educational background, could access and use to their own benefit.40 In particular, the Harlem branch encouraged said diversity; when Foucher reported immigrant registrations for January 1910, her language became clearly celebratory, writing,

the foreign children have not failed us this month as you will see by the list of nationalities represented:
Americans 97
Australians [sic] 13
Danish 1
Colored 3
English 7
French 1
German 30
Hungarian 12
Hollandish 1
Irish 17
Jewish 15
Italian 6
Polish 3
Spanish 1
Scotch 1
Romanian 1
Her emphasis on “us” is quite evocative, suggesting that, over the last few months, Ehle and Foucher’s observations had drawn Moore’s interest and made “foreign children” a branchwide priority (although as their extensive collection of foreign languages texts proves, the New York Public Library was already working to appeal to the growing immigrant population.)

With this in mind, while the implementation of Americanization practices after the turn of the century were as diverse as the populations themselves, librarians argued over who should work with them or what kinds of books they should read. These debates occurred in a variety of venues, ranging from The Library Journal to ALA speeches, from East Coast through the Midwest. As suggested previously, New York Public Library was one of the more progressive institutions; for example, in 1896, Mr. Booth, an NYPL librarian, reached out to Julia Richman, principal of Grammar School No. 77 and an educator who would become renowned for her work with immigrant children, to see how his library could help supplement her pupils’ education.

In her response, Richmond, who was a part of Harlem’s Jewish population and the child of Jewish-Bohemian immigrants, expressed her frustration with their book selection, noting the majority of books were unsuitable for children still learning English:

When once these little foreigners learn to love to read, the Library needs no advocate. But I know these children, and their capacity is limited, and you must supply simple easily digested literature in quantities, else they, like their parents, will grow up without a love for books, and as adults the “world”, and the “Daily News” with perhapas [sic] “Puck” as recreation, will furnish them with all they will ever know in the reading line.

While Booth seemed to imagine a shared ethos for school and library when he wrote Richmond, her response illustrated a much more limited purpose for the library system: a space for cultural
development (through literature). However, I argue Foucher’s excitement over her “foreign children” could suggest a more leftist line of progressive thought, i.e., that their participation could be read as an act of citizenship. In fact, librarians had long argued that libraries could function as a civic project in the United States. During Moore’s years at Pratt in the 1890s, Eddy argues that librarians developed a “narrative about the library that tapped directly into broader national narratives about education, achievement, social mobility and responsibility, and the democratic process itself,” one that paired public schools and public libraries as a complementary answer to Hall’s original question: how do we push our citizenry down the evolutionary highway and lead humanity to a civilized future?45

And yet, both lists are striking in that they shift categorization from primarily religious and racial identification to nationality, except in the case of Jewish and Black children, a move that brings up a host of questions. First, and perhaps most obvious, how did the librarians label the registrants? Did they ask each child to self-identify? Or did they guess based upon observation? And at what point were children labeled American? Was it when they were members of the second generation? Or perhaps third?46 Moreover, why did they distinguish between American and Jewish or Black children? For the last question, we may find an answer in the latter list, where Foucher made sure to distinguish between foreign and American children.47 According to her labels, Black and Jewish children fall under the “foreign,” or un-American, designation, one that recalls Hall’s hierarchy of subjectivity, particularly considering that both Hall’s Adolescence and popular national discourse depicted both Jewish and Black races as inferior.48 The connection between race and nationality becomes even clearer if we examine the hiring practices in the NYPL; while Julia Richmond may have achieved great success in the school system, immigrant and minority populations found little representation in
the NYPL librarians themselves. For example, it was not until early 1920s, when “white reformer” Ernestine Rose took over as head librarian, that the Harlem branch would hire its first African-American assistants, including Passing author Nella Larsen. Two years later, however, when Regina Anderson, a mixed-race woman, wrote “I’m American” on her application to the central branch of the NYPL, she was corrected “You’re not American. You’re not white.” Although she would eventually become the first African American head of a NYPL branch, Anderson’s treatment (both before and after she began her position in Harlem) illustrates that the racialized distinction Foucher made in her list between “foreign” and “American” was pervasive throughout the NYPL’s administration in the early 20th century.

Moreover, while New York itself was framed “as the apotheosis of the classless myth in America—a haven of opportunity and self-fashioning for poor immigrants or rural migrants—while paradoxically providing sanctuary for a burgeoning, wealthy elite,” the Harlem reports suggest that the librarians often dealt with large cultural and class differences, particularly since Harlem’s rapid growth lead to overcrowded tenements and a continually shifting demographic. Power, one of Moore’s proteges, complained in her September 1909 report to Moore that library fines were a huge barrier for many of their less-affluent children, noting

Questioning the older children as to why the books were over-due we found that moving to the next block or around the corner was an almost monthly occurrence with some families and the children did not receive our reminding postals. That meant the messenger and twenty cents extra. And that usually means a child barred from the library. Not many of them pay the large fines. They leave their cards and ignore all letters sent them.

If the library as an institution was supposed to function as a space for intellectual and cultural development accessible to anyone, regardless of background, then Power knew that it failed to account for all of the variables, which made her reflect that, “some feel so regretful at the withholding of their cards that one wonders whether one likes the ‘civic force idea’ of the library
which sends a child off bookless.” In other words, if librarian leadership saw and libraries as a fair playing field and reading as the great equalizer between the classes, then Power and other children’s librarians tried to model a democratic education for those patrons who had (ostensibly) the least agency. Put another way, however, we can see that by getting their first library cards, these young boys and girls were actively engaging (or at least were perceived to be) in the American civic process regardless of their nation of origin. Returning again to Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, if the nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their members or even hear of the them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion,” then the library (alongside the school) became the first step towards that communion.54

Unfortunately, these interactions could create complicated national and familial allegiances for the child, complications augmented by poverty. Power continued her diatribe against the fines by describing how they could have greater ramifications: one boy, Isadore, who was sent home with a note requesting payment, returned “with all the ear-marks of a spanking about his small person.”55 Upset at his “Spanish” mother’s reaction, the branch librarians created a payment plan to alleviate his debt while still maintaining borrowing privileges. Power noted with great satisfaction that as a result, the child’s “fondness for the library has increased as the fine diminishes and he is loyalty personified to the ‘library teachers,’” loyalty no doubt heightened by her promise to “eat a box of chocolates together [with the boy] when the fine is paid.” This literally and figuratively bittersweet interaction between a young boy and his librarians demonstrates that while these narratives around civic reading and democratic education played a real role in daily operations of the NYPL, they were also *contested* when they hurt the very people they were supposed to help.
And yet, if we return to Power’s emphasis on the mother’s Spanish ethnicity, we can see that Power framed her parental choices (i.e., beating her child) as not only wrong but distinctly un-American. Corporal punishment, as a developmental methodology, was replaced during the antebellum period in the United States by what Richard Brodhead called “disciplinary intimacy, or simply discipline through love.” Love, given physical form in chocolates and library books, clearly worked in this instance, as the boy became enamored of his librarians; however, in this light, Power takes on an almost triumphant tone in this battle between Old World and New World values. Consequently, Power’s rhetoric begins to align with that of the child guidance movement, i.e. that parents, especially immigrant parents, could not be trusted to raise their children to know their facts and figures or, even worse, to discern between what Moore would later call the “true American spirit” and “the old bluff, bluster, and braggadocio” of previous generations. In turn, Power reinforced assumptions of white superiority, the effective “mother” to G. Stanley Hall’s father of civilization.

That being said, Foucher, Power, and Ehle recognized and did their best to respond to the needs of both immigrant child and adult patrons, a move that helped create stronger bonds with their diverse community. As they found on more than one occasion, children’s literature seemed to function as a bridge between the primarily upper-class American women who ran the Reading Room and their (often immigrant or minority) patrons. As Power wrote,

The parents of our children very often visit the library and their wonder at the array of books “just for children” and their amazing at the sight of so many little tots hovering over pictures books and fairy tales makes one want to start a fairy tale class for mothers who never had a Violet Fairy Tale Book or laughed at Uncle Remus. One German woman who came, not on a friendly visit, but with war in her eye about her small son’s fine, was asked to wait in the reference room to talk about the matter. When the assistant went to her, she found the war-fire gone and Sammy and his mother were looking at our butter-flies. Next the German picture books were produced and before she went away poor Sammy was berated soundly for “making nuisances with the nice ladies.” [sic]
One could argue that Power took a patronizing tone in this entry. Considering Moore’s belief that fairy tales were essential to child development, Power’s proposed course could read as a corrective, one intended to help two generations (mother and child) rediscover their imaginative selves. Moreover, her initial literary selections, Andrew Lang’s *Violet Fairy Book* and Joel Chandler Harris’ *Uncle Remus*, could function as a form of assimilation in Anglo-American values, which, as we saw the first chapter, were cultural touchstones for nativists since the 18th century. In short, Power could use both texts to train (mostly) immigrant mothers in Anglo-American colonial frameworks, with the assumption that they would be passed down to the next generation.

And yet, Sammy’s mother’s quick acceptance of the library institution suggests a more complex scenario. Although she may have come from Harlem’s wealthier and more established German community, her initial anger over fines indicates both a general unfamiliarity with the library system and some financial instability, and Power’s attempt to inscribe her accent (“making nuisances with the nice ladies”) suggests she was a non-native English speaker. As Stephen Steinberg notes, cultural ignorance carried massive financial penalties for immigrant communities and assimilation became (or was perceived to be) the route to social mobility. The process of assimilation, however, could be deeply alienating, particularly due to experiences of marginality, which, as defined by the Chicago sociologists, was

the experience of living in two worlds and not fully belonging to either. On the social level marginality often expressed itself as a creative release from traditional authority...on the personal level, marginality was often experienced as a painful split, involving feelings of insecurity, alienation, and ambivalence toward both the ethnic subculture and the dominant society. The impulse to embrace American culture seemed less from a strain of self-hatred, as is often suggested, than out of a need on the part of immigrants and their children to feel a part of their adopted society.

For Sammy’s mother, the financial penalties here are quite real, but what’s striking about
Power’s report, however, is the almost seamless commingling of cultures in the library where German picture books sit alongside butterflies and the *Violet Fairy Book*. Each element may take on symbolic relevance: if the folktales represent the Anglo-American literary history that her son will likely adopt and the butterflies illustrate the broader educational imperatives of Moore’s library, then the German picture books are a moment in which Sammy’s mother, an immigrant with (likely) little money to spare, recognized the value of the library space *because she saw herself and her homeland reflected in its materials*. In service of helping their patrons adjust to the demands of their new nation, the “nice ladies” had created a space that rejected marginality and encouraged the development of Kallen’s “ethnocommunities.”

As such, while I do not think that Kallen’s theories can definitively answer my question about why Foucher labelled Black and Jewish children as un-American or “foreign,” the latter label, framed above in fairly non-judgmental terms, is highly suggestive that the staff may have advocated for a more balanced approach, one that recognized and encouraged the ethnocultural diversity of her patrons, including Black and Jewish children, but also hoped that through education, through *reading*, they would acclimate, as opposed to assimilate, to American life without entirely losing their cultural heritage. For instance, another report, written by Leonore Power, notes that they received “the little band of colored kindergarten tots [who] had the honor of being our chief visitors.”

She continued,

> they came, forty five of them, one morning last week and had a royal good time looking at our pictures books. When these little folk come they make themselves thoroughly at home. Hats and coats are doffed, stories are read, a kindergarten song is sung and then they have a ‘mamma cracker and a baby cracker’ for refreshment, for you see, it’s a ‘party’ and at parties one eats. The Kindergarten is in charge of Miss Frord [sic] assisted by two young colored girls who are being trained to do such work for their own people.

Power’s tone throughout this report is overwhelmingly positive. While class visits were not unusual at the library, framing the event as a party suggests she was anxious to give them a
positive experience at the library, one that would encourage them to become repeat patrons.\textsuperscript{64} And yet, in the Kindergarten instructors themselves, i.e. the two girls “who are being trained to do such work for their own people,” we can see evidence of Kallen’s progressive politics.\textsuperscript{65} In other words, while these children can visit the library, to come and go as they please, their education, where they spent the majority of their time, was dominated by social, if not legal, segregation.\textsuperscript{66}

And yet, I think it is important to note that of the three interactions that I have described here, it is unsurprising that Sammy was the only child who could find books that \textit{explicitly} addressed both national affiliations, as his was closest to the values favored by elites, i.e. “nationalism, individualism, and the Anglo-Saxon heritage.”\textsuperscript{67} For Sammy, moving between German and American cultures both in and outside the library walls may have been less daunting at the turn of the century (his nickname indicates it may have already started.). Not only did Harlem have a thriving German-American community, but the New York Public Library had also recently spearheaded a concentrated effort to collect German-American materials tracking and celebrating contact between the two nations (although the advent of the Great War would disrupt if not destroy these efforts.)\textsuperscript{68} In contrast, there is no evidence that either Isadore, the young boy of Spanish descent, or the Black kindergarteners had any institutional support. Nor would they for some time—Spanish bilingual services wouldn’t be established until the NYPL hired Pura Belpré, a Puerto Rican immigrant, in 1921, and the Countee Cullen library, formerly the 135\textsuperscript{th} Street Branch, wouldn’t develop the James Weldon Johnson collection for children until 1938, and at its inception, it would only have forty novels with “positive portrayals of blacks.”\textsuperscript{69}

\textit{“To Be Dull in a New Way”: the “Fall” of American Children’s Literature and the Rise of}
the Juvenile Series

During the war, boys rejected stories of the war and asked, just as we did for personal narrative. And from this reading of ‘the real thing’ in books, in newspapers and magazines, and in letters from their brothers or friends in the camps and at the front, they learned very rapidly some of the things which must go into the making of the American soldier of today. They began to see the difference between the old bluff, bluster, and braggadocio fostered by so many writers for boys and the true American spirit.
--Anne Carroll Moore, “Writing for Children,” 1920

Since [1918], with astonishing speed, a powerful new system for publishing and disseminating children’s books had take shape during the years immediately following the First World War. For authors, artists, publishers, booksellers, librarians, parents and children alike, the consequences of these new arrangements had already proved to be salutary...Having triumphed on distant battlefields of their choosing, with American industry on the rise and Old World empires left in tatters by the hugely destructive war, Americans felt that their own cultural coming of age was at last at hand. In no quarter was this conviction more firmly held than among the growing ranks of professionals concerned with the education and general welfare of the nation’s children.”
---Leonard S. Marcus, Minders of Make-Believe, 2008

In 1918, when the editors of The Bookman asked Moore to write a column reviewing children’s books, she was not well-known outside of library circles, but she was one of the most qualified for the job. Moore had spent the last three decades building her expertise on children’s literature and children’s librarianship in the United States. During the 1890s, Moore had built up her resume by heading the demonstration library for children at Pratt Library, while in 1900, Moore was elected president of what would eventually become the American Library Association’s Children’s Librarian’s Section. Moore shortly followed this with her position at the NYPL, and by 1917, Moore had already begun to advertise herself as a children’s expert to the wider public; in a pamphlet entitled “Children’s Books: Their Authors, Their Illustrators, Their Readers,” Moore offered a series of lectures she had developed for both general and specialized adult audiences. At the time of publication, however, she could not rely on her name alone. While the pamphlet rushed to reassure any potential client of her expertise, she also provided a list of references, including author Kate Douglas Wiggins and G. Stanley Hall, in a
moment that, in the context of her later, more critical, comments in *The Bookman*, reads like the passing of the child study baton.\textsuperscript{73}

Like Hall and many others of their generation, Moore’s early essays in *The Bookman* take on a similar note of national panic to heighten the stakes of her claims.\textsuperscript{74} In one of her earliest columns, she provided a grim diagnosis:

> We are tired of substitutes for realities in writing for children. The trail of the serpent has been growing more and more clearly defined in the flow of children’s books from publisher to bookshop, library, home, and school—a trail strewn with patronage and propaganda, moralizing self-sufficiency and sham efficiency, mock heroics and cheap optimism—above all, with the commonplace in theme, treatment, and language—the proverbial stone in place of bread, in the name of education.\textsuperscript{75}

Much of her disdain was directed at overly didactic material for the young—she saw, in recent literary trends a return to the much-derided literature of the antebellum period, literature that was meant for moral and practical education, and often times little else. Moore shared with Hall his fear that most novels did not portray the world as it was, particularly in the wake of the first World War. Unlike Hall, however, Moore proposed books *could be* a solution, if they were of high quality, because she believed that they could prepare young American boys and girls to face a new and increasingly global world. To do so, Moore argued that the United States needed to systematize children’s literary standards through literary criticism (which she, of course, provide). Such work would guide parents, teachers, and even librarians to better distinguish between trash and “excellent” children’s literature, thereby reducing any negative effects from trash literature on American children.

To be fair, Moore was likely relying on decades of staff reports that, at least in the aughts and early teens, frequently complained that both children and teens were reading the *wrong* kinds of books—books that they believed were at best, unwise, and at worst, quite harmful. In one instance in 1908, a Harlem librarian reported that “four boys were found reading
books of a very poor type, one a Frank Harding book, which they had brought with them” because “there weren’t any books in the library that they cared to read.” Although she tried to convince them to read “standard works” instead of Harding, she had little recourse to change their minds. In fact, patron preference for poor or adequate books was a recurring problem for the librarians at the Harlem branch, for in 1909, Power wrote,

> If there were no twelve, thirteen, or fourteen year old girls in our library we could say that our book supply has been adequate and all that could be desired. Most of our girls do not seem ready for Scott, Dickens, and the other standards among our collection for older children. Many of them ought to be reading better books and have tried to allure them into better reading but do not think they will stand a diet of standards.

And what books did they find so appalling? She continued,

> They ask for Mrs. Richards’ *Hildegarde* series, *Three Margarets, Peggy, Fernley House* and ‘In the Old Herricle House.’ We have no copies of some of these and too few of others to ever be found on the shelves. The *Gypsy Brenton* books, Woolsey’s *Clover* and *In the High Valley, The Story of Betty* by Wells, the *Patty* books by Webster, and nearly all of Mrs. Delands, especially *Katrina*, are on demand and never in. The older girls would like some of Amelia Barr’s books and a number of copies of *The Lamplighter* would be used.

Notably, these librarians did not try to keep young girls from reading these books, as they seemed dedicated to getting children and teens *to read at all*; considering many of the books mentioned, including Richards’ *Peggy* (1899) and Webster’s *When Patty Went to College* (1906), focus on the adventures of college and high school girls—likely resembling the same girls grabbing them off the library shelves. As such, it is not surprising that they were considerably more popular than the classics and perhaps even functioned in similar terms to young adult literature does today.

> That being said, the two instances noted here suggest that the librarians at the Harlem Branch evaluated literature based upon a hierarchy of quality literature. According to David N. Hyussen, class relations during and after the Progressive era were dominated by three “fault lines

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of interaction: prescription, cooperation, and conflict,” and prescriptivism, or “when bourgeois individuals or groups attempt to prescribe or choreograph the behavior of the poor and working class with a minimum of violence,” dominated librarian discourse, although as Ester Green Bierbaum notes, whether librarians had the right to prescribe has been a long-term source of debate.78 Poor literature (like Frank Harding) should not be read at all, whereas inadequate literature (like high school and college novels of the time) could be used by teens as a stepping stone to “standards.” And yet, the repeated emphasis on “standards” suggests an added purpose to their prescription, particularly when considering the diverse immigrant population with which they were working. Standards imply a shared canon of texts that are widely accepted as “good,” and although the process of canon-making looked remarkably different by the time Moore began writing for The Bookman, a process I will discuss in detail later in the chapter, the librarian’s language displayed distinct symptoms of various cultural hierarchies developing at the turn of the century. In Highbrow/Lowbrow, Lawrence W. Levine describes the horror with which cultural elites felt, faced with an ever-increasing diverse population:

But these worlds of [immigrants and other minorities] did not remain contained; they spilled over into the public spaces that characterized nineteenth-century America and that included theaters, music halls, opera houses, museums, parks, fairs, and the rich public cultural life that took place daily on the streets of American cities. This is precisely where the threat lay and the response of the elites was a tripartite one: to retreat into their own privates spaces whenever possible, to transform public spaces by rules, systems of taste, and canons of behavior of their own choosing; and, finally, to convert the strangers so that their modes of behavior and cultural predilections emulated those of the elites.79

Although Levine does not include libraries in his model, we can see that these librarians saw their work (and the public space of the library) as an extension of the latter two responses. Familiarity with standards that would not only help their patrons develop the “right” kind of taste expected to be upwardly mobile, but for those immigrant children who did not or could not read American or Anglophone literature, developing good taste would also help them acculturate
more easily. The “right” kind of books would make, as Claude Leland wrote, “the boys and girls of New York love their own city and the whole American scheme of living;” however, the wrong kind might, as both Richmond and Moore feared, alienate them not only from their nation but also from reading itself.\textsuperscript{80}

As the superintendent of the Office of Work with Children in the NYPL, Moore set the standards for thousands of children; however, once she started writing for \textit{The Bookman}, her reach expanded exponentially, helping her define poor, adequate, and excellent children’s literature throughout the twenties, thirties, and forties.\textsuperscript{81} What, then, exactly defined good versus trash children’s literature for Moore and her peers? As alluded to earlier, Moore despised overly didactic books, primarily because they privileged pedagogy over imagination. While Moore’s preference for “imaginative literature” often relied upon highly romantic images of childhood, we can see in her earliest essays that her rationale was both deeply personal and political, in a manner that today would likely be deemed auto-ethnographic. In part, she modeled her theories on her relationship with her father, who died along with her mother in an influenza epidemic in 1892.\textsuperscript{82} Her first essay, “Roads to Childhood,” memorializes their relationship as one of unconscious education and inspiration, in which their daily companionate walks transformed the natural world into an informal classroom. During their walks down roads both new and old, her father functioned as mentor \textit{and} friend, which Moore argues inspired her love for learning. Frustrated by the panicked parenting style that she believes dominated after the war--aided by the anti-imaginative prescriptions of the child guidance movement--Moore wrote,

\begin{quote}
We are so eager for our children to know the things we knew and all we didn’t know at their age that we fail to provide the ‘leisure to grow wise’ that must lie behind all who would ‘think with the heart as well with the mind.’ ‘Life, what is it but a dream?’ murmurs Lewis Carroll, linger with his thoughts of Alice long after he has passed with her through Wonderland and the Looking-Glass. I am quite sure that my father had no conscious thought of imparting lessons to me as we drove or walked about the country. It
was my companionship he sought, not my improvement or instruction, and his invitation always meant a good time.\textsuperscript{83}

By juxtaposing *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* with her father’s teaching methods, Moore metaphorically transformed her father into a “good” children’s book; in other words, a good book, in Moore’s eyes, should be a child’s companion, one that embeds learning in a framework of fun, of “impressions which are to go with them through life.” Moreover, her model implies that, if the child’s parent provided poor guidance, or none at all, good books could serve in their stead. In the process, Moore constructs a model of reading that directly contradicted Hall’s model, one in which reading, nature, and learning not only peacefully co-exist, but a pedagogically intertwined.

Subsequently, Moore argued that overly didactic literature not only bored children, but was actually pedagogically unsound. If, in the above passage, she made imaginative engagement, like in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* or *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, essential for the learning process, then reducing knowledge to facts and figures or transforming the story into obvious propaganda, like in Martha Finley’s *Elsie Dinsmore* series or Eleanor H. Porter’s *Pollyanna* novels, reduced a child’s ability to dream something new or persuade their peers, a problem that she argued had vast political ramifications.\textsuperscript{84} She wrote that in the current publishing market,

\begin{quote}
It is the didactic period of the 18th Century in France and England and the early 19th Century in New England all over again. What can be done about it? It is often necessary to persuade people to do things for which they see no reason--farmers that they should let new roads run through their farms--parents that dreams, fancies, humor, are the natural heritage of childhood and are at the foundation of what is beautiful poetical in literature, art, and human experience. Never in our history has there been greater need for men and women of vision and power to persuade. The qualities may, and assuredly do, take form and clarify from the facts of science, but they live only in literature and in the aspirations of the human heart.\textsuperscript{85}
\end{quote}

While Moore’s topic might have been children’s literature, we can see from her allusion to the
recent end of World War I that Moore felt that recovery (on both local and later global scales) tied to directly to humanist educational program, one where arts and sciences were given equal focus. Moreover, she framed it as a civic duty, for if reluctant farmer must give up their land for the greater good, then the parents’ desire (for didactic literature) must give way for the greater good of their children and subsequent generations (by including imaginative literature).

That being said, if investing in imagination was a cultural and national prerogative, then the worst books for children, in Moore’s eyes, were highly commercialized and omni-present dime novels and juvenile series, i.e. the “factory fiction” produced by the prolific Stratemeyer Syndicate because they prioritized a quick profit over either imagination or education. Before I address factory fiction in detail, however, it is important to note that Moore uses the term “series” to refer to three different publishing models in her columns. For Moore, ideally all books would be “original” texts, original here signifying imaginative and authentic; however, an author could publish a single book that would be continued with further stories if it proved popular or particularly well done--for example, Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*. Moore did not particularly approve of this model per se, but she deemed sequels acceptable “according to the measure of [their] vitality.” Finally, Moore detested publishers’ series, or when a publisher would curate a collection of original novels (often out of copyright) and republish them as a series. While from a publisher's’ perspective, these collections were relatively easy money, Moore argued they were often accompanied by poor illustrations and unattractive uniformity, which she feared would alienate children and teens from great literature.

Of the three models, Moore saved the majority of her ire for factory fiction, like those published by the Stratemeyer Syndicate, because they lacked imagination and belittled the
intelligence of its audience. In Moore’s early career at the New York Public Library, her response to the juvenile series was direct and brutal, for when she assumed the position as director of work with children, she immediately destroyed their collection of series fiction. By 1918 Stratemeyer’s factory fiction, although not specified by name, stayed near the forefront her early essays. In “Viewing and Reviewing Children’s Books,” she specifically attacks series fiction as a national scourge that was counterproductive both for its audience and for those publishing it, bemoaning,

We are convinced that publishers do not want to go on supplying plots, scenes, and bits of character study from their offices...Somehow or other, the impression seems to have got abroad that when one writes for children or young people, he divests himself as far as possible of any natural or acquired ability to write and adapts himself to a formula of what the publisher is looking for in a ‘successful juvenile.’ It is conceived that this formula must be subscribed to before embarking on the undertaking and there are many who shrink from the surrender.

Moore reads the formula model as, in essence, anti-imaginative, forcing authors to not only give up their own literary pretensions but to give up creativity almost entirely.

And yet, as the Stratemeyer Syndicate’s massive popularity suggested, formula fiction could be a very lucrative field to enter. Edward Stratemeyer (1862-1930), a first-generation German-American born in New Jersey, benefited from the literary heritage of juvenile authors such as Horatio Alger Jr., when he established his Stratemeyer Syndicate in 1905. Although he had previously written extensively either under his own name or as a ghostwriter through publisher Street and Smith—he would publish forty-nine dime novels between 1888 and 1893 alone—the Syndicate offered a space for the mass-production of juveniles at a rate that would eventually lead Fortune magazine to call him the “Rockefeller” of literature. As Deidre Johnson describes in Edward Stratemeyer and the Stratemeyer Syndicate, his factory fiction process was as follows:
Stratemeyer recruited writers and assigned them to work on volumes in various series for which he owned the rights. In later years, Stratemeyer (and subsequently his daughters) drafted two- to three-page outlines for each book, sketching the plot, subplot, characters, and major incidents. Writers-for hire would take these outlines and write full-length manuscripts, then return them to the Syndicate for editing. Writers received a flat sum for each book—with no royalties—and signed a contract agreeing not to use the pseudonyms for their own material or even to acknowledge their connection to them.  

Moreover, other than a distinctive “hook,” each series followed a similar formula: a quest—usually for stolen goods—that fit within a set number of pages and included the appropriate number of cliffhangers plus, of course, a teaser for the sequel. While the “fiction factory” approach, partially modeled on his experience at Street and Smith, was remarkably successful, as Kent Baxter argues, Stratemeyer’s status as a “producer” (as opposed to author) of children’s literature effectively stained his work as manufactured and “trashy,” an easy target of librarians who saw themselves as defenders of children’s reading practices. Moreover, Moore’s rhetoric suggests that if she wanted literature to “leave impressions” on a child’s mind, the sheer amount of repetition in formula fiction would make impressions impossible, as the texts would inherently blend together.

That being said, Stratemeyer repeatedly emphasized that his books were both pleasurable to read and educational, a model that gained his books countless fans. In one interview, he stated that, “the best an author can do is to give them a fair proportion of legitimate excitement, and with this a judicious dose of pleasantly prepared information. Every story ought to be of a high moral tone, but the moral ought to be felt rather than mentioned.” According to fan mail sent to the Stratemeyer Syndicate in the late twenties, these stories succeeded in their mission. Children loved the combination of facts and thrills, the former of which gave even the more outrageous adventures a veneer of realism. Letters poured in from across the United States asking if the stories were real or based on real events, while others, in a move that would have
horrified Moore, created their own clubs in order to recreate some of the more domestic plotlines. Others, particularly those who read books based upon foreign travel, spoke excitedly of how much they learned from the books. In a letter to Victor Appleton, the collective pseudonym responsible for many of Stratemeyer’s most popular series including Tom Swift and Don Sturdy, one young reader wrote, “I have just finished a series of books that you have written called Don Sturdy and I enjoyed them very much. I have learned very much about animals reptiles and indian customs [sic]. I am happy to say that since I started to read these books I have pulled my geography mark in a school up for 70% to 95%. I have loaned my books to my friends and they also like them.” While the Don Sturdy series interactions with the (typically native) populations were entrenched in imperialist ideologies of white superiority, this young boy found Don Sturdy pedagogically productive because he enjoyed them.

While Moore fought against trash literature, she made it a priority to ask children’s opinions of the books they read. She often visited bookstores with children to purchase books for them, and favorite versus forced reading material was a popular topic in the letters she received from children and teens. In one such example, a pre-pubescent Paul Bowles happily described finding a treasure-trove of seemingly lost books, writing “I supposed I didn’t tell you how a whole box, or crate of my books had disappeared, and how I had given them up for lost, when we moved. But there they were, including Doctor Dolittle. I was so glad I couldn’t contain myself, but I dusted each off and put them in my bookcase.” Bowles’ conversational tone not only suggests that these literary conversations were regular and ongoing, but he also highlights a book that was a particular favorite of Moore’s: Doctor Dolittle. While one could argue that Moore had already influenced his reading selection, Bowles discussed other books he read along with sharing his own attempts at literature (including stories, plays, and poetry) in his letter,
ultimately suggesting that Moore and Bowles’ conversations functioned more like a dialogue between equally interested parties than a lecture symposium from which Moore could impart her taste to the teeming masses.

Moore not only spoke regularly with children and teens about what they loved, she also advocated that children should have a role/agency in determining the “best books,” that “no reviewer should approach the children’s books of the year without calling upon at least one child, preferably not his own, to blaze a trail.” To bolster her point, she frequently included detailed interactions and discussions with children and teens in her columns; for example, her essay “Vacation Reading” opened with an evocative interaction with a reluctant reader:

“I’m not going to read a single book all summer!” The boy of sixteen who made this announcement in the summer of 1917 was driving a spirited horse over one of those willow-fringed roads which lead back from the New Hampshire coast through a lovely inland country. “You see,” he continued, after waiting in vain for expostulation or comment, “I’ve already read three books from that old list, (a long list furnished by one of the large preparatory schools of the country) and I don’t have to read more than three.” “Don’t you by any chance want to read a book that is not on the list?” I inquired. “No, I don’t think of any. If I should come across another book as good as ‘Ivanhoe’ I’d read it. I read ‘Ivanhoe’ four times before I ever saw it on a list. When I called for another, just as good, father handed me ‘Quentin Durward’ and ‘The Talisman,’ but I couldn’t get interested in either of them. Anyway I’m sick of looking at print. Can you stand a road full of thank-you-ma’ams?” I could and I did. Books were forgotten in the enchantment of that wood-road nor did we speak of them again during a week of perfect June weather...

In this passage, Moore framed herself as a sympathetic companion, one who advocated a balance between reading and other activities—she refused to push an already exhausted reader beyond his interest.

And yet, this scene also contained a hidden threat, one that haunted her essays: what happens if this boy cannot find his next Ivanhoe? Will he stop reading entirely? Ostensibly, as a children’s librarian, her mission was to persuade children into a lifelong reading habit, which in the passage above, was already in peril thanks to reading requirements. Moreover, in 1926, the
American Library Association published a report in which children from thirty-four cities reported their favorite books; ninety-eight percent reported they read series books.\textsuperscript{102} As such, although she wrote “Vacation Reading,” albeit several years before the report, she may have recognized the signs and considered the battle against formula fiction less of a lost cause and more of a gateway drug to “better” literature. Therefore, in spite of hating the prevalence of formula fiction, Moore ultimately bowed to pressure from actual library patrons, writing in “Books for Young People,” that series books, “if well-sustained,” are appropriate for the “middle-aged” child, aged eleven to thirteen, who voraciously consumed any text encountered.\textsuperscript{103} It is possible she saw children and teens critique series fiction as well. For example, in one 1931 fan letter to Alice B. Emerson, the pen name for the authors of Betty Gordon and Ruth Fielding, two young girls expressed their frustration with the former series in remarkably harsh terms, writing, “We have just read ‘Betty Gordon at Mystery Farm.’ You could have done much better...In Mystery Farm you have a character by the name of Gus Hornbecker, who was stingy and treated his wife shabbily, just Joe Peabody in Bramble Farm. Please get some new ideas.”\textsuperscript{104} Although they apologized for their harsh criticism—their postscript proclaimed “don’t think us fresh, we both are very frank!”—these girls wrote because they were passionate “admirers” of the series and wanted the literary quality to match their expectations. Perhaps Moore heard similar frustrations and felt reassured that, with the right recommendations, middle-aged children could be lead to something better.

Of course, Moore’s laidback attitude in “Vacation Reading” might have changed had this teenager replaced Ivanhoe with Tom Swift or The Motor Boys, as when it came to teens and series fiction, Moore’s quavering acceptance of factory fiction fell away. In particular, when she argued that the ubiquity of formula fiction could lead to a “state of arrested development” for
American publishers in “Books for Young People,” she implied that these novels would have a much more devastating impact on American teens. I want to call attention to how Moore, like Hall, tied the reading process to psychological development for teens. Instead of calling on educators to provide a solution as Hall did, however, Moore targeted publishers as a major player in teenage development. Calling those “present schemes for juvenile publications” based on series fiction “an affront to the intelligence of young people,” she derided their efforts in a thinly veiled attack on the all variants on the Stratemeyer model, noting that they were “built around the series idea with all its limitations for author, publisher, and reader.”

To bolster her argument, Moore claimed that the current condition of children’s literature had both national and global ramifications, i.e., she believed children’s books could play a key role as devastated nations rebuilt themselves after World War I. Moore recognized that the sheer scale of warfare in WWI had radically restructured global politics such that the United States could no longer practice neutral or isolationist policies, which meant subsequent generations could not remain ignorant of other nations’ customs and culture if they were to both successfully navigate the international arena and avoid a second World War. To facilitate this new educational paradigm, Moore proposed a worldwide exchange of children’s books, each of which would depict the daily lives and national character of their citizens in hopes of promoting intercontinental understanding and friendship. For Moore, her commitment to this project strayed beyond the page and into actual practice. Moore loved international travel, and she visited the British Isles repeatedly to examine library and publishing practices and France as a part of her work with the American Committee for Devastated France. These trips, which she frequently featured in her columns (and for the most part, would be compiled in New Crossroads to Childhood), often took on the lens of the ethnographer, introducing American readers to their
compatriots across the pond. For example, in France she advocated for rebuilding and expanding small town libraries, and she frequently sent her favorite books to replace those destroyed in the war. To support her work on the ground, she wrote an article for *The Bookman* that spent more words on her interactions with French children than French books.\(^{108}\) Jean, the brilliant and bilingual three-year-old son of her French hairdresser, featured heavily in her review “The Children of France,” although he, unsurprisingly, never appears outside of discourse between Moore and his father. To add more credibility, Moore included French children’s letters—both typed and handwritten, in English and in French—in which the children discussed their favorite books, education, and of course, libraries. Including these scenes, however, not only proved that her recommendations of foreign children’s books were pedagogically sound, but they also advocated for increased empathy with a war-torn nation through its children’s (shared) desire to read. In effect, her reviews, although primarily focused on European nations, advocated an increasingly cosmopolitan worldview.

If the United States were to join in this exchange, however, Moore argued that, for two reasons, they would need better books than their current offerings. Trash literature, with its paper thin plots and cardboard characters, certainly would not work, and since the war devastated most European publishing outfits and wartime rations in the United States put major constraints on American publishers, there were few better options available. In her essays, she noted that she frequently struggled to find *any* books to review, much less recommend as authentic or well-written. In her 1921 essay “The Unwritten Review,” which she wrote before one of her trips to France, Moore could not write an omnibus review because not a single publisher sent her a galley proof.\(^{109}\) Faced with failure, she instead devoted her column to meditating on the role of reading in national life. According to her, free reading provided children with the “master key”
to understanding a nation’s “soul;” however, while Gary D. Schmidt situates this argument within a progressive, even radical movement in children’s literature that advocated for “global awareness and worked toward establishing a “unified conscience and unified consciousness,” I suggest that her rhetoric quickly turns militaristic. Moore continued her diatribe with the following quote from William Canton’s “The Invisible Playmate:” “...And as new nations with their cities and villages, their fields, woods, mountains, and seashores, rise up into the mountainside, lo! fresh troops, and still fresh troops, and yet again fresh troops of these school-going children of the dawn.” Perhaps, in the post-war rubble, Moore found hope in these lines, a hope that, as long as there were well-educated children, nations could and would rebuild despite such terrible devastation, as in the original poem, the quote appears as a part of an old man reminiscing on the universality of children’s education through the ages.

The triple repetition of “troops,” I argue, suggests a darker future in which those same children would become cannon fodder for the military, ready to conquer new mountains and create new homes in nations far from their own. My argument stems in part from a previous essay, “Writing for Children,” in which Moore openly linked the right kinds of books to a rhetoric of progress and, more implicitly, imperialism, stating

Boys who read in the morning papers of such wonders as the cruise of the Emden, the coming of the Deutschland and the flights across the Atlantic, want all the imaginings of a Jules Verne and something more in actuality. Authors must take time to originate new plots and to create heroes so well drawn as to require no words of praise from them—heroes who leave one sure that there are other worlds to conquer. Writers for boys of the new America must not continue to feed our provincial tendencies.

Although framed through the lens of science fiction, Moore’s argument for better adventure novels rested heavily on the events of World War I to provide its relevance to her audience—i.e., the threat of German-Austrian expansion in the form of German warships, the Emden and the Deutschland contrasted against the United States’ initially isolationist (i.e. “provincial”) policies.
In rewriting these events as the “wonders” of scientific progress, however, Moore implied the United States could be the heir to such military might--that the right kinds of books would inspire young boys to pursue the same kinds of “conquering heroism,” whether in the lab or on a submarine.

Moreover, those familiar with The Invisible Playmate would know that the poem itself draw a parallel between education and imperialism in subsequent lines:

The first school-going is the most daring of all adventures, the most romantic of all marvelous quests…’each smallest lad as he crosses the home-threshold that morning is a Columbus steering to the new world, to golden Indies that truly lie--at last--beyond the sunset. He is a little Ulysses outward-bound on a long voyage, wherethrough help him, thou dear Heaven, past the Calyp-so Isles and the Harpy-shores lest he perish miserably!113

With this in mind, we can see that Moore’s use of The Invisible Playmate as a guidepost for American literary output functions similar to what Laura Wexler calls “domestic images.” Wexler argues that many female photographers, especially professionals, used photography to construct domestic images that normalized the United States’ imperialist actions at the turn of the century.114 Domestic images, accordingly,

may be--but need not be--representations of and for a so-called separate sphere of family life. Domestic images may also be configurations of familiar and intimate arrangements intended for the eyes of outsiders, the heimlich (private) as a kind of propaganda; or they may be metonymical references to unfamiliar arrangements, the unheimlich intended for domestic consumption. What matters is the use of the image to signify the domestic realm. The domestic realm can be figured as well by a battleship as by a nursery if that battleship, as in the case of the Olympia, is known to be on a mission to redraw and then patrol the nation’s boundaries, the sine qua non of the homeland.115

In The Invisible Playmate, a traditionally domestic image, i.e. children on their way to school, take up their books and pens in the classroom, only for these tools of education to be transformed into the spears and ships of imperialist domination in the new world. Moore’s inclusion of Canton’s evocative language in an essay that framed reading as nationalist practice suggests that
children’s literature could function as both the *heimlich* and the *unheimlich*, or the propaganda to others about American culture, and by simultaneously placing its American protagonists in unfamiliar situations, instruction how to *act American* (even if that were threaded through, say, British romanticism). As such, Moore’s vision of an international market, moreover, would facilitate the exchange of these domestic images, which would help redraw national boundaries in an international imaginary.

In fact, the New York Public Library had a longer history of promoting reading material through a militaristic lens. In one 1914 pamphlet entitled “Heroism,” librarians collected books together that would promote civic and racial duty in children and teens, noting on the front page “the grandest heritage a hero can leave to his race is to have been a hero.” The pamphlet, published for an annual exhibit on heroism, utilized a remarkably antimodernist timeline, organizing the texts into the following categories: “Bible Heroes and Heroines,” “Hero Tales of Myth and Legend,” “Heroic Saints,” “Heroes and Heroines of History,” “Heroes and Heroines of American History,” “Indian Heroes,” “Heroes of the Sea,” “Heroes of Discovery,” and “Everyday Heroes.” While the trend in subject headings followed a slightly haphazard trajectory, I would argue that the overall direction suggested the United States stood as inheritor of this history, particularly because the conclusion included an anonymous quote that began, “I am a citizen of America and heir to all her greatness and renown...the health and happiness of my own body depend on each muscle and nerve and drop of blood doing its work in its place. So the health and happiness of my country depend on each citizen doing his work in his place.” In other words, the contemporary child must be encouraged to “kno[w] their place” for the nation’s sake, and while the “places” available are ultimately diverse in nature, including nurses and miners, saints and scholars, soldiers—imperialist or otherwise—dominate the narrative.
Unsurprisingly, the list is headed by another William Canton poem which exalted,

I tell of warriors, saints, and kings
in scarlet, sackcloth, glittering mail
and helmets peaked with iron wings
They beat down Wrong; they strove for Right.
In ringing fields, on grappling ships,
singing they flung into the fight;
They fell with triumph on their lips,
and in their eyes a glorious light.”

In short, the primary model available for fighting injustice was the battlefield; however, the reading list assumed that this model worked only if its citizens cooperated without complaint and following the order already established, on the battlefield or off. Since the list appeared before the start of World War I, “Heroism” may not have prophesied war, but it certainly constructed a link between nationhood and conquest (albeit re-framed as justice.)

Regardless, if we consider reading to be a civic process, one that could teach children about the “national soul,” the dearth of “good” American children’s literature provides two potential problems for Moore’s model. First, as discussed previously, bad literature could indoctrinate the young into the “wrong” image of the nation or alienate them entirely. The second problem was more insidious—other nations would receive the wrong image of the United States, one that projected a weak and misinformed country that did not care about the education of their young. Such an image could undermine the United States’ new position as a global leader, an easy target for imperially-minded states. In “A Spring Review of Children’s Books” she described the global ramifications of the current literary market, writing,

Whenever we are asked to evaluate a selection of children’s books to be sent out of the country, we realize afresh how little we have to offer in travel, history, and biography; how deadly dull many of these books are and how great is the need of the children of our own land for just such book as we are trying to find children in South America, Norway, Sweden, France or Belgium. These countries, and still more distant ones, are asking some very important questions when their educators and ambassadors take time to concern themselves with the selection of books for children. They ask for books to “enlarge the
understanding, deepen the sympathies and with a strong appeal to the imagination of children.”

Implicit in her argument is the assumption that the United States should be the source of those books and moreover, with the right material, the American publishing community could educate the world, creating a grand-scale imagined community out of Americans, immigrants, and foreigners entranced with an idealized domestic image of the United States. If we return to Kallen, we can also see how these novels would function as reminders that American citizens were also “transnational citizens,” that they had a role to play on the international stage. As such, we can see that Moore aimed to redefine the stakes of children’s literature and to realign its importance in national culture after World War I in hopes of shoring up the political gains she believed the United States had won over the course of the war.

And yet, while Moore’s articles imagined a diverse reading public desperate for books that could introduce them into American culture, this construction focused more on a global audience needing to see a unified front and less on appealing to immigrants and minorities already in the United States, as I will discuss in the following section. (Or, to return to Kallen’s framework again, while Americans may be “transnational citizens of the world” to Moore, they are first and foremost Americans; ethnocultural communities were given little consideration, if any.) Instead, Moore relied in part upon her nostalgia for Gilded Age publishing practices to construct her new vision of children’s and young adult literature, a period whose vision of the United States, as we saw in the previous chapter, was built on antimodernist and eugenic values which often alienated those not of Anglo-Saxon descent. In addition, she also tried to connect her work with a larger movement to “make” American literature, a process of canon formation that was invested in divesting children’s literature from the American canon. To combat that measure, she created her own children’s literary canon that followed Americanization principles;
however, instead of encouraging diversity, Moore constructed a canon in which white, or more accurately, Anglo-Saxon young adults dominated.

**Turning Trash into (White) Treasure: Anne Carroll Moore and Canonizing Children’s and Adolescent Literature**

When Ralph Bergengren’s “Jane, Joseph and John” came forth from The Atlantic Monthly Press last fall, we said, “Why shouldn’t it happen again? Why not another golden age of writing and illustrating children’s books at first hand such as Mary Mapes Dodge and Frank R. Stockton inaugurated when they left *Hearth and Home* and took up their abode at the house of *St. Nicholas* in 1873?

--Anne Carroll Moore, “Viewing and Reviewing Books for Children,” 1920

[The Atlantic Monthly editor Bliss] Perry found Scudder’s devotion to public service admirable but was ultimately bemused that Scudder’s “imagination envisaged every hour of hack work as a permanent contribution to the development of American culture and character.” For Perry and for other arbiters of culture in the early twentieth century, children and childhood were either havens for a culture no longer vital (Longfellow) or tokens of what was undesirable in commerce (Wiggin).


Even as Moore tried to envision what a U.S.-specific children’s literature would look like, academia was trying to divorce children’s literature from the American literary canon.120 Debates over what constituted American Literature (high art) versus American literature (low art) began in the twenties, and Paul Lauter notes that, during the following decades, “what had been the function of individuals, of families, or of literary clubs and certain magazines—choosing books to be remembered and read, building culture and taste—became the purview of the classroom.”121 Eager to push aside the image of the United States as a young nation, academics and literary critics, primarily white male professionals, worked to divorce “black, white female, and all working-class literature from the canon” (and as Joshua L. Miller notes, similar work was occurring in linguistic circles, as H.L. Menken’s massively popular monograph *The American Language* posited the “American” language “to be an ethnically white, masculine,
normative vernacular.”

Children’s literature, as Beverly Lyon Clark argues, became another such casualty, and while that gave librarians the chance to take ownership over children’s literature as a discipline (albeit one challenged by psychologists), it simultaneously reinforced negative connections between popular culture, women’s writing (and work), and children’s literature. Aware of this division between academics and librarians, Moore tried to use her Bookman articles as a bridge between children’s literature in the popular sphere and the academic space, writing in 1919,

We may as well face frankly at the outset this reluctance to write for children on the part of competent writers, for it is symptomatic of a grave defect in our national education. We have drifted too far apart, in the life of our American colleges and universities, from the current of life in popular educational institutions in which the free use of books by children has been sustained for a generation or more...why should we not look to our universities to blaze new trails for the stimulation of both writers and readers of books for children?

And yet, despite Moore’s work (along with other champions of children’s literature in education and library studies), it would take decades for English departments across the United States to recover children’s literature as a viable source of study or national pride.

Before I address how Moore engaged in her own canon-making to counter the effects of trash literature and the devaluation of the field, I want to highlight how the literary and critical genealogies Moore constructed not only privileged white authors and scholars, but how they also naturalized their intended audience (i.e. young adult readers) as white, middle-class readers, ideally native-born. In Kiddie Lit, Beverly Lyon Clark rightly notes that process by which Moore and her peers attempted to reinscribe children’s literature with cultural value (including developing awards like the Newberry and the Caldecott), tended to privilege gender over race. While women have won the majority of awards given by the ALA, Clark notes,

The award-givers have been less responsive to issues of race. As Donnarae MacCann notes, pointing to the award of the Newbery medal to The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle
[one of Moore’s favorites] even as Du Bois’s pioneering children’s journal *The Brownies’ Book* ceased publishing because of insufficient circulation, ‘the increasing institutionalization of children’s literature...helped extend the lifespan of the white supremacy myth.’ Yet, I would argue librarians—perhaps more attuned to the impact of books on individuals readers—have been quicker to respond to representations of race than have literary critics. I look at the creation of the Coretta Scott King Award in 1970, at the New York Public Library’s periodic bibliographies *The Black Experience in Children’s Literature*, beginning in 1974, and at a number of edited volumes produced in the 1970s, 1980s, and beyond.¹²⁵

I agree with Clark’s point that librarians—particularly those at the NYPL—were more responsive than academics when thinking about issues of race and ethnicity; for example, my research in the archives shows the librarians in the Countee Cullen Regional Branch of the NYPL produced reading bibliographies for black teens and children as early as 1964, a decade before *The Black Experience in Children’s Literature*.¹²⁶ Moreover, as I have shown in the first two sections, librarians were often able to successfully intervene on the personal, rather than the institutional level, and Moore facilitated those interactions by repeatedly advocating for a responsive approach to reading choices, even when their taste in reading material differed widely. Finally, I appreciate Clark’s project: to reclaim the history of children’s scholarship produced by librarians, the majority of which has been forced into the margins of academia due to its association with women’s work.

And yet, if we consider the 40 years of institutional history between Moore’s columns for *The Bookman* and the bibliographies published by the NYPL, I think it would be a mistake to overlook how Moore, in constructing her booklists and her literary genealogies to combat trash literature, favored Anglo-American classics instead of more contemporary reading material that would have appealed to the racially and ethnically diverse patrons of the New York Public Library. In part, this stemmed from her reliance on the previous “golden age” of American children’s literature for the model of her “ideal” literary market and critical tradition. During the
years immediately after the Civil War, children’s literature became a national project and obsession, one that led to a period of massive growth in the sophistication and popularity of children’s literature in the United States. Thanks to the explosion of children’s literary magazines like the *Youth’s Companion*, *Our Young Folks*, and *St. Nicholas*, and best-sellers such as Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and Francis Hodgson Burnett’s *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, well-written, original children’s literature was far more accessible than before the war.\(^{127}\)

Moreover, this was period in which the division between children’s and adult literature was particularly nebulous. As Lyon argues, children’s publishing enjoyed a respectively high status among adult authors as well; for example, *Youth’s Companion*, one of the most successful magazines for children, included “contributions by almost all the authors considered preeminent during the nineteenth century.”\(^{128}\) The field was further championed by a number of critic-authors who saw reading as a family project, and the conflation of reading audiences therefore gave a particular sophistication and cultural relevance to children’s literature. Much like in Moore’s time, concerns over the content of trash literature drove the editors from a range of magazines like the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Scribner’s Monthly* to review the latest books and debate purpose and quality of children’s literature.\(^{129}\) With three editors from the former—William Dean Howells, Thomas Bailey Aldrich and Horace Scudder—writing for mixed audiences, the *Atlantic Monthly* was particularly devoted to developing and “print[ing] nothing which a father may not read to his daughter or safely leave her to read herself.”\(^{130}\) In other words, during the Gilded Age, children’s literature had significantly more cultural capital, and its production, to a certain extent, was considered of national importance.

As such, it is unsurprising that Moore turned to classics from the Gilded Age to construct
a new literary lineage. In Moore’s “Books for Young People,” Moore recreated a partial conversation with an unnamed woman who requesting book recommendations for a club “composed of more or less intelligent women whose children [were] grown up or non-existent.”

In so doing, she satirized the “sophisticated middle-aged audience” who, separated as they were from any interaction with young people, deemed literature for or featuring children as “too simple for discussion” or “from too youthful and romantic a standpoint.” In response, Moore began to (re)construct literary and critical genealogies that privileged children’s literature and reinscribed cultural value to these (much beloved and much derided) texts by correcting her imagined student from either misguidedly disassociating famous authors from a degraded children’s literary canon or firmly ensconcing them within it. For example, when the leader of the book club noted that Mark Twain was just a “humorist,” Moore realigned Twain with other canonical children’s authors like Dafoe and Scott. And yet, when it came to literature published originally for children, Moore had to work doubly-hard to fight against their preconceived notions. In another instance, Moore shocked her listener by suggesting *Little Woman* as an appropriate text. Objecting to the title because of its slang, her listener stated:

> But I’m afraid the club would seriously object to Miss Alcott’s English. I am really surprised you don’t object to it. I had supposed librarians were more particular about English than anything else. To be sure, I never thought about it when I was reading ‘Little Women,’ but the question has been raised by so many literary critics. Miss Alcott *is* dramatic and human of course. [emphasis original]

In this passage, Moore distinctly aligns the general public with pedantic literary critics whose misplaced attention to language blinds them to the superiority of *Little Women’s* subject and widespread international acclaim—“Russian girls read her books? How singular?”—while librarians like Moore were better situated by their interactions with real readers to remind their audiences of *Little Women’s* power and potential as a domestic image. If little Russian girls
can learn about the United States from it, she implied, why not our own?

To help her case, Moore called upon her own nostalgia of children’s literature distinguished place during the late 1800s. In particular, she foregrounded the relationship between two editors, Horace Scudder and *St. Nicholas* editor Mary Mapes Dodge, as a blueprint for the new critical tradition. According to Clark, Horace Scudder, editor of the *Riverside Magazine for Young People*, author of *Childhood in Literature and Art* and the Bodley stories, and eventual editor in chief of the *Atlantic Monthly*, “embodie[d] the stunning confluence of the worlds of editing, writing and publishing in the nineteenth century--including the confluence of the book worlds of children and adults.” While Moore certainly appreciated his promotion of sophisticated children’s literature and his “rare philosophy and understanding of child life,” most of her real praise was reserved for his peer Mary Mapes Dodge, perhaps the original bookwoman. Dodge, author of the popular novel *Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates* (1865), lead the much-acclaimed children’s magazine *St. Nicholas* until her death in 1905. Under Dodge’s direction, *St. Nicholas* became famous for its rich illustrations and range of “distinguished authors,” including not only the aforementioned Alcott, Twain, and Burnett, but also novelists like Rudyard Kipling and Thomas Bailey Aldrich, poets like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and politicians like Theodore Roosevelt. For Moore, Dodge embodied the ideal critic, for Dodge not only produced literature herself while running the magazine but also cultivated an environment devoted to standards that assumed children’s literature was more difficult, and more rewarding, to write.

And yet, Dodge’s children’s magazine *St. Nicholas* often relied on deeply outdated stereotypes of the patrons Moore claimed to serve, “treat[ing] blacks with scorn if it introduced them into the magazine at all,” or, as we saw in the last chapter with *Little Lord Fauntleroy*,

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using ethnic minorities to reinforce white supremacy. As we’ll see, Moore’s contemporary choices did not fare much better, in part because she, like Hall, relied on the same antimodernist thought.\textsuperscript{138} Granted, their connection is, perhaps, unsurprising, considering their familiarity with each other’s work, but Moore’s language in \textit{Roads to Childhood}, and more specifically, “Books for Young People” calls upon Hall’s fears of failed adolescence, as addressed in Chapter 1. She wrote,

\begin{quote}
It is inevitable that [the over-reliance on series fiction for teens] should result in just such a state of arrested development that we find to-day. It has been said that child-hood and poverty emerged at the same time to claim their naturalization papers--in poetry at the hands of Wordsworth, in prose in the novels of Dickens. The discovery of adolescence has not yet been declared in corresponding terms, but all clearly recollected experience concerning it indicates that it is a period of greater expansion, of livelier interests, of deeper emotions, of greater sensitiveness, of stronger appreciations and of keener critical perceptions than any other period of life.\textsuperscript{139}
\end{quote}

By focusing on curiosity, sensitivity, emotional depth, and great passion, Moore not only alluded to Hall’s sometimes paradoxical sketches of adolescent development, but she also called upon the values espoused by American antimodernism.\textsuperscript{140} And yet, while Hall argued that teens should read as little as possible, we can see that Moore argued that reading itself provides the same intensity of emotion; cultivating a lifelong and extensive reading habit in youth, accordingly, must be a priority so they can continue to access such pleasures into adulthood. She wrote, “[adolescence] is a time, not for prohibitions and restrictions hedged about with sentimentality and cheap optimism; it is a time for throwing wide the gates if any have been set up.”\textsuperscript{141} Reading, according to Moore, was a process of absorption, in which the reader could vicariously experience a world unlike their own and, as her condemnation of “sentimentality and cheap optimism” suggested, train themselves in the right emotions, including nationalist sentiment.

What’s more striking, however, is how she ties together literary movements with
individual and social development. Moore implies that children and teens will best understand how the world works (whether for good or ill) by seeing it reflected in literature. Literature becomes inherently pedagogical here, instructing its audience how to conceptualize, in one such example, childhood and poverty. Teens, without a true literature to call their own, are left adrift, unable to grasp the full implications and limitations of this newly discovered life stage. With only a few authors (Twain, Alcott, and Kipling, among others) able to protect the emotional and psychological education of teens, it was incumbent that librarians and parents call on publishers for a new genre for teens.142

If we compare her preferred novels for teens to those for children, we can more clearly see how Moore constructed a particularly white-washed developmental path. As we saw in the previous chapter, anti-modernism was built on the assumption that people of color, framed as “Orientals” or “noble savages” in antimodernist thought, were developmentally delayed; in essence, if the cultural artifacts anti-modernists consumed provided temporary access a “simpler time,” then those producing said culture could not escape it. There certainly were texts published for Black children and teens that did not render them as or evolutionarily or culturally backwards. Silas X. Floyd’s etiquette book Floyd’s Flowers for Colored Children was extensively revised for publication in 1920 under the title Short Stories For Colored People Both Young and Old, and W.E.B. Du Bois’ short lived children magazine, The Brownie’s Book (January 1920-December 1921), was developed to parallel St. Nicholas’ success (i.e., with a broad audience of children and teens up to sixteen years of age from all racial backgrounds), but one that would “rework the most visible materials of popular culture into a mirror that can begin to reflect its [Black] child readers back to themselves.”143

This does not mean that all of Moore’s recommendations were inherently conservative—
Julia L. Mickenberg notes that one of Moore’s favorites, Carl Sandburg’s *Rootabaga Stories* (1922), imagined a “socialist utopia” that would inspire figures like Langston Hughes. And yet, most texts recommended to increase cultural understanding, Mickenberg argues, “held simplistic understandings of group identity, and their approach encouraged a focus on transforming ‘individual outlook’ rather than upon getting at the structural roots of prejudice.” As such, neither Floyd’s or Du Bois’ work would appear in Moore’s lists for *The Bookman*, nor would her readers likely access more diverse novels through non-American publishing houses. While Moore herself did not ignore foreign literature for children in her *Bookman* essays, she rarely recommended books that were written and published outside of Western Europe (typically England, France, and Italy). If she did recommend a book that featured characters of color or was written from non-Western European viewpoints, the book was typically a collection of folklore. In her essay “Making a Library,” she argued librarians and parent could balance histories of the United States and Europe could be balanced with “myths, legends, and folk-tale[s] of Northern, Southern, and Oriental countries” (whose histories apparently did not exist).

In particular, these collections, like Charles Finger’s Newbery-Award winning *Tales from Silver Lands* for children, or Robert Louis Stevenson’s *New Arabian Nights* for teens, were frequently collected and translated by white authors who framed their non-white subjects as exoticized Others trapped in a mythic past. For example, *Tales from Silver Lands*, a collection of Central and South American folktales, introduced many of the stories through interactions between Finger and an indigenous storyteller, interactions he described in the stance of an anthropologist collecting authentic representations of South American culture. In one story he writes, “There are Indians [near Cape Horn], poor gentle folk who fish in the sea and who know nothing but a life of cold, and they paddle or sit crouching in their canoes, taking no heed of the
biting wind and the snow that falls on their naked bodies,” whereas the storyteller in question, a young boy Fisher claims was left alone on a nearby island, is described as intelligent but equally ignorant, simultaneously able to shape arrowheads out of bottles but almost unable to understand knots or buckles. The juxtaposition here between ancient (arrowheads) and modern technology (bottles, knots, buckles) becomes a gulf that Finger, but not the young boy, may easily cross.

Language provides an additional barrier, as Finger portrays the unnamed boy halting attempts to share his story in a broken language: “Many day, a far day, underwater man walk water. Eat man my father’s father; men cry much hard.” Finger rewrites the narrative, beginning with a bastardized opening, with “[l]ong years ago, the people of that land were sadly at the mercy of the wild, hairy folk who lived under the sea” In short, Finger implies that he must speak on the boy’s behalf because the boy cannot—he alone can traverse audiences, continents, stages of civilization. While this boy’s depiction is one of the more extreme examples from the text, it functions as a textual representation of Hall’s hierarchy of subjectivity, in which the storytellers have no control over their own tales but instead must be interpreted by a white audience. (An 1989 edition of the text published by Scholastic would make this cultural appropriation unwittingly explicit by replacing the original cover, a woodcutting of an indigenous man carving a monkey, with a blond hunk in a preppy polo telling tales to a group of vaguely disinterested children, all set in a vaguely “southern hemisphere” setting.)

Nor did she, like her mentor Caroline M. Hewins, include biographies from writers of color or immigrants. In a 1915 pamphlet entitled Books for Boys and Girls: A Selected List, Hewins created two lists of autobiographies, “A Few Boyhoods” and “Half a Dozen Girlhoods,” both of which seemed entirely representative of American children—in the former, she included
several native-born Americans (including William Dean Howells’ autobiography) alongside Booker T. Washington’s *Up from Slavery*, Jacob Riis’ *Making of an American* (a Danish-born immigrant and influential muckracker) and John Muir’s *Story of My Boyhood and Youth* (a Scottish-born environmentalist), whereas the latter recommended Mary Antin’s *The Promised Lands*, written by a Russian-Jewish immigrant. Several questioned ideologies of Americanization as they bought into it; for example, while Riis’ works advocated “Roosevelitian notions of Americanism,” his autobiography acknowledged his love for both Denmark and the United States, that he “recognize[d] on a very personal level the cost of relinquishing his originary ties and sees American identity and patriotism as a complex dual loyalty that comes through cultural practice and a weaving together of old and new.”

Hewins’ list, while far from representative, at least imagined that diverse materials would appeal to the American reading public.

Moreover, we can see Moore’s implicit acceptance of this racist literary model formalized in her books for teens. For example, she recommended adventure novels like *Robinson Crusoe* to boys under eighteen, a genre littered with “noble savages” whose roles were frequently limited to murderous enemy, servant, or slave, whereas one of her favorite novels for girls, Booth Tarkington’s *Seventeen: A Tale of Youth and Summer Time and the Baxter Family Especially William*, included African-American characters taken out of minstrel shows. The novel satirized the romantic attempts of an upper-class boy, William, over the course of a single summer, and Moore deemed *Seventeen* “of particular value for girls of [fifteen and sixteen] and older” because she felt William’s mother, Mrs. Baxter, was an ideal figure for young girls. I am more interested, however, in examining how William’s development is paralleled with that of the local Black community. In many ways, William fits Hall’s model of the temperamental
teenager—he suffers from massive mood swings, uses slang, is obsessed with his social standing, and his devotion to the beautiful and flirtatious Lola takes on a religious fervor. With that in mind, at the beginning of the novel, William’s physical description ties him directly to the black townsfolk.

...the only people who looked at him with any attention were pedestrians of color. It is true that when the gaze of these fell upon him it was instantly arrested, for no colored person could have passed him without a little pang of pleasure and of longing. Indeed, the tropical violence of William Sylvanus Baxter’s tie and the strange brilliancy of his hat might have made it positively unsafe for him to walk at night through the negro quarter of that town.155

As the passage suggests, William’s preference for bright clothing does not indicate identification; in fact, he is frequently horrified whenever he must interact with Genesis, the local Black handyman, in front of his friends because he’s afraid that “nobody...seeing him in such company could believe that he belonged to ‘one of the oldest and best families in town.’”156 Instead, it suggests that his taste has not fully developed, that he is still, according to recapitulation, stuck in a previous stage of civilization (one in which the local Black community is depicted as unable to leave). Moreover, these scenes pull their humor by implying not only is William’s judgement impaired as an adolescence, he also has yet to assume the effortless knowledge of the advantages afforded to him by virtue of his whiteness, advantages his parents take for granted. These lapses, however, are framed as symptoms of adolescence that will soon be grown out of—and by the end, it is implied that he does in a short wedding scene with a somber young woman.

In short, Moore assumed these novels could provide temporary access to previous stages of development, rendered more spiritually and emotionally poignant than (much of) contemporary literature, but her logic was predicated upon a model that rendered non-white (and really, non-Western European) subjects outside of development. Moreover, if we return to
Wexler’s construction of domestic images, we can see why the novels Moore featured not only did not reflect the population she purportedly served, but also helped marginalize it. Wexler argues that domestic images were often created and dispersed by white American women to support imperialist practices at the turn of the century, and in the process, they “normalize[d] and inscribe[d] raced and classed relations of dominance during slavery and to reinscribe them after its legal end.” With this in mind, if I wrote previously that these novels provided instruction how to act American, then acting American according to Moore’s prescriptions meant being white.

Consider, for example, the African-American kindergarteners visiting the Harlem branch in 1909. Excited by the librarians’ warm welcome, these children would likely want to return and borrow books that would stimulate both mind and imagination. Picture them several years later, when they ask the librarian for a recommendation and she gives them one of her personal favorites, a book that she believed all parents and children should read. Imagine one of them opening Uncle Remus, a Southern fantasy of black enslavement, or Robinson Crusoe. Some might identify with the characters or plot, but others may set it aside in disappointment or maybe share it with a disapproving parent. Imagine them returning to one of the Harlem branches ten years later. If they were lucky, maybe they spoke with Ernestine Rose or Nella Larsen, but what if they spoke with a librarian whose primary references came from Moore’s columns? What if they are given Tarkington’s Seventeen? What kind of “impression” would that leave on their minds? Of course, I do not want to suggest that cross-racial or cross-national identification could not happen, and yet, in a 1984 interview, James Baldwin discussed his experiences in the Harlem libraries, stating,

I read everything. I read my way out of the two libraries in Harlem by the time I was thirteen. One does learn a great deal about writing this way. First of all, you learn how
little you know. It is true that the more one learns the less one knows. I’m still learning how to write. I don’t know what technique is. All I know is that you have to make the reader see it. This I learned from Dostoyevsky, from Balzac. I’m sure that my life in France would have been very different had I not met Balzac. Even though I hadn’t experienced it yet, I understood something about the concierge, all the French institutions and personalities. The way that country and its society works. How to find my way around in it, not get lost in it, and not feel rejected by it. The French gave me what I could not get in America, which was a sense of “If I can do it, I may do it.” I won’t generalize, but in the years I grew up in the U.S., I could not do that. I’d already been defined.\textsuperscript{158}

While some of literature that he read in these libraries helped him to become a transnational citizen, others told him exactly what they expected of him based on his race. I want to note that Baldwin was born during Moore’s tenure at \textit{The Bookman}, when she was advocating for more books about English, French, and Italian children. Moore knew the population her librarians worked with, but instead of advocating for books that reflected that population, her actual recommendations for teens normalized whiteness as standard—limiting who could think “If I can do it, I may do it.”

With this in mind, we can see that, in spite of (or perhaps because of) Moore’s more liberal tendencies, she held a narrow conception of appropriate adolescent subjectivities, and if we turn to her second major essay, “Entering the Teens,” written several years later and collected in \textit{Crossroads to Childhood} (1926), we can see that she doubled-down on her initial claims.\textsuperscript{159} Of course, by the time Moore compiled \textit{Cross-roads to Childhood}, Moore was fully established as the children’s critic of note. Entirely confident in her influence, Moore no longer begged Saint Dodge to give her strength. Instead, she charged into the fray of the Fairy Tale wars, challenging any who might question her authority. In “The Reviewing of Children’s Books,” she trashed both child study and child guidance movements, writing,

\begin{quote}
Clear memory of childhood is as rare as it is un-selfconscious. That it cannot be recovered by the questionnaire method has been fully demonstrated in recent novels no less than in the text-books on child study of an earlier day. It was indeed the futility of
\end{quote}
the child study methods of the 1890’s as applied to children’s reading, and a keen interest in eighteenth century literature for its own sake, which drove me backward and forward over the history of the writing, illustrating, and publishing of children’s books until it took hold on my mind as a subject of fascinating interesting and limitless possibilities.160

One of those possibilities was an expanded selection of books for teens, and her subsequent article “Entering the Teens,” much shorter than “Books for Young People,” began with an intervention in the field, asking, “Does anybody really know anything about the teens--those seven years between thirteen and twenty? I wonder. No book that I have ever read, no list of books that I have ever seen, indicates that much is clearly known.”161 And yet, to rationalize her own list, she referred “not with a questionnaire by with memory alight for my own first and then for all the others I have known.” In short, as Eddy argues, we can see her own voice emerge and, perhaps, become dominant over those teens she represents in her essay based on what one must guess is her own “clear memory of childhood.”

To be sure, her recommendations in the accompanying bibliography, “In the Teens,” were met with some resistance because, unsurprisingly, she advocated a heavy reading list filled with British, French, and Russian novels, many of which now would be considered canonical.162 For example, Melville’s *Moby Dick* appeared alongside Keats’ poetry, Willa Cather’s *My Ántonia* and Ibsen’s *The Doll’s House*, although Moore did not shy away from more traditional children’s fare, including Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tales and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.163 As one librarian from Georgia wrote, “at first we thought those books were too old for teens, but when you think that that goes up to twenty, I think they’re all right. If anybody’s ever going to start reading good things they will do it before they are twenty.”164 In her comment, one could see two potential reservations about assigning the standards to teens, both of which drove much subsequent discourse around young adult reading practices. First, as we’ll see in chapter four, educators worried that classic literature might be too difficult for teens to read, and
therefore, they would need to create a separate genre that would help teens learn the reading skills necessary to access the standards. Alternatively, the topics frequently addressed in the novels Moore recommended—adultery, embezzlement, and violence—might disturb or worse, mislead their young audience. Moore tried to forestall the latter in her introduction, writing,

A frank determination to know all that can happen to human beings in books or in life is quite different from a prurient curiosity. Feeling under the obligation myself, I have never been shocked to find other boys and girls similarly compelled to find out all that they can. Tragedy lies, I think, not in knowing too much but rather in not knowing enough to think things through. Just here the great classics seem to me veritable soul preservers…

In other words, classics, by reflecting reality no matter how dark, would better prepare teens to take their place on life’s stage, a surprisingly liberal approach (and one that maybe lead to her stop prescribing for teens entirely). Regardless, even though she, as Eddy argued, spoke for teens, she also advocated on their behalf, trusting that they could handle reading these stories.

While Moore did not publish any other articles directly addressing teens, her work with the NYPL set up a lineage of bookwomen who thought critically about reading’s role in adolescent lives. Mabel Williams, a librarian from Massachusetts who worked under Moore as the Supervisor of Work with Schools, would take up the baton with her 1929 booklist “Books for Young People,” whereas Williams’ friend Margaret Scoggin, a former Harlem librarian herself, would take over Williams’ position at her retirement and head the Nathan Strauss Library (1941-1951), the “first public library dedicated exclusively for the use of young people” and a “laboratory” for librarians to test out books for teens and children. Moreover, in 1928, the NYPL established the Book Committee for Older Boys and Girls, who released a book list, “Books for Young People,” for each branch’s adult department to help ease adolescents as they transitioned from the children’s room. While Moore’s list in Crossroads stuck primarily to classics, this list was much more expansive in scope, with over eight hundred titles broken down
by genre and topic, but there was some overlap between the two lists (and they even included two essays from Anne Carroll Moore’s *New Roads to Childhood.*) In their introduction, moreover, they adopted Moore’s “responsive” approach to recommendation, noting the list is in loose-leaf form, because the committee believes such a list should be constantly revised. High School [sic] students are probably more critical of “dead wood” than any other group using our libraries...we have tried to include here those books that boys and girls have enjoyed, directed only by a chance suggestion from a friend, a teacher, a librarian, or by the impetus received through book talks or reading clubs.

Of course, teens were not “free” from guidance, but that guidance could come from any variety of sources (including their peers) and the Committee preferred to avoid “compulsion,” unlike high schools.

Due to the wider scope and (perhaps) increased dialogue between librarians and patrons, the biographies, histories, and novels recommended were slightly more diverse in their offering; for example, the list included three different novels by Indian immigrant Dhan Gopal Mukerji, whose children’s novel *Gay Neck, Story of a Pigeon* would win the 1928 Newbery Award, making him the first person of color to be honored. They also included novels with sympathetic protagonists of color, including Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* (1884), but these steps were small and, in many ways, not enough, especially if we consider that the James Weldon Johnson collection would not appear until James Baldwin had, according to his interview, already read through the library system. Moore’s advice to listen to and engage with actual patrons helped open up dialogue intended to better serve both the NYPL and wider American population, but her desire to consolidate both a national, even canonical, literary character and a national publishing industry for the global market meant that she erased many of her patrons longing for inclusion. Subsequently, it took decades for the NYPL librarians to
create formalized booklists, like “A List of Books About the American Negro for Young People,” that allowed a little pushback in terms of representation in young adult literature.


2 Ibid., 112. Eddy uses the term “bookwomen” to refer to this network of women working to develop the field of children’s literature, and I will use this terminology throughout the chapter to refer to the same. For a history of how the child guidance movement developed and established their own claims to authority (to the detriment of mothers in the United States), please see Kathleen W. Jones, Taming the Troublesome Child: American Families, Child Guidance, and the Limits of Psychiatric Authority (Harvard University Press, 1999).


5 Eddy, Bookwomen, 114, 9.

6 Ibid., 117.


11 For Anne Carroll Moore, the terms “juvenile,” “adolescent,” “young person,” “child,” “youth,” and “teen” can either reference a specific age or more generally, anyone under the age of 18 (and later, 20), depending on the context. She also used terms like “juvenile” to refer to the books published for children. For simplicity’s sake, I’ll be using “adolescent literature” to describe the literature being produced (or recommended) to adolescents, juvenile series to indicate those particular branded books published by such book factories like the Stratemeyer Syndicate, and children’s literature to describe the field as a whole, unless noted otherwise.


13 Her biographer, and staunch defender, Frances Clarke Sayers, wrote that “the years of [Anne Carroll Moore’s] contribution to The Bookman are generally designated as the era that inaugurated in American the reviewing of books for children on a sustained and continuous basis. There has been some hair-splitting among the Ph.Ds as to the validity of the assumption that no reviews of books for children preceded hers. As if it mattered” (211). That being said, contemporary articles in the New York Times suggests that Moore certainly wasn’t the only woman reviewing books for teens. For example, in 1920, Hildegard Hawthorne reviewed both children’s and adolescent literature, and her tone suggests that reviews for children and teens were certainly common enough to require no note or celebration. Hildegard Hawthorne, “Adventure, Romance and History for Young People,” New York Times, December 12, 1920, sec. The New York Times Book Review, http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/97947183?accountid=14667. For more on Moore’s reception, please see Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 210-213.

14 According to Frank Luther Mott’s A History of American Magazines, The Bookman was considered one of the foremost literary magazines of its time, covering both literature and criticism. To better serve its readers, The Bookman also introduced the American market to the concept of a best-seller list (originally introduced by the
Roosevelt, in particular, argued that immigrants needed to give up their old ties, writing, “we must... the majority had been subjects of the great autocratic..." (1989).

In fact, Caroline M. Hewins, one of the most influential figures in children’s librarianship and one of Moore’s mentors, would quote Hall’s diatribe against “bookishness” from Adolescence in her 1915 booklist to discuss the absence of cultural (i.e. literary) competency in high school and college age youth—the list of books she provided, however, included all ages and was organized by topic, not age. Caroline M. Hewins, Books for Boys and Girls: A Selected List, Third Revised Ed. (Chicago: American Library Association Publishing Board, 1915), 6. Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 87.

To find more on Moore’s management style, please see Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 128-130.

For example, the reporting librarian for Yorkville in 1910 typically spent little time on circulation, but wrote several pages on the popularity of the reference room, while Harlem’s librarians, as seen above, focused on their clientele. Generally, the reports were very descriptive of the patrons reading habits and often accompanied by incidents of note for at least one category. Jacqueline M. Overtow, “Monthly Report of the Children’s Room—Yorkville Branch,” October 1910, RG 8 Branch Libraries, Box 2, Folder Harlem 1909, Office of Children’s Services Records, 1906-2000, New York Public Library Archives, New York Public Library.


Ibid. 11.

Ibid., 4, 8.

Ibid. 9.

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Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 129.

Leonore Power would work at the Tompkins branch until 1911, when she would be promoted by Moore to help with the Main Library’s Children’s section. For more on her time at the Main Library Children’s Section, please see Leonore St. John Power, “Recollections of Anne Carroll Moore,” in Reading without Boundaries: Essays Presented to Anne Carroll Moore on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Inauguration of Library Service to Children at the New York Public Library (New York: The New York Public Library, 1956), 623–27.


Stephen Steinberg, The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in America, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989). Mirel notes that these immigrants were mostly “Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox Christian, or Jewish, and the majority had been subjects of the great autocratic empires of Europe and Eurasia” Patriotic Pluralism, 13. Roosevelt, in particular, argued that immigrants needed to give up their old ties, writing, “we must Americanize...
them in every way, in speech, in political ideas and principles, and in their way of looking at the relationship between Church and State. We welcome the German or the Irishman who becomes an American. We have no use for German or the Irishman who remains such.” Theodore Roosevelt, “True Americanism,” in *Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Memorial Ed., vol. 20 (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1926), 42.


34 Smith, *Civic Ideals*, 419, 422. Smith acknowledges, however, that, while many of their leaders are associated with turn-of-the-century political activism, much leftist thought developed after World War I and was popularized during the Civil Rights movement.

35 Smith, *Civic Ideals*, 422.

36 Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism*, 16.


38 Hermies visited along with two other women, one of whom may have been Moore herself. Mary E. Ehle, “Monthly Report for Children’s Room—Harlem Branch,” April 1909, RG 8 Branch Libraries, Box 2, Folder Harlem 1909., Office of Children’s Services Records, New York Public Library Archives, New York.


40 For example, in 1909, the children’s librarians at the newly-opened Harlem branch of the NYPL frequently complained about their missing reference books in the monthly reports to Moore, noting the sheer number of children and teachers they had to turn away because they simply did not have the material. Luckily, most of the books returned by September 1909, but the head librarian deemed the collection of reference texts an “embryo,” considering rising demands by teachers and children, who saw the library as a complimentary educational resource. As she notes, “The chief effect of the school work on the children’s room as noticed was a confidence on the part of the children that we had books on all subjects” and that “many of the children who are now registering say that their teachers have asked the whole class to join the library.” Leonore Power, “Monthly Report of the Children’s Room—Harlem Branch,” September 1909, RG 8 Branch Libraries, Box 2, Folder “Harlem 1909.” Office of Children’s Services Records, New York Public Library Archives, New York, 4-5.


42 Novotny, “Library Services to Immigrants.”

43 Julia Richman was a major advocate for Americanization in the NYC public school system; a Harlemite herself, she was the “first Jewish high school principal” in the system. Gill, *Harlem*, 157. “Julia Richman to Mr. Booth,” May 7, 1896, Box 6 (General Administrative Records), Folder “Julia Richmonds [sic] Letter,” Office of Young Adult Services, New York Public Library Archives, New York.


46 One could argue that American was short for Anglo-Saxon; however, I would argue that the inclusion of “English” immigrants suggests otherwise.


48 It is also possible that the designation “Irish” could also be referring to race instead of nationality; as George Bornstein illustrates in *The Colors of Zion*, Irish, Jewish, and Black communities were not only racialized but were frequently depicted genetically intertwined, a status that placed them “lower on the scale than Anglo-Saxons or
Aryans,” although Foucher includes no additional comments to suggest this is the case. George Bornstein, *The Colors of Zion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).


53 Power, September 1909, 6-8.


64 These visits would be recorded in a large, bound notebook where they recorded the date, the school, class, teacher, subject, gender of students, and how many were in attendance; as many teachers brought their students to various NYPL branches to investigate subjects as diverse as “inventions,” “Commercial Geography,” and “Shakespeare,” “Class Visits to the Library, 1913-1930,” n.d., Box 1 “School Specialists,” Folder “Class Visits to the Library, 1913-1930.” Office of Young Adult Services, New York Public Library Archives, New York.


66 While African-Americans were not subject to institutional segregation in New York City public schools, housing and job discrimination forced the black population into particular neighborhoods and made school segregation a daily reality for most African-American students. For an extensive history of segregation in the New York City public school system, please see Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars: New York City, 1805-1973 A History of the Public Schools as Battlefield of Social Change* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1974).

68 The stated goal of the collection, which began in October 1903, was to “embrace manuscript material, books pamphlets and smaller printed documents, periodicals, newspapers, etc., bearing on the history, biography and genealogy of the German element in America, literary and scientific works produced by German Americans (in English as well as in German), works about the United States in the German language and material about the various reciprocal relations between Germany and this country”: (6). For more please see Richard E. Helbig, German American Researches: The Growth of the German American Collection of the New York Public Library during 1906-1907 (Philadelphia, PA: International Print Co., 1908), http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hxde5w. And yet, as Michael Ermarth notes, Wilhelmine German elites (1890-1914) vocally opposed this “Americanization” of their absent countrymen, which they “represented...not merely disparagingly but even morbidly and pathologically, as an exorbitant, irreversible ‘hyper-’ or ‘over-Americanization,’” portending the tragic extinction of true Germaness” (35). Such rhetoric would help reinforce nationalist discourse in years leading up to World War I. Michael Ermarth, “Hyphenation and Hyper-Americanization: Germans of the Wilhelmine Reich View German-Americans, 1890-1914,” Journal of American Ethnic History 21, no. 2 (2002): 33–58, http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/stable/27502812. For more on the German-American community during World War I, please see Frederick C. Luebke, Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I. (Northern Illinois University Press, 1974).


71 Ibid., 64-65.

72 Classes for adults included “Contrasts between Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Centuries as Revealed in Books for Children,” “The Children’s Library-- a new idea in education,” while classes for mixed audiences tended to be more general, focusing on popular texts, i.e. “Favorite Books of Boys I Know,” “Favorite Books of Girls I Know” and “The Three Toms--Tom Brown, Tom Sawyer, and Tom Bailey.” Some of the topics that she appeared would appear in her column for The Bookman, including “Vacation Reading for Boys and Girls,” which appeared in essay form as “Vacation Reading;” unfortunately, since the lectures themselves no longer exist, I could not compare to see if they were the same text. Anne Carroll Moore, “Children’s Books: Their Authors, Their Illustrators, Their Readers,” New York, 1917, Box 32, Folder “Children's Books 1917,” Office of Children’s Services Records, New York Public Library Archives, New York.

73 It is notable that, for her lecture on “The Three Toms,” she chose two “bad boy” characters, both emblematic to a genre of writing that Hall would have likely approved of (see Chapter 1 for more). Additionally, although one could argue that Tom Brown, of Tom Brown’s School Days would not fit in the genre, Hall cited Tom Brown in his explanation Japanese bushido culture, which he valued highly for “express[ing] the race ideal of justice, patriotism, and the duty of living aright and dying nobly.” G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education, Vol. 1. 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1904), 219, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/iem.35558001871975.


Manuscripts and Archives Division. The New York Public Library. Astor
September 15, 1919, Al
Victor Appleton to John Ooshaye
1925 31, Folder 9
Phyllis McCrary, April 16, 1930; Hope to Evelyn Grant,
did not keep many incoming letters at the time.)
that asked about how to have their own clubs or asked whether the stories we
G. Reid to Commander J. T. Watkins,” June 10, 1933, Box 56, Folder 1
from the children themselves.
The New York Public Library,
Marcus,
After Alger’s death, Stratemeyer would be chose
Rehak,
“Girl Sleuth: Nancy Drew and the Women Who Created Her
Everything, regardless of circumstance. For
88
Inspired Independence in the Elsie Dinsmore Series,”
Rebekka A. Mehl, ‘’We Ought to Ob
Company, Inc., 1867), http://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951p01091698h.
recent scholarship has debated
novels were popular but dismissed by critics for being sentimental, didactic, and retrogressive for women, alt
50.

80 Claude Leland to Anne Carroll Moore.
81 As the years went on, her network expanded even further, as many of her students and friends would report from locales as far as France, Italy, Brazil, and China. Ruth Hill, for example, worked in China, and wrote Moore long letters about her experiences there, while in Helen Forbes’ description of Sicily, originally written in a letter, added
82 Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 50.
83 Moore, “Roads to Childhood,” 16.
85 In Moore’s early columns, these differences were left mostly implicit, but in her essay “Exploring Children’s Books,” re-published in Crossroads, she suggests that there are three distinct ways of organizing new publications, “original,” “sequel,” and “series.” Anne Carroll Moore, “Exploring Children’s Books,” in Cross-Roads to Childhood (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), 193.
86 Marcus, Minds of Make-Believe, 105.
87 Marcus, Minds of Make-Believe, 105.
91 Johnson, Edward Stratemeyer and the Stratemeyer Syndicate, 6.
94 Johnson, Edward Stratemeyer and the Stratemeyer Syndicate, 5.
95 All of the following letters come from the Stratemeyer Syndicate records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York. This first set of letters comes from the children themselves. Bruce Rhodes to Franklin Dixon, January 9, 1933, Box 56, Folder 1, S. G. Reid, “S. G. Reid to Commander J. T. Watkins,” June 10, 1933, Box 56, Folder 1-8. The following set are responses to letters that asked about how to have their own clubs or asked whether the stories were based on real people or events (they did not keep many incoming letters at the time.) Laura Lee Hope to Alice Turnbull, March 19, 1930; Laura Lee Hope to Evelyn Grant, January 5, 1921; Laura Lee Hope to Patricia Worl, March 22, 1928; Laura Lee Hope to Phyllis McCrary, April 16, 1930; Laura Lee Hope to Edith E. Elwell and Helen Young, November 28, 1919, Box 31, Folder 9-11; Victor Appleton to Charles Yanke, Feb. 10, 1927; Victor Appleton to Eugene Salts, March 15, 1925; Victor Appleton to Gerald Mayer,” April 20, 1926; Victor Appleton to Bertha Varke,” September 28, 1922; Victor Appleton to John Ooshaye, April 29, 1929, Box 31, Folder 2; Allen Chapman to Paul Homer Merriman, September 15, 1919, Allen Chapman to Beverly Nattans, January 2, 1924, Box 31, Folder 3.
The Don Sturdy novels focused on the adventures of the eponymous protagonist, described in Don Sturdy in Lion Land as “a splendid specimen of American boy” (15). He follows his two uncles (an explorer and scientist/anthropologist respectively) as they travel around the world, fighting animals and working with and often studying the local populations. In their focus on contemporary international events, Brian Rouleau argues, the Don Sturdy series and other simplified contemporary American debates over imperialism, and in their moreover, “in the world as portrayed in these books, indigenous people are almost always subordinate and even supplicant, suited for and needing rule by the white American men into whom the boys reading the books would grow.” In his own analysis of the Stratemeyer fan mail, he notes that “McIntyre, and presumably boys like him, relied upon the Stratemeyer factory to supply them with their early conceptions of the globe and their place in it.” For example, Don Sturdy in Lion Land functions as a series of lessons on how to be the right kind of imperialist--the main conflict is sparked because the British government took away the traditional weapons of the Maasai tribe (misspelled here as Masai) to avoid inter-tribal conflict. Moreover, Don and his companion Teddy are contrasted against two other American boys on safari, who abusive actions (stealing cows from the locals, verbally abusing their hired help) end up in a bloody revolt. In contrast, Captain Sturdy trains Don and Teddy to know that “More than one white man has left his bones in Africa because he hasn’t known how to handle the natives. Treat them right, and they’ll do anything for you. Mistreat them and you’re liable at any minute to get an arrow in your heart or a knife in your throat (183).” In short, they choose the same “paternal imperialism” espoused by figures like G. Stanley Hall. Brian Rouleau, “Childhood’s Imperial Imagination: Edward Stratemeyer’s Fiction Factory and the Valorization of American Empire,” The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era 7, no. 4 (October 2008): 484, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40542940. Victor Appleton, Don Sturdy in Lion Land, or The Strange Clearing in the Jungle (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1929.)

Paul Bowles to Anne Carroll Moore, October 25, 1923, Box 1, Folder 26, Anne Carroll Moore papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York.

Moore frequently recommended Doctor Dolittle, arguing in “Some Unusual Books” that it was well-suited for the whole family, although she expressed some reservations about the sequels (100). According to letters from Jonathan Cape, one publisher of Doctor Dolittle, Moore had actually advised him to not publish the novel as a part of series of books from other authors but as an individual publication instead, a criticism for which he was quite grateful. Jonathan Cape to Anne Carroll Moore, June 17, 1921. Box 1, Folder 39. Anne Carroll Moore papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York.


Shirley Bennan and Shirley Levine to Alice B. Emerson, August 17, 1931, Box 56, Folder 1, Stratemeyer Syndicate records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York.


Ibid., 180. First published in 1910, the Tom Swift series, featured one such boy whose mechanical inventions would inevitably save the day; perhaps one of Stratemeyer’s most successful series besides The Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew, Moore would have been deeply familiar with Tom’s adventures.

Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 90-102, 130-131.


“Heroism: A Reading List for Boys and Girls,” the New York Public Library, 1914. Box 1 Booklists (Assistant Coordinator-General Files), Folder “Heroism, 1914.” Office of Young Adult Services, New York Public Library Archives, New York. Front cover. The New York Public Library has two copies of this document in their archives, one published with the preface and one without (although in the latter the preface appears in the table of contents, so I suspect the difference is a binding error). Unless noted otherwise, I am referencing the copy without the preface (cited above).

Ibid., back inside cover.

Ibid., 3.


See Clark, Kiddie Lit, 57-69 for a more detailed analysis. In part, the popular reception of children’s literature (and the reluctance to recognize it as art) may be due to the commercial history of children’s literature, particularly its association with the Christmas season. Although children’s magazines like St. Nicholas were published year-round, children’s books were only published in the weeks immediately before Christmas, often in massive and expensively bound gift editions. In her attempt to divest children’s literature from the fiction factory approach, Moore appealed to publishers made squeamish by the cost of publishing such expensive editions year-round by framing children’s books as art. In “A Spring Review of Children’s Books,” published in May 1920, Moore proposed an expansion of the children book season beyond the Christmas holiday in hopes of promoting the publication of what she deems “real books.” She asks, “Why should we go on treating children’s books like Christmas toys? Why shouldn’t more of them be published in the spring and accorded more individual consideration as books, then, and at other seasons of the year?” (87). To be deemed real, Moore argued that the book must be simultaneously ordinary and sacred, easy to access but held in high esteem; however, children’s literature, tainted by a particularly commercialized season, could be neither. I would argue, however, that Moore’s emphasis on real book functioned as one of several ways that Moore aligned herself with the particular values of the antimodern movement and the Victorian values of her childhood and adolescence. For more on gift editions of children’s literature, see Marcus’s Minders of Make-believe, 135. For more on the commercialism of traditional American holidays, please see Leigh Eric Schmidt, “The Commercialization of the Calendar: American Holidays and the Culture of Consumption, 1870-1930,” The Journal of American History 78, no. 3 (1991): 887–916, doi: 10.2307/2078795.


Clark, Kiddie Lit, 74.

One bibliography, entitled “A List of Books about American Negro for Young Adults” was published in 1964 and was shortly followed by a second list entitled “Books By and About the American Negro” in 1966. Both were collated by the young adult librarians at the Countee Cullen Regional Branch and included biographies, poetry, fiction, music, drama, and history, most of which were written and, in the case of their record collection, performed by black authors and musicians. Countee Cullen Library staff, “A List of Books About the American Negro For Young People,” January 28, 1965, Box 1 Booklists (Assistant Coordinator-General Files), Folder: “American Negro, ca. 1964,” Office of Young Adult Services, New York Public Library Archives. Young Adult Librarians of the Countee Cullen Regional Branch, “Books by and about the American Negro: A Selected List for Young Adults” (The New York Public Library, 1966), Box 1 Booklists (Assistant Coordinator-General Files), Folder: “Books By and About the American Negro,” Office of Young Adult Services, New York Public Library Archives, New York.

Marcus, Minders of Make-believe, 35, 49. Many of these authors became celebrities in their own right; Alcott, for example, was frequently accosted by fans desperate for memorabilia, escaping to the woods when they became too insistent. For more on Alcott’s fanbase, please see Barbara Sicherman, Well-Read Lives: How Books Inspired A Generation of American Women (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

Clark, Kiddie Lit, 49.
Early 20th forward to "black cultural nationalism." Katharine Capshaw Smith, "Childhood, the Body, and Race Performance: space for black narratives and lives, a complicated stance that could reinforce regressive archetypes wh

through exuberant health and intense experience." Lears, medieval or Oriental cultures" which subsequently "reinforced the shift . . . to ideal of self-civilization. Moore, "Overcivilized" modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual

the Brownies’ Book,"

Moore to E.B. White, quoted in Sayers, not a “completely realized fantasy.” Moore, "Viewing and Reviewing Children’s Literature," 75, 76. Anne

critic who was “not in the least surprised to learn of [the press’s] very definite plans.” In many ways, Moore’s essay

in Moore’s ear words of encouragement. While the essay never specified exactly why the press chose to print “good

movement in the writing and publishing of books for children,” Dodge morphed a sort of guardian angel, whispe

“no.” When Moore’s limited influence did not convince the Atlantic Monthly Press to “[lead] a renaissance

through 1907-1908 they could not keep up with demand for Alcott’s books. A. M. Lawrence, “Monthly Report of


Clark, Kiddie Lit, 53.


Dodge’s prevalence in the essay, moreover, suggests that Moore saw herself as Dodge’s spiritual successor. When describing her interactions with the Atlantic Monthly Press, Moore framed herself as a powerless critic, “timidly” asking whether the press would begin publishing children’s literature. The response? A cheerful and firm “no.” When Moore’s limited influence did not convince the Atlantic Monthly Press to “[lead] a renaissance movement in the writing and publishing of books for children,” Dodge morphed a sort of guardian angel, whispering in Moore’s ear words of encouragement. While the essay never specified exactly why the press chose to print “good modern books for children, with the consistent maintenance of a high literary standard,” Moore’s new lineage—which connected her to the foremost children’s critic of Gilded Age–helped her transform herself into a self-assured critic who was “not in the least surprised to learn of [the press’s] very definite plans.” In many ways, Moore’s essay was prophetic. Not only did she become one of the most powerful critics, but Moore would also frequently mentor writers hoping to write for children, although her taste did not always match the public’s taste. For example, in one infamous case, she told E. B. White that Stuart Little would “become an embarrassment rather than the source of continuing pleasure and rewarding return any book from his pen should command,” as she believed the novel was not a “completely realized fantasy.” Moore, “Viewing and Reviewing Children’s Literature,” 75, 76. Anne Carroll Moore to E.B. White, quoted in Sayers, Anne Carroll Moore, 244. She would also later write a negative review for Charlotte’s Web.


As we saw in the previous chapter, Lears described American antimodernism as “the recoil from an ‘overcivilized’ modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual experience supposedly embodied in medieval or Oriental cultures” which subsequently “reinforced the shift . . . to ideal of self-fulfillment in this world through exuberant health and intense experience.” Lears, No Place of Grace, xvi.


Ibid., 184.


54. Tarkington, Seventeen, 10.

55. Ibid., 29.

56. Wexler, Tender Violence, 6.


167 Book Committee for Older Boys and Girls, “Books for Young People.”
169 Helen Hunt Jackson, Ramona, a Story (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1912), http://hdl.handle.net/2027/msu.31293105643104.
There is no more amazing phase of nine-teeth-century feminine development than its passionate and enervating indulgence in nauseous mental pabulum, and the appalling extent to which an unlimited supply of such stuff is furnished to the young. The same woman who is conscientiously careful of the school companionship of her daughter of twelve or fourteen years, is apparently criminally indifferent to the character of her associates in the world of books. She will watch what boy carries her girl’s books home from school, but forgets to look below the cover of the new novel that same daughter has brought back from the circulating library, stopping there for it on the way home. Now this apathy or ignorance in regard to what young girls read is responsible for the destruction of the finer tone of character of many of our children developing into womanhood, and explains a good deal of the frivolity, demoralizing coquetry, and unfortunate “affairs” which from time to time startle a community, and bring sorrow and disgrace on highly respectable families.

--Anonymous, “What Our Young Daughters Read,” 1883

The truth lies, as usual, between the two extremes. Too much reading--like anything in excess--is bad, but a generous allowance, if under a mother’s oversight, is an unmixed good. The young book-lover has always a resource at home, is not forever craving some excitement, does not wear the mother out with restlessness, nor keep her awake nights to plan entertainment for her. But to be of genuine use to a girl, books must be selected for her judiciously, as they should likewise be in the case of a son, these silent friends doing as much as any living teacher to form tastes, incite to modes of conduct, and impress opinions.

--Olive Thorne Miller, “The Daughter at Home,” 1890

In general it may be said that the young girl should never, on any pretense, be permitted to read an unworthy book. The catalogues of the large publishing houses are crowded with good things, and any one of the half dozen literary journals sufficiently describes and characterizes the publications. To spend time over a poor book is as unnecessary as it is unwise. And when one considers the influence of good literature, how large a majority of the noted men and women of all ages have been stimulated and nerved to action by the thought of others expressed in some form, it may not be regarded a matter of small moment to select the reading for a girl of eighteen.

--Helen Marshall North, “A Young Girl’s Reading,” 1890

In my first two chapters, I showed how reading, as depicted by G. Stanley Hall and Anne Carroll Moore, could be a terribly fraught process for teens.¹ Both framed bookstores and public
and private libraries as filled with potential landmines, i.e., unsuitable books filled with vice, stories lacking originality, and characters who modelled unacceptable subjectivities. It is perhaps unsurprising that they shared certain fears about the wrong kinds of books—although their respective magnum opuses were published a generation apart, the overlap between their careers provided several intellectual and theoretical commonalities in their work: their passionate belief in American potential, their reliance on anti-modernist thought, their desire to protect newer generations from the excesses of the old. Although both ended up constructing their own reading programs to support the next generation of Americans, their sense of literature’s place in adolescent development was diametrically opposed. Hall fervently opposed books for teens outside of a few approved texts, whereas Moore believed they played a crucial role in emotional and intellectual engagement and should be consumed voraciously. In the process, Hall and Moore created programs that imagined a white, even WASP reading public; at best, they mostly ignored immigrant teens and teens of color, or at worst, they assumed minority teens were not evolved enough to appreciate or learn from the literature given them.

With this in mind, I will examine how the adolescent American reader they imagined was not only white, but also gendered. This chapter aims to tease apart how Hall and Moore constructed images of white womanhood, bound up in particular intersections of race, nationality, gender, sexuality, and class, in literature for teens. Adolescent girls, as Barbara Sicherman notes, were frequently considered too voracious in their reading practices to continue unsupervised; however, in the years immediately before Hall wrote Adolescence, reading became a central component of women’s personal and social lives. Since reading, for women, could also “s[t]r imaginations and foste[r] female ambition,” a method of traversing the boundaries between public and private, developing a young woman’s literary taste became a crucial part of
her education, and editors, scholars, and librarians devoted reams of paper to guiding parents (mostly mothers) through this process.³ In fact, from 1883-1904, there were at least seven articles in *Harper’s Bazaar* alone that debated over what, when, where, and how much young girls should read (whereas the only articles addressing books for boys did so under the auspices of finding books for all children).⁴ Most, like Miller and the anonymous author of “What Our Young Daughters Read,” worried about the effects of the wrong novels on a young woman’s character; for example, Miller believed that “the stories of wild life so stimulating to a boy’s natural love of adventure may be read by his sister without injury,” but “goody books, which depict young monsters of virtue” should be avoided at all costs to avoid turning her into “a prig, with the reformation of her parents as her life’s work.”⁵ Others, like North, framed their response in more positive terms, focusing on how the right kinds of books could provide enough stimulation to spur young women to great heights in art, science, and history. In most, there is the overwhelming sense that young girls, whether eight or eighteen, could not be left alone to choose their books, for such lack of oversight would be potentially catastrophic for the girl, her family, and her community.⁶ In short, arbiters of culture and morality feared the effects of reading on young, middle-class, white girls significantly more than their male compatriots, likely because, as future potential mothers, they were tasked with the next generation’s upbringing (including guiding their own children’s reading practices).⁷

In particular, as older, more domestic models of femininity were replaced by newer, more publicly active models, i.e. the New Woman and her more disreputable descendent, the Modern Girl. I examine how Moore and Hall policed literary gender expression to promoted what they determined to be “authentic” girlhood.⁸ While scholars have extensively discussed Hall’s theories as they constructed broader gender norms after the *fin de siècle*, none have addressed
how his prescriptions intersected with contemporary women’s reading practice, like those of proto-flapper Mary MacLane. 9 Known as the “Wild Woman of Butte,” MacLane’s memoir, The Story of Mary MacLane was a rousing success due to MacLane’s overt sexuality and her young age (written when she was nineteen), but her tactics, while making her famous, also made her persona non grata amongst the educated elite, G. Stanley Hall included. 10 As for Moore, her work is framed by most scholars as revolutionary—she created a space for children and adolescents in the library, she pushed publishers to prioritize artistry in children’s literature, she helped professionalize women’s role in the public sphere, she advocated for a global vision of children’s literature, she created a litmus test for what constituted quality; however, as I argued in the previous chapter, she still regulated these spaces in ways that have gone unrecognized, either implicitly (in her refusal to represent the populations served by the NYPL in her essays) or, as I argue in this chapter, explicitly (in defining what represented “real” literary girls). 11

I bring these three figures together for several reasons: first, as I discussed in chapter two, Hall and Moore’s work, to a certain extent, can be read in conversation with each other. We know that Hall was familiar enough with Moore’s work to serve as an academic reference and that, after his death, Moore openly challenged Hall’s methods to justify her own literary prescriptions. Moreover, both figures’s work illuminated similar discourses that set careful boundaries around white womanhood. While their goals were different, i.e. Hall strongly resisted “bookishness” in hopes of curtailing women’s growing entrance into the public sphere whereas Moore worked to legitimize those steps through white respectability, both chose reading material and advocated reading practices that reflected the sexually conservative rhetoric of familial and community shame that dominated “What Our Young Daughters Read.” In contrast, Mary MacLane, who Hall deemed a “real type, although perhaps hardly possible save in this
country,” read transgressively, culling material from her favorite books and celebrities to write out sexually and philosophically adventurous diary entries that tracked a brilliant mind stifled by oppressive middle-class expectations of behavior. As a result, MacLane created a model of reading and fan engagement that was deeply subversive. Although Moore was not familiar with MacLane’s work, the former railed against literary “bad” girls, like Fannie Kilbourne’s Betty Bell, who modelled similar reading practices.

I argue that most of the “bad girls,” fictional or non-fictional, in this chapter are those who were wrought with excessive desires—to learn, to read, to explore their sexualities, to express their fandom—and the ways in which those desires were frequently conflated with wrestling away control of the male gaze. I examine how their desires and their self-awareness of the “gaze” allow them to manipulate (or try to manipulate) how they are perceived using what Liz Conor calls “techniques of appearing,” or “the manner and means of execution of one’s visual effects and status.” She argues that “appearing facilitates rethinking how the visual extent of the modern significatory scene spectacularized the feminine and produced a new subjectivity in which the performance of the feminine became more concentrated on the visual. It works from two claims: firstly, that the modern is a spectacular age, or that the significatory scene of the twentieth-century West privileges the visual; and secondly, that through a discursive web that includes the mechanical reproduction of images, commodity fetishism, illusion, and visual scandal, the modern feminine has been spectacularized.” In short, the modern women (whether new or otherwise) was more aware of the male gaze, and subsequently, “modern women understood self-display to be part of the question for mobility, self-determination, and sexual identity.” Although The Story of Mary MacLane and Betty Bell were actually published before Conor’s period of study, I will show how both protagonists, who mixed fannish obsession
with self-display and sexual agency, can be considered “modern types,” a combination which lead to their condemnation.

With this in mind, my chapter will examine how, as Hall and Moore both called for and crafted early definitions of adolescent literature, they explicitly or implicitly coupled white adolescent womanhood with white respectability, whereas Mary MacLane’s memoirs worked as a counter-narrative promoting “bad” behavior that undermined the bases upon which Hall’s and Moore’s goals were built. To do so, I will begin by using debates surrounding women’s education and the New Woman to illuminate how Mary MacLane not only deviated from Hall’s theories of American girlhood, but how her reading and writing practices invoked practices of fandom. MacLane borrowed, or poached as Henry Jenkins would write, from the texts she read to imagine alternative possibilities to the middle-class American lifestyle; subsequently, her fandom allowed her to not only frame her development in terms recognizable to contemporary fan culture, but also envision a bohemian life on the fringe of society, one filled with sexual promiscuity. In Adolescence, Hall argued she threatened the course of American progress because her work challenged his pedagogical models for young women, and in turn, she became symbolic of contemporaneous debates over college education for women.

Second, I will turn to Moore’s prescriptions for adolescent girls in her articles for The Bookman, specifically in her essay “Books for Young People,” to examine how she utilized particular book recommendations to implicitly censure depictions of Modern Girls. As discussed in the previous chapter, Moore was deeply concerned with developing and leading a burgeoning international market for American children’s literature at the same time as the Modern Girl started to emerge as a new global figure, one that was read as synonymous with sexual promiscuity and conspicuous consumption. Through a close examination of three novels
featured in her article “Books For Young People,” May Sinclair’s *Mary Olivier*, Fannie Kilbourne’s *Betty Bell*, and Booth Tarkington’s *Seventeen: A Tale of Youth and Summer Time and the Baxter Family Especially William*, I argue that Moore attempted to course correct towards more “respectable” forms of agency (i.e. as mothers or as career women) by rejecting the excessive desires, i.e. the commercialism, the fandom, and sexuality of Modern Girls.

While the structure of this chapter distinguishes between the New Woman and the Modern Girl in the introduction, I would argue that both bad girls, MacLane and Betty Bell, exhibit characteristics of both types, in part because the lines between the two were often murky and poorly distinguished, especially in the twenties and thirties. As the Modern Girl Around the World Research Group writes,

> the New Woman is frequently figured as the mother of the Modern Girl: contemporaries identified the New Woman with Reform and with social and political advocacy and associated her daughter with the ‘frivolous’ pursuits of consumption, romance, and fashion. While our research suggests a close association between the Modern Girl and commodity capitalism in all context, it also questions hard and fast distinctions that align New Women with political activism and Modern Girls with consumption. New Women were often avid consumers and passionate advocates of ‘free love,’ and Modern Girls embraced a variety of political projects including socialism and nationalism.  

Yet, I find that separating these two figures not only highlights the generational differences between Hall and Moore’s approach to women’s education, with Hall markedly against specialized education and rampant consumption while Moore directly benefitted from it, literary or otherwise. In particular, Moore, who hoped to expand children’s book purchasing beyond the holiday season certainly would capitalize on the public’s purchasing power, especially at the end of World War I.

“*I, of Woman Kind and of Nineteen Years*”: Mary MacLane, Fan Culture, and Reading like a New Woman
I, of woman kind and of nineteen years, will now begin to set down as full and frank a Portrayal as I am able of myself, Mary MacLane, for whom the world contains not a parallel.
I am convinced of this, for I am odd.
I am distinctly original innately and in development.
I have in me a quite unusual intensity of life.
I can feel.
I have a marvelous capacity for misery and for happiness.
I am broad-minded.
I am a genius.
I am a philosopher of my own good peripatetic school.
I care neither for right nor for wrong—my conscience is nil.
My brain is a conglomeration of aggressive versatility.
I have reached a truly wonderful state of miserable morbid unhappiness.
I know myself, oh, very well.
I have attained an egotism that is rare indeed.
I have gone into the deep shadows.
All of this constitutes oddity. I find, therefore, I am quite, quite odd.
I have hunted for even the suggestion of a parallel among the several hundred persons I call acquaintances. But in vain.
--Mary MacLane, *The Story of Mary MacLane*, 1902

The confessional outpourings of Mary MacLane constitute a unique and valuable adolescent document, despite the fact that it seems throughout affected and written for effect; however, it well illustrates a real type, although perhaps hardly possible save in this country, and was inspired very likely by the preceding [author Marie Bashkirtseff].
--G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, vol. 1, 1904

Some years ago—twelve or thirteen—a weird witch-light descended out of the air upon me in the person of Miss Mary MacLane. Anything more quaint and subversive—wise in deep ways, absurd in odd vanities, both quiet and volcanic, with a mind that undermined into dark corners and shook its little torch at the sun itself—I never expect to see in human flesh than this young and pretty girl from Butte, Montana. She had written a book of wild youthful revolt, a book which made a noise even though it had a streak of genius in it.
--Harriet Monroe, “Fire of Youth,” 1917

*The Story of Mary MacLane* opens two opposing images of its author, Mary MacLane. 18

In the first, a photograph that appears across from the title page, MacLane stands demure in a dark skirt and jacket setting off her white shirtwaist, hands behind her back, face tilted beneath her flowered hat, showing off the curves of her plump cheek. She looks somber, but genteel, a young, middle-class woman ready for her afternoon walk through a city park. In contrast, her first words, in the form of a long free-verse poem, present a striking piece of subjectivity

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dripping with confidence, even arrogance. A song of female self-knowledge, she proclaims her
genius, her uniqueness, her desire for renown, a striking juxtaposition to the modest woman
whose eyes barely meet that of the camera lens on the previous page. Ostensibly her diary
covering three months in 1901, the first entry of MacLane’s Story, as it will henceforth be
referred, set the tone for the rest of her memoir, promising an authentic exploration of a young
woman’s fertile mind, including her various reflections, philosophical musings, and sexual
fantasies (directed at both women and men). One could argue that the juxtaposition functioned
as a bait-and-switch, luring in the unsuspecting reader before shocking them with her bold
proclamations; however, I would suggest that the juxtaposition between the image and text
functioned as an early example of Conor’s techniques of appearing. In one interview, published
in Chicago Daily Tribune not long after Story was released to a ravenous public, both author and
illustrator labeled MacLane as a “poser” whose studied air reminded the illustrator of “stage
pictures” and book prints.19 Accompanying the article was a sketch of her postures, one of
which matched her stance in Story: “Pose No. 5--Exaltation. She stands at her full height, with
head thrown back and a haughty look in her eye. This is her attitude when included to defy the
world and its opinion.” In short, whether in books or in front of reporters, MacLane was deeply
aware of how she “should” appear to her audience, although as the snarky caption, “her every
attitude gives evidence of being well studied,” suggests, she wasn’t always quite successful.

No matter the article, however, it was strikingly difficult to pin down the “real”
MacLane. Her memoirs are filled with contradictions and inconsistencies; in one entry, she
wrote, “I wish to give the world a naked Portrayal of Mary MacLane: her wooden heart, her
good young woman’s - body, her mind, her soul.”20 In the subsequent entry, however, she
opened with “so then, yes. I find myself at this stage of womankind and nineteen years, a genius,
a thief, a liar,” a characterization that immediately put the veracity of her previous two entries (much less the rest of her diary) into doubt. Moreover, MacLane had no qualms owning up to her posturing post-publication. In a New York World article entitled “The Real Mary MacLane,” she told the reporter, Zona Gale,

But I pose all the time...I never give my real self. I have a hundred sides, and I turn first one way and then the other. I am playing a deep game. I have a number of strong cards up my sleeve. I have never been myself, excepting to two friends…most people are stupid unless they do [pose]. I wouldn’t be, but it is so amusing to pose. Besides, unless you aren’t clever enough to select poses, why ever be yourself to any one? You have a right to yourself for yourself and a few friends. Why should I give myself to you? You are nothing to me.

Of course, when Gale subsequently questioned her memoir’s authenticity, MacLane quickly revised her statement, noting “I do not see any beauty in self-restraint. Give something. If not yourself, then a pose. I gave myself [in Story].” As article’s title suggests, the reporter wanted to parse out MacLane’s personality, determine what was “real” and what was crafted for effect, but MacLane’s response suggests that this line of inquiry was useless—all and none were real to her. Such framing worked, as MacLane and her Story were almost immediately popular. The autobiography sold 100,000 copies within months of publication and inspired countless impassioned debates of its quality, parodies of its excesses, songs, cartoons, a local baseball team, and a tug boat; modernist critics like Monroe and writers such as Ernest Hemingway would cite her book as an influence. For Monroe, who hosted MacLane during her stay in Chicago and carried on a correspondence with MacLane that aroused feelings of friendship and (possibly romantic) ardor on MacLane’s side, MacLane’s game of self-display was bewitching in its audacity to claim both genius and control (if not always deftly handled) over her public persona. To others, like Hall, it was horrifying, a sign of how inauthentic contemporary culture had become.
To be fair, as a nineteen-year-old self-proclaimed outcast from Butte, Montana, Moore knew she had to be outrageous; triply disenfranchised by age, gender, and location, MacLane needed to cause a stir to get the fame she so desperately wanted. As she wrote her publisher in the months before her book went public, “I think the best possible advertisement for [the memoir] would be a severe criticism in the Bookman or Book-buyer or some equally well known reviewer. I believe if any of them could be persuaded to review it at length, my book would be fairly started on a career of sorts.” MacLane’s desires were left unfulfilled, at least by The Bookman; the editors of both American and British editions refused to discuss her text “at length,” with the former stating, “We have little desire to say anything about the so-called ‘Mary MacLane’ matter. It has all been very freely aired by the newspapers, and it strikes us only as being wholly preposterous, no matter in what way one looks at it.” That being said, her comfort with invoking outrage for her own personal benefit seems inspired by autobiographies from the previous generation of women who used the genre to justify their forays into the working world. As Barbara Sicherman writes,

Self-advertisement, not necessarily a virtue even for men of this generation, was altogether out of bounds for women. For a woman to write about herself in this way flew in the face of traditional norms of female modesty and renunciation of ambition of a nondomestic sort. Such conspicuous self-presentation required a conviction that the writer had accomplished something worth bringing to public attention.

As a nineteen-year-old, however, MacLane had few accomplishments (outside of graduating high school) and her (relatively) comfortable middle-class existence meant she had yet to hold a job. Instead, what she could offer her public is her oddness in the form of her diary, a persona packaged for consumption.

In particular, she found inspiration from another memoirist, Marie Bashkirtseff, a Ukrainian-born French diarist whose Journal was published posthumously in French in 1887 and
subsequently in English in 1889. Cathryn Halverson argues that both diaries share many of the same themes, including “an avowed objective to lay the self bare, but a growing belief in the impossibility of doing so; desire for fame and love, anguish at being alone and misunderstood, and a conviction that the journal is the sole place where its writer finally can be known,” and she notes some passages “appear to be borrowed directly from Bashkirtseff’s book.”

Moreover, while Bashkirtseff began her journals by claiming they contained “the exact, the absolute, the strict truth,” her entries would later imply that, as Halverson argues, “unearthing the strict truth of her being was an impossibility.” Of course, while MacLane noted their similarities in her first diary entry, she immediately reassured her audience that they would not receive a pale imitation, writing, “where [Bashkirtseff] is deep, I am deeper. Where she is wonderful in her intensity, I am still more wonderful in my intensity.” In short, if MacLane knew that her salability relied on a particular persona, her persona would be a puzzle, one that must be consumed repeatedly in order to be understood.

Scholars have cited a multitude of genres and texts that informed MacLane’s early self-positioning, including Bashkirtseff’s journal, women’s autobiography, spiritual confessionals, literatures of the American West and japonisme; in turn, they put Story forth as a text that is simultaneously queer, Western, feminist, psychoanalytic, a subversive series of “experiments in self-making by one who is, in every sense of the word, self-centered.” There has been little work done, however, on Story as a piece of adolescent literature—perhaps because, most obviously, there is no evidence that Story was written for teens as opposed to a broader audience. And yet, contemporaneous audiences certainly read her as young, as immature, or as an adolescent when reviewing her work; as one reviewer wrote, “who could think of a young woman of nineteen putting down her innermost thoughts, some of the strangest thoughts, too,
that ever coursed through the brain of an erratic mortal?” Hall, too, read her as one such example of *ephebic* literature, a genre he believed would document adolescent turmoil and could, with the right guidance, be used as a “corrective” for wayward youths. However, if young adult literature, as discussed in my introduction, includes all books invested in the process of becoming an adult, *ephebic* literature was based on two generic assumptions: first, only white (WASP), male adolescents could achieve full subjectivity or become an adult, thereby relegating white women, alongside men and women of color, to permanent adolescence. Second, indoctrinating adolescents into the right kinds of citizenship (a process that was both gendered and racialized) was the highest pedagogical priority. As such, if Hall argued that *ephebic* literature functioned as “a school of its own,” what kind of education could MacLane’s *Story* provide?

Moreover, since women were “by nature more typical and a better representative of the race and less prone to specialization,” Hall could read women’s autobiographies diagnostically to ascertain the most and least effective kinds of child and adolescent instruction, especially vis-à-vis encouraging citizenship. MacLane appears repeatedly throughout *Adolescence* as representative of the worst kind of womanhood, and since the famous were often read as synodical of the nation at the time, I argue that—by foregrounding her nationality—Hall implied MacLane’s autobiography was the consequence of a nation on the brink of disaster and thus entirely unsuitable for adolescent minds. With this in mind, I want to read her memoir as a novel of education threaded through fandom that modeled alternative modes of learning outside of the classroom, modes that in real life resulted in her banishment from elite college classrooms. Mary MacLane became, albeit for a very short time, a contested signifier of both the New
Women and the dangers of women’s education, one Hall adopted in *Adolescence* to justify his claims that women did not belong in higher education.

My goal here is two-fold: first, to explore how MacLane’s revisionary reading and writing practices *as an adolescent* constituted an early example of Liz Conor’s techniques of appearing, techniques that claimed subjectivity by transforming her primary source materials, Butte, Montana, and her literary heroes, into fodder for subversive self-expression. My argument builds upon Julia Watson’s interpretation of MacLane’s *Story* as a series of “experiments in self-making by one who is, in every sense of the word, self-centered,” but I resituate these experiments in fan studies and the growing celebrity culture at the end of the nineteenth century to better understand what MacLane hoped to gain from representing herself as a fan of a wide variety of materials. Second, I parse out what Hall means by calling MacLane a “real type” by showing how her “Huck Finn” upbringing deviated from his theories of women’s development; as discussed in chapter one, Hall worried that American girls were becoming androgynous by breaking away from the domestic space. I argue that MacLane’s “experiments,” especially those performative reading and writing practices that she used to construct her discursive self, are the primary source of Hall’s horror and condemnation, as this sort of self-conscious play would not only suggest MacLane hoped to reach developmentally beyond her sex and age, but that she also deliberately refused authentic womanly feelings and goals (at least as Hall would have defined them). Moreover, her autobiography’s massive popularity in the United States would likely have alarmed Hall, as MacLane provided a new model of adolescent womanhood for these girls to mimic, one that challenged his Victorian model of self-sacrifice in the face of familial, national and racial goals. Hall’s response, I argue, is exemplary of the paternalistic attitudes that would come to dominate young adult literary discourse, i.e., to protect
a particular group of teens—in this case, white American girls—from their own worst impulses, whether reading the wrong kinds of books, getting the worst kinds of education, or advocating for the pursuit of sexual pleasure (and, as we’ll see in the follow pages, these are frequently intertwined).

Julia Watson argues that, as MacLane attempts to shape a discursive “I”—a persona that variously invokes “genius, artist, bad girl—liar, thief, gambler—and frustrated sensuous women”—she culls from variety of literary sources including, she notes, the bildungsroman [novel of formation] and the Künstlerroman [artist-novel or “a novel which shows the development of the artist from childhood to maturity or later”]; however, she leaves these literary sources mostly untapped, preferring to frame MacLane’s posturing through terms of locale, i.e. her “anxiety of place” vis-à-vis Butte, Montana, or affective response, romantic (i.e., the Devil, her “anemone” lady, or Napoleon.). In placing both bildungsroman and Künstlerroman aside, Watson elides MacLane’s interests in providing pedagogical models for her audience, noting instead that “her literary style, a pastiche combining incantatory lists and litanies with manifesto-like declarations calculated to shock and entice, invites her reader to be both sparring partner and potential lover.” And yet, in MacLane’s opening prose-poem, she offers more than just a persona. She offers herself as a “philosopher of her own good peripatetic school,” a Victorian Socrates who, thanks to her age, gender, and location, must rely on the printing press, the newspaper, the telegram to spread her teachings. Few look to educational models as a source of her persona construction, perhaps because MacLane disavowed her formal education (which she received through high school), stating that her high school education only gave her “very good Latin, good French and Greek; indifferent geometry and other mathematics; a broad conception of history and literature.” She sources her peripatetic philosophy, instead, to outside sources,
an informal education she gathered from her walks in the wilderness and her extensive reading habit.

And yet, her claim is only partly true. Her formal education did give her Fanny Corbin, better known as MacLane’s “anemone lady,” a high school literature teacher who takes up much of MacLane’s romantic and sexual attention in *Story*. Cathryn Halverson reads Corbin’s presence as an expression of same-sex desire, one that simultaneously allowed MacLane to play with more masculine posturing.\(^42\) MacLane’s anemone lady inspires “a strange attraction of sex,” which she explains as follows:

There is in me a masculine element that, when I am thinking of her, arises and overshadows all the others. ‘Why am I not a man...that I might give this wonderful, dear, delicious woman an absolutely perfect love!’ And this is my predominating feeling for her. So then, it is not the woman-love, but the man-love, set in the mysterious sensibilities of my woman nature, It brings me pain and pleasure mingled in that odd, odd fashion. Do you think a man is the only creature with whom one may fall in love?\(^43\)

For Halverson, MacLane’s fantasies of Fannie allowed her to “incorporate[e] within herself male sexuality and the power it connote[d]” a queer act that, alongside her desire for the Devil, inspired much of the text’s controversy. That being said, I wonder if we can also read Corbin’s entrance into *Story* though another lens, that of the fan. Before Corbin, MacLane describes her life as lonely, without sympathetic friend or family member to dispel “this dull dreariness that wraps me round.”\(^44\) Upon Corbin’s entrance, however, MacLane proclaims, “now I have my one friend to love and to worship. I have named my friend the ‘anem-one lady,’ a name beautifully appro-priate. The anemone lady used to teach me literature in the Butte High School. She used to read poetry in the class-room in a clear, sweet voice that made me wish one might sit there forever and listen to it.” Corbin figures in her entrance in four ways: a friend, a Christian, a pedagogue, and a performer, but even though Corbin is compassionate and sympathetic,
MacLane notes that Corbin’s Christian ethics—selflessness, relative innocence—keep them from 
true mutual understanding. What compels her, then, to fantasize about this woman?

I turn to MacLane’s use of “worship” as an entry point to think about MacLane’s story as 
not just bildungsroman or Künstlerroman, but also as novel of fandom, or one could argue, a 
fanroman. If Watson argues that MacLane’s main transgressions are erotically charged, I would 
suggest that they are equally charged with obsessive fandom, in particular because fan studies 
offers us a model that ties together MacLane’s three main passions: consumption (of food, of 
books, of Napoleonic images), pedagogy (Corbin, her own peripatetic school), and connection 
(her desire for fame, for Corbin and the Devil, for a friend). In Henry Jenkins’ Textual 
Poaching, he argues that

fans construct their cultural and social identity through borrowing and inflecting mass 
culture images, articulating concerns which often go unvoiced within the dominant media...Because popular narratives often fail to satisfy, fans must struggle with them, to 
try to articulate to themselves and others unrealized possibilities within the original 
works. Because the texts continue to fascinate, fans cannot dismiss them from their 
attention but rather must try to find ways to salvage them for their interests...fans 
actively assert their mastery over the mass-produced texts which provide the raw 
materials for their own cultural productions and the basis for their social interactions.45

Poaching, or those acts of reading that borrow, revise, and combine canonical texts, is a 
subversive gesture, one that foregrounds personal pleasure over authorial intent (authorial here 
referring to both the intent of the original author and literary authorities more broadly defined, 
i.e. teachers, professors, literary critics). Such poaching does not exist in isolation; it can create 
affective communities bound together in a shared passion for a particular text (like Star Trek) or 
shared interpretive practice (reading slash fiction in which canonically straight Star Trek 
characters fall in love).46 As I’ll show below, the sources Watson cites as transgressive, i.e., 
Napoleon, Corbin, and the Devil must be examined in the context of the books MacLane reads 
since all constitute sources from which she can poach. While Watson characterizes her stance
with her audience as either lover or fighter, I would suggest that MacLane reads transgressively to model for (and subsequently create through her own celebrity) a community of “bad girls” of her own peripatetic school.

MacLane’s text is rife with fannish engagement beyond her (both real and imagined) relationship with Corbin. As stated previously, she appreciated Bashkirtseff and venerated Napoleon, in the latter case collecting seventeen different pictures of him with which she could fall in love. Moreover, she read widely and critically, writing, “when I read a book I study it carefully to find whether the author knows things, and whether I could, with the same subject, write a better one myself. The latter question I usually decide in the affirmative.” While this may not look fannish, her emphasis on “knows things” suggests a level of pedagogical and critical engagement that certainly illustrates her sense that “popular narratives often fail to satisfy.” In particular, she sharply critiqued popular girl’s fiction of the time, in large part because she felt she could not identify with their protagonists, who she described in acid tones. She wrote,

though I am young and feminine—very feminine—yet I am not that quaint conceit, a girl: the sort of person that Laura E. Richards writes about, and Nora Perry, and Louisa M. Alcott,—girls with bright eyes, and with charming faces (they always have charming faces), standing with reluctant feet where the brook and river meet,—and all that sort of thing. I missed all that…[in reading girl’s books] I felt I had more tastes in common with the Jews wandering through the wilderness, or with a band of fighting Amazons.

Her partial identification with “the Jews” and the “fighting Amazons” rather than the protagonists of Richards’ and Alcott’s novels, who were almost universally white, native-born Americans, suggests that, despite her background, she set herself apart from the assumed white, even WASP, middle-class audience for these novels, that she preferred to work and read on the margins of idealized citizenship.48
In addition, many of the novels written by Richards (the *Hildegarde* and the *Margaret* series) and Alcott (*Little Women*, *An Old-Fashioned Girl*, *Eight Cousins*) could be considered *bildungsroman*; most follow a young girl or several young girls as they grow up and get married. If we consider the generic constraints of the female *bildungsroman*, it is perhaps not surprising that MacLane felt alienated by these titles. As Susan Fraiman notes in *Unbecoming Women*, *bildungsroman* for men prioritized choice (of job, community, partner), one that “helped to construct the normative, middle-class man whose skills and labor are his own;” in contrast, *bildungsroman* with female protagonists foreground “compromise and even coercion…that they are largely what other people, what the world will make of them.” 49 Throughout *Story*, MacLane rejects compromise, a stance that frequently forces her at the fringes of Butte society, and, in the following sentences, she seems to reject the concept of development, arguing, “I am not a girl. I am a woman, of a kind. I began to be a woman at twelve, or more properly, a genius.” 50 That being said, she also cast aside adult heroines for being too beautiful and too heteronormative for her to identify with, writing that they “fell methodically in love with a man—always with a man.” 51 In other words, both models bored her *because of their reliance* on normative subjectivity, ones that she ultimately found personally limiting; instead, her favorite texts tended to be filled with violence and adventure, murder and mystery. 52

There is one *bildungsroman* of which she seems particularly, if not fond, then deeply invested in: Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*. 53 *Jane Eyre* would be a touchstone throughout MacLane’s life. While she would own to Zona Gale in her 1902 interview that the novel was one of the few texts she had read and enjoyed, in 1911 she would cite Brontë’s quote from *Jane Eyre*’s preface, “Conventionality is not morality,” calling Brontë herself a “noble-minded, gentle-souled woman.” In *Story*, MacLane’s feelings are more complicated. In one entry, she
included Brontë in a list of literary foremothers along with Bashkirtseff, George Eliot and Olive Schreiner, all of whom she deemed “geniuses” like herself.\(^{54}\) And yet, despite her admiration, she judged *Jane Eyre*, Brontë’s most famous work as a disappointment in two separate entries.\(^{55}\) In the first, dated January 29, MacLane argued that, despite having been created “out of the feeling and fullness of zealous hearts,” *Jane Eyre*’s muddled message led it to be misunderstood by the majority of its audience, including herself, although she admits that “I saw that there was a message—of bravery, perhaps, or of that good which may come out of Nazareth.”\(^{56}\) *Jane Eyre*, which she calls, “that pathetic, artless little old-fashioned thing,” still provided her a model—here, a model to understand how her Portrayal could both “give [her] praise and applause and money if [she] will prostitute [her] sensibilities and her emotions” and simultaneously, how that text may be warped, misread, or misunderstood by its readers. In the latter critique, written only two weeks later, her disappointment is all the more personal. In *Jane Eyre*’s plain face, MacLane saw a potential heroine, a model for her own life, but Jane’s sexually and socially conservative actions left MacLane cold, writing

> [Jane] should have entered into a marriage with her beloved Rochester in the first place. I should have, let there be a dozen mad wives upstairs. but I suppose the author thought she must give her heroine some desirable thing—high moral principles, since she was not beautiful...But, any way, I wish someone would write a book about a plain, bad heroine so that I might feel in real sympathy with her.\(^{57}\)

In other words, much like protagonists of girls’ books she critiques in the exact same entry, Jane’s failure rested in her contrived nature, her failure to be truly bad, to reject the world’s standards and morals in favor of the passion and personal pleasure that MacLane advocated.

With this in mind, I argue that this particular passage is perhaps MacLane’s most revealing because it implied that, in writing her *Story*, she actually did write a newer “version” of Brontë’s classic. In particular, *Story*, originally and evocatively entitled *I Await the Devil’s*...
Coming, contains multiple scenes that operate as proto-Mary Sue fan fiction for Jane Eyre. According to Busse and Helleckson, Mary Sue narratives place an idealized version of the author into another novels’ plot (usually as the central character); however, MacLane did not need to stretch very far to find similarities with her fictional counterpart. Both in their late teens, MacLane shared Jane’s plain face and sharp mind along with a penchant for long walks in a desolate countryside. Moreover, Mary MacLane’s two romantic interests, the Devil and the anemone lady, draw distinct parallels to Jane Eyre’s Mr. Rochester and, to a lesser extent, his romantic rival St. John Rivers. While Erika Marksbury argues that MacLane uses the Devil to “witness [and share in] her isolation” from the Christian community in Butte, I argue that, considering that the Devil re-appears immediately after MacLane first addressed Jane Eyre, we can also read him as a transplanted Rochester, a gothic hero for the Western set. MacLane imagined the Devil not “as that atrocious creature in red tights, with cloven hoofs and a tail and a two-tined fork” but instead “as an extremely fascinating, strong, steel-willed person in conventional clothes—a man with whom to fall completely, madly in love…He is so fascinating, so strong—so strong, exactly the sort of man whom my wooden heart awaits.” Like Mr. Rochester, whose teasing nature and dark past both frustrated and attracted Jane, MacLane imagined that Devil, who shared Mr. Rochester’s dark gaze, albeit a steel-gray to Rochester’s black, would trick and torture his beloved, grabbing her in his arms for stirring kisses and treating her “cruelly, brutally.”

Moreover, while MacLane previously associates marriage with the “virtuous” hypocrisy the Christian middle-class, marriage holds no threat in her Gothic Western; she labels herself a “dear little wife,” recalling Rochester’s proposal, in which he calls Jane, “my little wife!” Unlike Jane, however, MacLane holds more agency in the relationship—when Jane first hears of
Rochester’s impending marriage, she mistakenly assumes she is not the intended wife and, in despair, plans to leave Thornfield. In contrast, MacLane rewrites the scene by throwing herself at the Devil; later she even proposes marriage herself, one that “would be Bohemian, outlandish, adorable!”64 By rewriting Jane’s marriage plot to her liking, molding Rochester into her own image, MacLane not only constructs a community contradictory to the Christian morality promoted by Jane (and the Butte middle-class), but she also takes control of the bildungsroman plot, allowing her to determine the content and the constraints of their marriage.

I want to return, however, for a moment to Miss Corbin, who I argue functions not only as an expression of MacLane’s same-sex desires, but also provides an additional alternative to the heteronormativity offered by many girls’ bildungsromanen. As stated previously, Corbin is both inspiration and foil for MacLane’s posing: “she is different from me as is day from night. She believes in God—that God that is shown in the Bible of the Christians. And she carries with her an atmosphere of gentleness and truth. The while I am ready and waiting to dedicate my life to the Devil in exchange for Happiness—or some lesser thing.”65 To be fair, as a real person, Corbin shares little with St. John Rivers except that both are pedagogues with a sharp devotion to Christian morality that blinds them to their potential partner’s true feelings. St. John’s missionary zeal requires Jane to not only give up Rochester (and England), but also passion and, likely, a future. Conversely, the anemone lady cannot see MacLane’s desire to “go and live with her in some little out-of-the-world place high up on the side of a mountain for the rest of my life” nor would she want it, for Corbin’s “life is made up mostly of sacrifices—doing for her fellow-creatures, giving of herself. She never would leave this.”66 One could argue that MacLane, in hoping to steal away her anemone lady, takes on a Rochester-like insistence here, which I argue undermines the heteronormative compromise that structures Jane Eyre’s ending. In Unbecoming
Women, Susan Fraiman argues that, while Jane finds herself married “with all the privileges of an upper-class wife” by the narrative’s end, she never escapes servitude, moving from governess to Rochester’s primary caretaker (a job previously filled by Rochester’s housekeeper). And yet, as a Rochester stealing away a Rivers, MacLane can imagine a more equitable (and resolutely queer) ending. Therefore, if MacLane found both her relationship with Corbin and Jane Eyre disappointing, she could use the latter to rewrite the former into a sort of Mary Sue femslash (fan fiction focusing on the sexual or romantic relationships between women) which not only gave Jane Eyre a distinctly pedagogical function throughout her Story, but also re-centered adolescent imagination as a valid form of literary engagement.

With this in mind, her constant self-comparison to Brontë, Napoleon, Bashkirtseff, and others who had achieved fame illustrated one such method for tapping into Victorian celebrity culture, but celebrity—literary or otherwise—during the nineteenth century was a privilege typically reserved for men, i.e., the Lord Byrons, the Longfellows, the Napoleons of the world whose talents only proved their masculine superiority. Those women who did, as Mary Kelley notes, often bore about them the signifiers of domestic life (even as they contested them), but women could not openly, expressly desire for fame. Instead, they had to perform their fame through more alternative methods, either through their relation to famous men or, if achieved through their own talents, to disavow any active pursuit (as it implied one wanted to sell oneself like an actress or, worse, a prostitute). Unlike most female authors in the late nineteenth century, however, MacLane was open in her intention to be known and renowned. In her second diary entry, she complained that, because she was a woman, she could not fight like her idol Napoleon to “make a deep impression of [her]self on the world.” She continued,

I am filled with an ambition. I wish to give to the world a naked Portrayal of Mary Mac Lane: her wooden heart, her good young woman's - body, her mind, her soul. I wish to
write, write, write! I wish to acquire that beautiful, benign, gentle, satisfying thing--Fame. I want it--oh, I want it! I wish to leave all my obscurity, my misery--my weary unhappiness--behind me forever…I wish this Portrayal to be published and launched into that deep salt sea--the world. There are some there surely who will understand it and me.

Using the language of conquest (“launched into that deep salt sea”), she reveals that, like her desire for Corbin, her identification with Napoleon stemmed from a desire for masculine power. As a woman, she knew that her best avenue for fame and connection was through writing, or that writing could give her a motive and a method for fighting and changing her life. To claim this desire as a woman (and a young woman moreover) was truly scandalous.

That being said, MacLane appears to have pilfered a variety of literary rhetorical moves in *Story* to construct her fanbase. To claim Brontë as a foremother, for example, was far from unique; as Brenda Weber notes, Brontë’s “life and career stood as the touchstone for what it meant to be a famous woman in the Victorian period,” especially as “a reference point for gendering fame and authorship.” Moreover, her invocation of masculinity and male idols suggests some interplay with male as well as female *bildungsroman*, for if the male *bildungsroman* offers the illusion (if not always the reality) to choose one’s work, partner, or community, MacLane certainly invoked all three in her stance as both fan and fledgling celebrity: her work, her (potential) partners, her community is all the work of fandom.

MacLane’s bombastic opening, however, intimates a third rhetorical device: the lyric poem. Although definitions of lyric poetry are, as Yopie Prins and Virginia Jackson note, ever shifting and “blurry around the edges,” David Haven Blake writes that, if celebrity relies upon a false notion of intimacy between celebrity and fan, the genre, which frequently prioritized an individual’s emotive experience, began to capitalize on that intimacy in the nineteenth century. He argues, “[w]hen compared to other poetic genres, the nineteenth-century lyric received special praise for its ability to arouse intense feelings of closeness and devotion in its readers…”

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Coaxed to engage emotionally with the speaker (either through reverence, identification, fascination, repulsion, or desire), readers appraised these widely circulated texts by their personal impact. One could argue that MacLane’s opening was simply another one of the many lists strewn throughout the text, particularly since MacLane eschewed any rhyme or meter that could help clue her audience in, but MacLane, who loved listening to Corbin recite poetry and cited Poe and Byron amongst her idols, may have seen her first entry—formatted in short poetic lines proclaiming her individuality and her “marvelous capacity for misery and for happiness”—as a chance to invoke the emotional reaction needed to gain a bevy of followers. Starting her “diary” with poetry allows MacLane to blur the lines between private and public, casual and formal, authentic and posed, inviting her audience into her artistic mind.

To bolster her reach (and her sales), MacLane called on newspapers, writing to her publisher,

I agree with you that the sale of the book might be promoted by interviews with newspaper writers, and I shall receive any that may come. And I think you may rely on me to use discretion in the matter. I shall grant an interview wherever I can see that it will be an advantage to the book, but I shall try to avoid anything like mere cheap notoriety and sensationalism which can only detract from it.

To appear more trustworthy, public figures in the late nineteenth century commonly used newspapers to craft a more authentic image, revealing themselves as flawed but essentially “good” people. If we momentarily return to the articles published from the Chicago Daily Tribune and the New York World, however, we can see that MacLane refused to be authentic. For example, in her interview with Zona Gale, MacLane refused any connection to contemporary poets and novelists; she claimed she “did not read,” that, in fact, she had never read Whitman or Christina Rossetti, read little Dante and Bashkirtseff, and disliked Longfellow. However, she immediately contradicted herself by citing her favorite authors, (Virgil, Poe, and Chaucer, along
with Stevenson, Dickens, *Jane Eyre*, and Ross), I would argue that this was a new posture, one to prove her originality. Throughout various articles, MacLane would play up her authorial persona, suggesting that if reading was pedagogically transformative for MacLane, then writing was doubly so, if only because, by creating her revisionary text as a woman and as an adolescent, she could more easily create sensations for a willing public to both *purchase* and *follow*.77

And follow they did, transfixed by her posing both in and outside of her memoirs. As noted previously, she inspired baseball teams and vaudeville shows, and fans celebrated her “genius” in letters to the *New York World* (the same newspaper Zona Gale, and eventually MacLane herself wrote for).78 Halverson points to multiple instances of young girls and women who wrote their own books in response to MacLane’s work, hoping for their own literary fame; in one article published in the *Butte Inter-Mountain*, Mary is quoted as saying, “It is with pain that I read of the dire effects of my book on the minds of young girls…I think that the book has appealed to them…I think that I have written something that creeps into the barrenness of their lives and illuminates the darkness that is within ‘em,” going on to cite various clubs and two suicides (one successful and one narrowly averted) connected to her book.79 While the article’s sarcastic tone throws the interview’s veracity into doubt, her status as a celebrity with a multitude of fans was not—people were fascinated, entranced, and repulsed by her posing, i.e., her techniques of appearing, as both fan and creator.

Several letters over the summer of 1902 suggest that, in reality, MacLane was somewhat unprepared for the attention celebrity would bring her. When showered with fan mail, she complained,

about these letters – I think you have taken unnecessary trouble with them. I receive many of them every day which I never think of reading, not only because of their probable character, but because they do not interest me and I have not time to waste upon them…Doubtless there are many kind and sincere ones among them – like the one you
enclose – but I do not feel called upon to give any attention to these unsought tributes.80 While one could argue that her dismissal of such fan materials illustrates a similar dismissal of the community she created, Halverson notes that she wrote her own fan letters to literary luminaries that she admired.81 As such, I would argue that a broad fandom was never her intention. Instead, if we look at her journey towards Radcliffe College in Cambridge, MA, we can see her posturing may have been aimed at constructing a more selective and more educated audience. Newspapers celebrated her journey East for its pedagogical implications, i.e., the further East she went, the more refined she could become, and newspapers debated what highbrow women’s college would let her into their hallowed halls.82 Since Corbin, MacLane’s chaperone out East, was attending summer school at Radcliffe, it was decided—by MacLane, by Stone, by Corbin, the archival material leaves one unsure—MacLane would do the same, but her letters back to Stone suggest that her desire to study was real, although she preferred chemistry to English, as she noted, “I write a pure Anglo-Saxon style.”83

Corbin, however, expressed some frustration with MacLane’s memoire after its publication, in part due to her new notoriety and in part because MacLane’s posing could close the very doors they both hoped to open. Upon MacLane’s arrival in Boston, newspapers reported that Corbin, upon taking charge of her former student, convinced her to refuse all interviews (although MacLane would report to her publisher that she became significantly more selective in “consider[ation] of my own physical and mental comfort”).84 In one article, Corbin allegedly took a more severe approach to policing her former student, saying “Mary must be careful…or I’ll spank her. There’ll be no more interviews, no more freaks, no more talking in the air if I have anything to say in the matter. To use the vernacular, she must get onto her job and cease from being a chump. She’ll keep away from reporters if I have to lock her up.”85 Her response
(whether severe or sweet, depending on the report) seemed aimed to curtail MacLane’s personas, which were deemed by both the public and conservative Radcliffe college staff as too disruptive. Corbin reported that the college not only required extensive entrance exams deemed too difficult for a girl educated in western school, but that they were “not superlatively anxious to receive Mary MacLane.” In other words, while MacLane tried to construct herself as a “peculiar rare genius,” an educated woman whose philosophies on art and life needed no improvement, her actual audience received her as a wild woman, uncouth, uneducated, and fame-hungry—after a couple failed appeals, she ran off to New York with Zora Gale to become a reporter for the *New York World*.

I would argue that Radcliffe’s refusal to admit MacLane illustrated the contested position of women’s education and the particular dangers of “bad books” (referring either to the books MacLane read or the book she wrote) on the adolescent female mind. To better understand how she functioned as a symbol of those debates (albeit for a short time), I want to turn to Hall’s stance on MacLane with respect to his theories on women’s development and pedagogy, as he epitomized a particularly vehement stance against women in higher education. As stated previously, Hall used women’s memoirs diagnostically, and MacLane, who venerated “badness,” represented the worst of American womanhood because, as I argue here, Hall most explicitly tied his eugenic philosophy to a woman’s moral, spiritual, and physical duties. If men were meant to protect the home (both physically and monetarily), women were supposed to protect and educate their children, a duty given to them by God and reinforced by the women’s evolutionary instincts. He wrote,

As Augustine said, the soul is made for God and is not happy till it finds rest in him, so women’s body and soul are made for maternity and she can never find true repose for either without...even if she does not realize it, her whole nature demands first of all children to love, who depend on her for care, and perhaps a little less, a man whom she
heartily respects and trusts to strengthen and perhaps protect her in discharging this function. This alone can complete her being, and without it her sphere, however she shape it, is but a hemisphere.  

In short, if T.J. Jackson Lears claims that *Adolescence* is a paean to domesticity, then this quote is its rhetorical climax, one that recalls the Victorian “angel of the house,” a conservative myth of Christian womanhood defined by her “domesticity, unworldliness, asexuality, innocence, even helplessness in matters outside the domestic sphere.” Moreover, by labeling women as more “generic,” Hall could twist recapitulation theory into making the angel a woman’s biological destiny. While Hall begrudgingly admitted that “[woman’s] academic achievements have forced conservative minds to admit that her intellect is not inferior to that of man,” he still argued that her brain was modeled differently enough that her talents did not extend far outside the home, and thus, she should be given an education that prioritized domestic competence over academic rigor.  

To his horror, Hall saw contemporary women distracted from their domestic duties by a new and distinctly feminist model of womanhood, “the New Woman.” As Sally Ledger writes in *The New Woman: fiction and feminism at the fin de siècle*, the New Woman functioned discursively in complex and ever-changing ways, a combination of oddball archetypes concerning women whose lives undermined heteronormative and gendered paradigms. The lines delineating the New Women were fuzzy, at best: masculine or feminine, sexual or asexual, wedded or spinster, barren or fertile, regardless of her attributes, Ledger argues, “all that was certain was that she was dangerous, a threat to the status quo,” and the fluidity of the New Woman, as June Howard asserts, meant she was “constantly combined with other images.” In MacLane’s case, newspapers rendered her as a sort of “New Woman of the Wild West,” a combination of cowboy, rube, and hussy. For example, when the *Boston Globe* celebrated
MacLane’s arrival in the article “Mary, The Elusive: She is here, here, here!,” two MacLanes appeared in the accompanying illustration. The first, a roughly hewn cowgirl shooting off pistols in every direction, rides into town on a massive, cartoonish horse. Newspapers fly about her as she grins maniacally; on her head, she wears a massive cowboy hat inscribed with the words, “I’M IT!”

The second resembled a much more common archetype popularized by the Gibson Girl, i.e., wealthy, well-educated, and white. Like the photo that appeared at the opening of *Story*, MacLane wears a neat dress, carries a dainty umbrella, but considering this image is dwarfed by MacLane as wild woman, one suspects that both illustrator and author were somewhat disappointed that the spectacle created by MacLane’s *Story* did not match her in reality.

Although Hall never explicitly used the term “the New Woman”—his preferred term was “feminist”—we can see from his tone that his opinion of those women who refused his domestic status quo fell into the “dangerous” camp. For Hall, “the New Woman” was particularly well-educated, the kind of young woman who entered higher education not for enjoyment but for employment, and who entered the work force so she could purchase luxury goods and appease her own selfish desires instead of the hard work and self-sacrifice required of a good housewife. He wrote,

> Excessive intellectualism insidiously instils the same aversion to ‘brute maternity’ as does luxury, overindulgence, or excessive devotion to society. Just as man must fight the battles of competition, and be ready to lay down his life for his country, so woman needs a heroism of her own to face the pain, danger, and work of bearing and rearing children, and whatever lowers the tone of her body, nerves, or morale so that she seeks to escape this function, merits the same kind of opprobrium which society metes out to the exempts who can not or who will not fight to save their country in time of need.\(^\text{93}\)

Accordingly, motherhood was more than just a spiritual or physical imperative, it was a national one, an act of citizenship required by every American woman; however, Hall’s subsequent
language here becomes increasingly antagonistic and eugenic. Those who refused to conceive, in Hall’s eyes, should be classified as bottom feeders along with those “least fitted to survive” because they would not contribute to the overall national product: well-developed boys and girls devoted to national and racial progress. That being said, the majority of his censure was aimed at those women who would knowingly avoid motherhood, or worse, help others avoid motherhood through more scientific means, deeming them traitors (or crackpots) undermining the United States. To end this cycle of anti-American behavior, Hall offered a dual pedagogical solution for young women, one that reinforced a domestic prerogative by strictly separating adolescents by gender (to avoid encouraging androgyny) and dovetailing all secondary and higher educational programs to foreground skills needed by America’s future mothers. This pedagogical model, which he pointedly noted was “based on their nature and needs not on convention or the demands of feminists,” bore a marked resemblance to a liberal arts education: exercise a heavy focus on religion and nature, and eventually art, history, philosophy and psychology, some literature, and of course, domestic skills to prepare them for managing their future homes and educating their children. None, however, should be taught beyond the basics.

When Hall proposed sex-segregated educational policies, he was responding to a drastic increase in higher education for women, who were attending coeducational colleges (like the University of Michigan, which began enrolling women in 1870), coordinated institutions (like Radcliffe College, which opened as an “Annex” to Harvard in 1879), or women’s only colleges, (like Bryn Mawr College, which opened as a women’s only institution in 1885) in massive numbers, jumping from 11,000 in 1870 to 85,000 in 1900. Certainly, this growth was controversial—Dr. Edward H. Clarke wrote a scathing indictment of the trend in 1873 entitled Sex in Education; or A Fair Chance for Girls, in which he argued giving women the same
education as men would damage both mind and body, noting “the physio-logical motto is,
educate a man for manhood, a woman for womanhood, both for humanity. In this lies the hope
for the race.” With twelve printings in a year, and fifth edition by 1875, the text cast a pall
over, but did not stop, women’s colleges from forming, and upcoming generations of female
academics would remember his book as a “gloomy little specter.” With this in mind, by the
time Hall wrote Adolescence, he was rehashing an old argument, albeit one that come into vogue
again. For example, after a 1901 speech to Detroit educators, his argument against co-education
was attacked by both male and female pedagogues as undemocratic and unsupported by evidence
(as one Dr. Sarah Hackett Stevenson noted, “We all make mistakes at times, and this is one of
which Dr. Hall is guilty. He is a scholarly, thoughtful man, and one not prone to error, but the
theory he has just presented is so evidently fallacious that it is not worth discussing.”) Reports,
however, suggest that the audience was split on the issue, and he would continue preaching this
doctrine to critical and supportive audiences into the late aughts, culminating in a 1908 article,
“The Kinds of Women Colleges Produce,” that directly attacked “splendid spinster presidents”
who advocated advanced training and specialization for their female students.

In turning to The Story of Mary MacLane, we can see that MacLane’s self-construction
realized many of Hall’s fears about racial failure. First, MacLane’s description of her homelife
decomposed the domestic unit and obliterated Hall’s angel. In the first entry, she described a
broken family scene filled with disdain and misunderstanding—while Hall’s family was led by a
strong, loving paternal figure, MacLane’s father, Jim MacLane, had died when she was eight
(and when he was alive, she noted, he was “quite incapable of loving any one but himself.”) Her step-father certainly did no better, as his financial mismanagement forced MacLane to stay
in Butte instead of attending Stanford University, a fact that may account for his mysterious
absence from her diary. As for her mother, who was supposed to be a source of support and guidance, MacLane wrote,

My mother, having been with me during the whole of my nineteen years, has an utterly distorted idea of my nature and its desires, if indeed she has any idea of it. When I think of the exquisite love and sympathy which might be between a mother and daughter, I feel myself defrauded of a beautiful thing rightfully mine, in a world where for me such things are pitiably few.

With a mother grown and devoted to her own cares and her other children, MacLane would, according to Hall, miss her own “angel in the house” at the most crucial stage of development, and as Gale's interview suggested, this disconnect between mother and daughter may have turned her off motherhood altogether: “I would rather be a fairly happy wife and mother,’ she said simply. ‘There is nothing better in the world. But I shall never be. I am not worthy to be. You see, all the tastes and instincts with which I was born are not high. I am not good at heart.”

MacLane never did go on to have any children, but regardless of whether or not MacLane truly believed herself incapable of being a mother at the time, she displayed few proclivities for marriage and baby making in Story.

Moreover, as an inhabitant of the “West” and its “nothingness,” MacLane could cultivate a certain androgyny, for by framing her “wild,” she ended up fits Hall’s ideals for a young boy and a young girl. As we saw in chapter one, Hall recommended that boys get into all kinds of physical scrapes and moral quandaries—to be savage—to build up their nerve energy so they may survive the increasingly cerebral work that dominated the middle-class lifestyle. MacLane constructed her childhood self as a female Huck Finn, spending most of her days playing outdoors covered in dirt, fighting her friends, running amuck, and refusing to follow any rules for food or bedtime. She wrote, “I was a little wild savage...I was full of infantile malice. Truly I was a vicious little beast. I was a little piece of untrained Nature.” Her description easily fits the
moral quandaries and physical scrapes Hall prescribed for any young boy, although her inspiration more likely came from stereotypes of western life than academic theories of human development. This doesn’t mean that MacLane rejected all aspects of domestic life but Halverson rightly argues that, while MacLane found her middle-class home stifling, her diaries entries transformed her chores into venues for “self-expression,” another subversion of expected women’s work. Regardless, while Hall believed a strong, loving hand would eventually transform bad boys into altruistic, nationally-minded men, MacLane’s freedom to move, to feel, to rage is never checked as she grows into adolescence. Instead, devoid of familial comforts, MacLane found solace walking in the wilds outside of Butte, and although she argued her childhood created much of her subsequent suffering, we can see her “vicious” upbringing provides the emotional core of her writing and her self-proclaimed genius.

MacLane’s framing of Butte (and the North American West more broadly) as the edge of civilization places her in a particularly liminal space, one that allowed her a great amount of freedom to play with her identity, and as many scholars have noted, MacLane used the barren wilderness to construct her morality as explicitly bad. In particular, by growing up in Butte, a space caught between “Nothingness” and “Bohemia,” she was bereft of all gentle guidance that Hall would prescribe for a young girl, both personal and institutional, masculine or feminine, national or racial. Not only is her mother unsympathetic, she finds herself surrounded by “dumb” townspeople. Several diary entries are devoted to their description, and none are flattering, in no small part due to the diversity dominating the streets. She noted, in language that often utilizes racist and stereotypical imagery, that the mixture of nationalities and racial background in Butte is particularly potent, including but not limited to Irish, Cornish, African, Chinese,
Jewish, and Scandinavian inhabitants.\textsuperscript{110} Regardless, their hometown is their doom, “for the entire herd is warped, distorted, barren, having lived its life in smoke-cured Butte.”\textsuperscript{111}

MacLane, as observer and outsider, positioned herself above them, and yet, this diverse mixture allowed her to find alternative models of womanhood, which, as Watson argues, gave her a more complicated relationship to the town she calls home. For example, MacLane described her relationship with an old Irish woman, a “profane old woman [whose] morals are not good—have never been good—judged by the world’s standards,” to illustrate how she developed her badness, or in this case, her “philosophy of stealing.”\textsuperscript{112} MacLane described her visits to the old woman thusly:

I sit with her for an hour or two and listen to her [tell stories of her life]. She is extremely glad to have me there. Except me she has no one to talk to but the milkman, the groceryman, and the butcher. So always she is glad to see me. There is a certain bond of sympathy between her and me. We are fond of each other. When she sees me picking my way towards her house, her hard, sour face softens wonderfully and a light of dis-tinct friendliness comes into her green eyes. Don't you know, there are few people enough in the world whose hard, sour faces will soften at sight of you and a distinctly friendly light come into their green eyes. For myself, I find such people few indeed. So the profane old woman and I are fond of each other. No question of morals, or of immorals, comes between us. We are equals.

Halverson argues that MacLane’s inclusion of this scene gives MacLane “a sense of daring in associating with others she considers definitely beneath her,” but in this space where morals have no place, MacLane found comfort in the old woman’s stories and in their shared outsider status.\textsuperscript{113} In turn, the old women inspired MacLane to spend money stolen from a much wealthier woman on chrysanthemums for her friend---although she argued both theft and purchase were more for her personal pleasure than for the old woman’s. And yet, the bonding experience helped her rationalize her supposed “bad” behavior and create a new morality, one based on mutual pleasure between women (i.e., running away with Corbin or giving expensive flowers to an old Irish woman) instead of self-sacrifice for familial or institutional gain.
Moreover, MacLane’s reading and writing practices allowed her to imagine alternatives to Hall’s Angel—in her on-going romance with the Devil, who appears in much of her writing, as in *Story*, she critiqued middle-class marriage as passionless and stultifying. If Mr. Rochester-as-Devil provided a space to imagine relationships centered around tempestuous ardor, she expanded the scope of her analysis in a 1902 article, “On Marriage,” for the *New York World*. MacLane satirized those who married for economic security, and upon this, she built a more extensive critique of monogamy as a whole:

> If you are married your fate is—in a measure—sealed. And there must be something even more than hell-and-damnation in the thought that you are bound closely, viciously to some person by devilish vows, that you must share the life of that person, that you must listen to him when he talks, that you must sit opposite to him at table three times every day of your life, that you can go nowhere, do nothing, have no friends, do no work—unless this person has part in each.

MacLane recognized the sort of absorption that women faced in a marriage (especially Hall’s vision of marriage, although there’s no evidence she knew his work), and the implication that her life was now permanently devoted to her husband. Moreover, she noted that people tended to get bored with their partners, to seek out alternatives through divorce or affairs. Instead, she proposed an alternative: marriages as “experiments—to be put away if unsuccessful.” As for herself, she could still use her Devil to get out of the thing entirely, for “I who once aspired, as it were, to the hand of his majesty, the Devil [,] should now so far descend from the ideals of my youth as to contemplate casting my lot with that of a mere man.”

Of course, Hall, who sought to stringently limit the subjectivities available to young women, would have found her reading and writing habits abominable, as they provided an education in direct opposition to the selfless angels who lined his “royal highway,” and he condemned Mary MacLane and her peers, Stella Klive, poet Hilma Strandberg and Marie Bashkirtseff in his chapter on “Adolescent Girls and Their Education.” They functioned, for
Hall, as an example of “the characterlessness normal to the prenubile period in which everything is kept tentative and plastic, and where life seems to have least unity, aim or purpose” but he hoped that MacLane et al. would recognize their need for children, either through marriage or as spinsters devoted to their care). Otherwise, he warned,

Unless marriage comes there is lassitude, subtle symptoms of invalidism, the germs of a rather aimless dissatisfaction with life, a little less interest, curiosity, and courage, certain forms of self-pampering, the resolution to be happy, though at too great cost...by thirty, she is perhaps goaded into more or less sourness; has developed more petty self-indulgences; has come to feel a right to happiness almost as passionately as the men of the French Revolution and as the women in their late movement for enfranchisement felt for liberty. Very likely she has turned to other women and entered into innocent Pla-tonic pairing-off relations with some one...there is a slight stagna-tion of soul...an analysis of psychic processes until they are weakened and insight becomes too clear; a sense of responsibility without an object; a slight general malaise and a sense that society is a false “margarine” affair; revolt against those that insist that in her child the real value of a woman is revealed.”

He sourced many of these attitudes not only to MacLane and her ilk, but also to women’s colleges, arguing that they could promote childlessness in their students, a feeling that, he argued, had massive racial consequences. In short, in four pages of text, Hall created a massive “slippery slope fallacy” connecting MacLane and women’s colleges to declining marriage rates, implied lesbianism, and racial suicide, but Hall was one of many academics complaining about women’s colleges. Radcliffe College, in particular, had been the target of many jokes and rumors proclaiming their students unmarriageable, or worse, lesbians, so it’s perhaps no wonder that they denied MacLane access—it is likely they worried she would have confirmed the rumors and, as one newspaper suggested, “keep others away.”

That being said, while MacLane’s androgyny and rebellious reading and writing practices horrified Hall at the turn of the century, by the early twenties, Hall not only revised his opinion of her life but her “kind,” due in no small part to the impact of World War I. In a 1922 article for The Atlantic Monthly entitled “Flapper Americana Novissima,” Hall welcomed the adolescent
flapper, of which he included “poor Mary MacLane,” with open arms, writing “the modern female ephebe comes nearer than any human being ever did before to being ‘all mankind’s epitome.’” Casting aside his angel, who “since the war...has become as extinct as the dodo, if indeed she ever existed at all,” Hall celebrated this new type of celebration: in the flapper’s passion for romance, her frequent disavowal of parental influence and tradition, and perhaps most shockingly, her intelligence, she was “more or less a product of movies, the auto, woman suffrage, and, especially, of the war.” In other words, if young men were the at the top of Hall’s developmental order in 1904, they were replaced as defective due to the trauma of warfare, whereas the young flapper’s “new and ostensive assertiveness” was “rejuvenating” for young and old alike. By the end of the article, he places the fate of civilization at her feet, quoting Faust’s “Das ewig Weibliche zieht uns hinan” [The eternal feminine draws us forward].

I do not want to suggest, however, that “Flapper Americana Novissima” represented a seismic shift in Hall’s thinking or that he completely recentered his theories along contemporaneous feminist paradigms, i.e. the same paradigms he openly rejected in Adolescence. As Chani Marchiselli notes, Hall excised both feminist and angel from his royal highway; however, for Hall to make the flapper knowable, he argued that he must remain objective, distant. In a discomforting scene, Hall described following a teenage flapper, thinking,

But a deep instinct told me that I could never, by any possible means hope to get into any kind of personal rapport with her or even with her life. I might have been her grandfather, and in all the world of man there is no wider and more unbridgeable gulf than that which yawns between me and those of my granddaughter’s age. If I should try to cultivate her, she would draw back into her shell; and to cultivate me would be the very last of her desires. Hence, as was only fair to her, I turned to a third source of information about her, namely her teacher.
In short, he argued, to treat the flapper, or any adolescent girl, “fairly,” he must remove her voice from analysis, must replace hers with adult voices whose backgrounds, pedagogical goals, and interpretations would more closely align with his own. In short, by silencing her, Hall forestalled any future “poor Mary MacLane”—an epithet he never clarifies—who might desire women, fight to change the world, or simply write their own lives down on the page.

With that in mind, Hall could label MacLane “poor” because by 1922, she had largely disappeared from view. While on the East Coast, MacLane pursued her Bohemian lifestyle, entering various relationships with women and writing more articles filled with self-expression and self-analysis. Under some pressure from her publisher, she quickly wrote a second memoir detailing her relationship with a porcelain Japanese doll, My Friend Annabel Lee. This novel, too, was a piece of fan fiction—a take on Poe’s famous poem—however, unlike Story, this one, however, flopped, and MacLane had to fight to keep her name in the papers. She would continue to play the outsider in public or in private, in New York City, Chicago, or Butte, where she returned after the failure of Annabel Lee. In a story recounted to author Gertrude Atherton, on her return, the local Butte elite decided to welcome her with open arms. Atherton continued,

\[
\text{Someone gave her an evening party to which all the elect were invited. They surrounded her, flattered her, quoted from her book. She sat in silence, smoking, her large brilliant eyes roving sardonically from one face to another. Finally she arose, tossed her cigarette stub on to the Aubusson carpet, and remarked: ‘Do you know what you all remind me of, you fat rich women? A lot of hogs with your feet in a trough.’ And sauntered out. It was probably a moment of exquisite revenge for Mary MacLane.}
\]

Whether or not her revenge actually took place, the scene was a spectacular performance of oddness she did not need to reject their invitation in so public a manner, but the story itself likely added to her legend about town, to which she would add saloon fights, gambling, drinking, and occasionally, a piece of journalism or literary criticism.
Although she never regained the spotlight to the same degree as the months after *Story’s* publication, tricks like these would keep her from falling to the wayside. Another memoir would follow in 1917, *I, Mary MacLane*, which opened doors into the film industry. George Spoor, head of Essanay Studios in Chicago, offered her a multi-film deal, the first of which, *Men Who Have Made Love to Me*, was based upon an article she wrote for the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1910. The story followed MacLane through six failed love affairs, narrated to the audience by MacLane herself, who frequently broke the fourth wall. As both writer and star, these films were very much under her control, and thus, MacLane could spectacularize her “kind” of modern woman: lavishly-dressed, lusty, and yet cynical about love, a true flapper. In fact, while the film itself was lost, newspaper ads suggest this film would finally solve the puzzle of her persona. In one ad, for example, the film was described as “the stripping naked of a woman’s soul;” another, the film implied that by seeing her on screen, moving, talking, one could get a better idea of the “authoress whose books dumbfounded them.” Both frame the film as a text of discovery, one that will grant the audience access to the inner thoughts of a woman, or type of woman, that had confounded them. Unfortunately, the film appeared to have revealed too much, in essence, that MacLane was not a natural actress but instead was as stilted in 1918 as she was in her first interview with the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1902. The film’s failure led to the cancellation of her contract, and when the costumer realized she had walked off with her character’s wardrobe, MacLane was summarily arrested.

After 1918, her popularity wavered and fell, and she died alone at age forty-eight in Chicago; her friend and caretaker Lucille Williams, a black photographer, was her only visitor for some time. She was not, however, entirely forgotten, as notice of her death appeared in such distinguished newspapers as *New York Times*, the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, and the *Los
Angeles Times. Although all of the obituaries described her along the same lines, The Chicagoan perhaps captured her best: “This errant daughter of literature, whose collected writings might easily be given the title Memoirs of My Libido, was the first of the self-expressionists, and also the first of the flappers...the modern girl’s delight in shocking her ancestors and strutting her sex is as old as the first edition of The Story of Mary MacLane.”134 And yet, I want to turn, for a moment, to two instances in her final memoir I, Mary MacLane, that better articulate the revolutionary subjectivities she offered. In her chapter “Not quite voilà-tout,” MacLane argued that “the clearest lights on persons are small salient personal facts and items about them and their ways of life,” which she immediately followed with a list of her own personal facts, including her intense hatred of cockroaches, the content of her “bureau-drawers,” her perfume preferences, her frustration with men who “looks bored if I mention Ibsen or ceramics or Aztec civilization but is interested instantly, alertly if I mention my garters.”135 At one point, she described a collection of images kept next to her desk, the majority of which were celebrities, queens and mistresses, poets and singers, baseball players and revolutionaries. Her collection suggests broader scope of inspiration, anchored by an image of Jane Eyre, her old favorite, juxtaposed against actresses Theda Bara, Nell Gynn, and Ethel Barrymore, women who signified the visual control she failed to achieve in her film. In short, we can read this list as a collage, a graphic history even, of MacLane’s fannish practice, one she tried to emulate and deploy to construct her persona.

Moreover, as her public identity incorporated same-sex desire, she fought the assumption that such desires were inherently alienating. In a chapter entitled “an ancient witch-light,” she argued that while “all women have a touch of the lesbian,” she had “lightly kissed and been kissed by Lesbian lips in a way which filled my throat with a sudden subtle pagan blood-flavored
wistfulness, ruinous and contraband: breath of bewildering demoniac winds smothering mine.”

Like “Sappho and her dreaming students,” her romantic and sexual attraction for other women drove her work, her imagination, her self-analysis; however, unlike Hall, who feared even “Platonic” lesbians would destroy the United States, she saw herself as contributing to it. In an update to her opening to *Story*, she broke down her personality as follows:

- a piece of a normal woman.
- a piece of a child.
- a piece of a poet.
- a piece of a Lesbian woman.
- a piece of a writer.
- a piece of a jester.
- a piece of a savage.
- a piece of something someway brave.
- a piece of a student.
- a patriotic American.
- a lump of tiredness.

None of these personas, or “cells” as she called it, barred her from claiming citizenship. Instead, they co-existed, suggesting that, despite her tumultuous career, she could be remembered as an inspiration, a woman who laid the groundwork for a generation of young girls experimenting with their own potential selves in the years to come.

**Bad Bettys and Martyred Marys: Moore Fights the Modern Girl**

Since the Brontës there has been no such unveiling of the inner life of a girl and woman as in “Mary Olivier.” Writers of girl’s books and mothers of girls who are still growing up may well look to it for the clarification of girls and women...that “Mary Olivier” was not written for children nor for girls in their ‘teens, we may feel confident. I think it would have interest only for a very unusual young girl, as May Sinclair herself must have been, but I also think it may come to be considered one of the strongest forces for the liberation of truer girl characters in fiction for young people; it bears so clear a stamp that what a girl really *is*—not what she is made to seem to be—determines her destiny, whatever her inheritance or environment.

--Anne Carroll Moore, “Books for Young People,” 1920

To contemporaries, Modern Girls appeared to challenge “proper” female commitments to the nation—be it as active participants in nationalist struggles for liberation; as mother, the biological reproduction of national subjects and populations; as transmitters of national culture; as upholders of the boundaries of nations through restrictions on sexual behavior and the
circumscription of “marriage” within clearly defined ethnic and racial groups; or as symbols and signifiers of nations. In particular, the Modern Girl’s supposed sexual transgressions—her expression of sexuality as such, her interest in same-sex or interracial sexuality and in sexuality outside marriage made the Modern Girl into a body in need of policing by nation-states, social reformers, and missionaries as well as national bourgeoisies.

When Mary MacLane published her first memoir, Anne Carroll Moore was still four years away from her appointment at NYPL; however, for a very short period, their stars rose simultaneously in New York City, albeit in very different neighborhoods and in pursuit of very different goals.\(^\text{139}\) MacLane, ever in search for fame and glory, wrote memoirs and articles filled with sexual adventures and deep inner turmoil in Greenwich Village or visited the “gambling houses on Forty-second Street” in search of fellow outcasts.\(^\text{140}\) In contrast, as I discussed in chapter two, Moore focused on building her newly established field, nursing children’s librarianship from her offices on 5th Avenue. By 1918, Moore finally gained a public forum in *The Bookman* where she could spread her literary gospel to booksellers, librarians, and other bibliophiles; her sustained criticism in both *The Bookman* and *The New York Herald* would eventually help revitalize a failing children’s literary market.\(^\text{141}\) With the release of her film, *Men Who Have Made Love to Me*, MacLane, too, experienced one of her greatest (albeit short-lived) triumphs that year, although by this time, she was living and working in Chicago.\(^\text{142}\)

Although they never met, both women followed their ambitions far from the middle-class household and Hall’s angel, and their lives provide a fascinating contrast in two models of the New Woman. MacLane provided the sexual challenges described above: she refused to get married and bear children, carried on affairs, portrayed herself as racially suspect, and re-read the “standards” in subversive ways. Her claims to subjecthood and sexuality left Hall little to do other than cast her as representative of all the failings of contemporary American culture in 1904.
In contrast, Moore, who knew Hall and used him as a reference, was highly educated and unmarried, and while her spinsterhood may have caused Hall some concern, she devoted her intellectual and persuasive powers as the prominent children’s librarian to instruct the next generation of Americans in the right kinds of culture. And yet, while Hall was able to later incorporate flappers and Modern Girls like Mary MacLane into his psychological theories by calling them another expression of the recapitulation process, I argue that Moore remained uneasy about the Modern Girl’s sexual agency, marking them unacceptable for developing the subjectivities of young American women.

It is possible that Moore, as a powerful, career-driven woman faced with heated debates about women in the workplace, found the growing ambiguities between New Women and Modern Girls troublesome, for while contemporary scholarship today tends to easily distinguish between the two, at the time Moore was writing, there was significant overlap in the ways New Women and Modern Girls were portrayed in public discourse. Certainly, they both functioned as a source of national horror and celebration (and as “The Flapper Novissima” intimated), and one might wonder whether she felt advocating for narratives with even a hint of the Modern Girl might damage her own position. Using a comparative close reading of three novels Moore recommended specifically for teenage girls, I will show how Moore’s adherence to antimodernist realism presumed a pedagogical function for novels she recommended that made the sexual and narrative agency displayed by the Modern Girl too dangerous for the consumption of those eighteen and under. If novels were to provide “impressions which are to go with them through life,” novels like Betty Bell, whose protagonist takes charge over her romantic life, might lead girls to, as the anonymous author at the beginning of the chapter wrote, “a good deal of the frivolity, demoralizing coquetry, and unfortunate “affairs” which from time to time startle a
community, and bring sorrow and disgrace on highly respectable families.”

As I discussed in the second chapter, Moore argued that literature was an excellent resource for teens and children to learn how to navigate an increasingly interconnected world by developing their emotional intelligence; however, if the world offered by the novel were not accurate and well-written, like those in Stratemeyer Syndicate’s offerings, it could cause the reader serious harm. Subsequently, to ward off Victorian fears that the absorption literature offered could corrupt children, she claimed that such intense textual engagement worked best if the child is offered “literature—great literature.” I would argue, however, that Moore’s emphasis on prescribing “real” literature—she frequently used adjectives like “authentic” and “true”—aligned her work with Henry James’ “the air of reality” and “the solidity of specification,” or the development of literary realism (as read through an antimodernist lens). If both Moore and Hall worried that the wrong literature, i.e. trash or sentimental literature, construct a false image of the world, then realism, a “genre constitutively in dialogue with other projects of knowledge making, and especially with the emerging social sciences,” would function as a literary textbook, providing engaging storylines that illuminated a worldview based on “scientific fact.” As Moore saw it, realist fiction could provide a bridge between the fantasies that dominated childhood and the encroaching demands of looming adulthood, a more literary alternative to Hall’s ephebic literature. Moore wrote,

I have always believed in educating such parents as may be unthinking, or even unwilling, to allow their daughters to take their first impressions of love from novels which seem to follow naturally the old fairy tales, the medieval legends and the classical tales. Fortunate the girl who passes, in her own good time, from “The Sleeping Beauty” to the stories of Atalanta, Brunhilde, Guinevere, and ‘Aucassin and Nicolette’; and from these to *The Scarlet Letter, The Mill on the Floss, Pride and Prejudice*, or *Cranford* . . . and her own free choice of Scott, Dickens, and other authors.

While the children’s literature certainly matched Hall’s emphasis on Greek and medieval
literature, Moore’s formulation recreated the steps of recapitulation to include contemporary realist classics, carving out a pedagogical path that would allow any young girl to grow up alongside her novels and reach the literary equivalent of (anti) modern civilization.

Moreover, Moore preferred a form of psychological realism that, like the antimodernists, rejected social and psychological theories that posited the self as “fragmented,” interdependent, and “just a collection of social roles,” but few contemporary novels fit the bill. Moore targeted contemporary literature for young women, calling the “made-to-order series with its girl bride and up-to-date boy hero,” too flat and unconvincing for young women. Instead, she advised both writers and mothers looking for “clarification of many hazy views respecting the character of girls and women” to turn to May Sinclair’s semi-autobiographical novel *Mary Olivier: A Life* (1919), noting “[the novel] bares so clear a stamp that what a girl really is—not what she is made to seem to be—determined her destiny, whatever her inheritance or environment.” Written by one of the “pioneers of psychological fiction,” *Mary Olivier* traced the life and oft-subverted passions of a British woman from “infancy” (1865) to “middle age” (1910), and the novel’s generic signifiers, i.e., stream-of-consciousness anchored by extensive descriptions of surrounding objects, expressed a heavy investment in the burgeoning intersection between psychological theories and literary representation of the mind favored by Henry James and Edith Wharton. When describing Mary’s infantile reaction to her mother’s comforting touch, for example, the narrative notes,

Mamma took her into the big bed. She curled up there under the shelter of the raised hip and shoulder. Mamma’s face was dry and warm and smelt sweet like Jenny’s powder-puff. Mamma’s mouth moved over her wet cheeks, nipping her tears. Her cry changed to a whimper and a soft, ebbing sob. Mamma’s breast: a smooth, cool, round thing that hung to your hands and slipped from them when they tried to hold it. You could feel the little ridges of the stiff nipple as your finger pushed it back into the breast. Her sobs shook in her throat and ceased suddenly.
With its deft descriptions of Mamma’s body, the novel provides the concrete details to set the scene as the shift from “she” to “you” conflates the reader’s perspective with Mary’s, if only for a moment, pulling them into the novel’s vision of what a girl “is.” Although Moore considered *Mary Olivier* unsuitable reading for actual teenaged girls—except very “unusual” ones—her emphasis on *is* suggests that the protagonist’s experiences were simultaneously universal and pedagogical in nature, that young women could better understand their own authentic nature if they read it.

With this in mind, *Mary Oliver* offered young girls a female life independent of marriage by paralleling literary and personal development, a sentiment that Moore openly appreciated.  

Like Mary MacLane, reading and writing was, for Moore and Olivier, a space for transformation and development. According to Cheryl A. Wilson, May Sinclair’s novel found potential empowerment in Victorian reading practices:

> The ability to create private physical and mental spaces is an additional attraction of reading; Sinclair focuses on the importance of the reading space as a place constructed and controlled by the woman reader and acknowledges the parallel creation of internal imaginative spaces. The power of reading is entwined with the sanctity of place, and women readers and writers must constantly fight to maintain control over their creative spaces. Mary Olivier also presents reading as a source of self-gratification because the reader can choose her own stimulus and obtain pleasure from it—a pleasure that has the potential to rival even heterosexual intercourse. The woman reader’s ability to indulge in her own interests, as expressed through her self-stimulation, intellectual freedom, and escape, informs the scenes of reading in Mary Olivier and grants the Victorian woman reader agency and the opportunity to exercise her own will.

As Wilson notes, Mary cannot read without penalty; as she tries to educate herself in Greek and philosophy, Mary faces serious resistance from her mother who, much like G. Stanley Hall, sees her reading as unfeminine. After she discovers Mary’s first beau, she chastises her daughter, saying “Men...are not interested in little book-worms.” The novel suggests, however, that this perspective is limited to the previous generation. For instance, Mary takes her first romantic
steps at age twelve, bent over an edition of John Locke with her brother’s much older companion, while a later romance blossoms over her secretarial work, culminating in a short-lived affair, and more importantly, a book of poems and several lauded translations. As such, while Mary never quite escapes the family home or her mother’s demands on her time, *Mary Olivier* modeled the very reading practices that Moore advocated and Mary MacLane lived, as reading and writing became a way for Olivier to direct her sexual, spiritual, and professional desires.

With *Mary Olivier* in mind, we can see that psychological realist literature Moore appreciated held a remarkably similar function as Hall’s biographies, that psychologically realist novels would guide teens’ emotional and intellectual development through example (although one doubts Hall would have appreciated *Mary Olivier*’s particular sensuality or rejection of domestic felicity as they bore too much resemblance to Mary MacLane’s writing). That being said, when we consider the Harlem reports discussed in the previous chapter, we can see that many of her patrons, regardless of background, not only found the “standards” difficult to read, but downright boring. As such, Moore knew she needed to find more contemporary novels that they would find appealing. In comparing the three novels she focused on most in “Books for Young People,” *Mary Olivier, Betty Bell* by Fannie Kilbourne, and *Seventeen: A Tale of Youth and Summer Time and the Baxter Family Especially William* by Booth Tarkington, we can see that Moore preferred a particular “image” of American girlhood, one that rejected the promiscuity enjoyed by modern girls like MacLane. While all three novels focus on the romantic entanglements of young teens (although as previously mentioned, *Mary Olivier* expands far beyond the scope of those years), Moore argued that *Mary Olivier* and *Seventeen* were much more suitable for teenage readers, dismissing *Betty Bell* as well-written but with a
“circumscribed” plot and “restricted” characters (read: inauthentic).\textsuperscript{157}

Her negative reaction could be based, in part, on Betty Bell’s “low” art signifiers, i.e. lack of psychological realism, audience, and authorial prestige. Both Mary Olivier and Seventeen were written expressly for adults, thus providing a veneer of respectability to an already suspicious audience, and both spend a significant time examining both emotional and psychological states of their protagonists, thus fitting in with Moore’s idea of “true literature.”\textsuperscript{158}

Moreover, Booth Tarkington had just won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel The Magnificent Ambersons (1918) the year before, while May Sinclair was a respected literary critic who not only moved in London’s literary circles but also supported the women’s rights movement.\textsuperscript{159} In contrast, Betty Bell focused more on plot developments than psychological turmoil, and her author had no such illustrious ties—Betty Bell was the first of several novels she wrote for young girls, and it was published by Harper and Brothers as one of a series called The Girls’ Library.\textsuperscript{160}

If Moore was hoping to increase her field’s cultural capital (as I discussed in chapter two), Betty Bell would harm more than help.

By quoting a teenage reader who derisively remarks, “Betty Bell is a regular little flirt, and that’s all she does do!,” in her review, however, Moore reoriented her lens on sexual politics, especially since her rationale for the celebrated Seventeen focused on the mother figure (to which I will return later).\textsuperscript{161} Moore implied that Betty Bell’s central flaw is Betty’s fickle and superficial character, a poor role model who jumps from boyfriend to boyfriend. To be fair, the novel offers up several potential romantic partners: her first boyfriend, Lester, who ignites her passion but then dashes her dreams of becoming class president; Mr. Burt, an English teacher who inspires a one-sided crush and a short writing career; Gilbert, a senior who flirts with and kisses any girl he can catch; Mr. Nevins, an older man whose attentions are merely in service of
attracting Betty’s beautiful, if facetious, cousin Greta; and finally, Virgil Darnell, a dashing actor who, unbeknownst to Betty, is married with two children.

While Moore’s teenaged reader may be dismissive of such romantic shenanigans, Betty’s narrative actually recorded a newly-developing courtship model after World War I, which I argue that Moore, raised in Victorian modes of romantic thought, might find too sexually permissive. Steven Mintz writes that dating was a radical departure from previous generations, as it “not only took place away from home; it usually involved some form of commercial amusement paid for by the male. It was unchaperoned and not subject to parental veto. It was not exclusive…and existed independently of the courtship process.”162 This process, which Mintz and others argued first found literary representation in Betty Bell, presumed significantly more agency for young women in choosing a partner; and in comparison to Mary Oliver or William, the adolescent lead of Seventeen, Betty is significantly more active in her romantic life, engaging with her partners outside the family purview. While Mary Oliver waits for her suitors and, more often than not, does not even realize their attraction until she can no longer engage them, Betty pursues her suitors, albeit often more in fantasy than in reality.

In fact, Betty sees dating as an imperative of the young, the “New Woman.” When fantasizing over her crush, she thinks “tradition frowned a stern, middle-aged repulse, maintaining that the male should do the courting, but the spirit of the new woman (or was the spirit old, as old as woman?) smiled welcome to the idea.”163 Moreover, dating, at least towards the beginning of the novel, is a practice in improving one’s status, or what Michael Gordon calls a “incipient rating-dating complex.”164 First developed by Willard Waller, the rating-dating complex described a dating schema that required an individual to pursue multiple partners to improve one’s individual “rating” or popularity. For example, when Gilbert asks her to go
canoeing, she hopes to display him to her friends, whereas Mr. Nevins represents to her “a different atmosphere, a very ‘old’ atmosphere” of sophistication and worldliness. Betty’s sequence of crushes function as a veritable stepladder of status, from a relatively powerless sophomore to an up-and-coming actor.

Moreover, in spite of Betty’s proclamation that she is a “new woman,” both her obsession with her dating status and her growing self-awareness illustrates her training in a Modern Girl’s “techniques of appearing,” or again, “the manner and means of execution of one’s visual effects and status.” As Betty prepares for her first dance with Lester, she is very much aware of what she should look like, and her awareness of his gaze guides her own fantasies:

She wondered if he wondered how it would seem to dance with her...from the gallery of anticipation she saw Lester dancing with a girl, beautiful, slender, fascinating, a girl whom nobody who had never dreamed dreams would have recognized for Betty—as she saw herself. It was not vanity which painted the picture of the laughing, dancing girl, it was merely her sense of the fitness of things. It was not seemly that any save a beautiful girl should dance with Lester. So Betty’s vision of her plain, plump little self smiled with the eyes of coquetry incarnate and danced as love’s partner should dance.

The illustration for the actual dance, captioned “‘Les seems to have a new girl,’ where the words she heard,” intimates that she finds reality less appealing than she thought. This image, in fact, contradicts Betty’s self-conception on two levels. First, she is not carefree because the swirling gossip around her indicates that Lester has multiple girls to dance with, which both threatens her own sense of the stature he brings to her as a potential partner and destroys her narrative about “one true love.” While this revelation upsets her, they continue to date, and she succeeds in capturing his attention by manipulating her appearance and ideals to fit his expectations, particularly when she gives up her chance at becoming class president. Second, although her eyes are filled with worry instead of “coquetry incarnate,” she is not depicted as either plain or plump, a fact which she will discover later in the narrative after several boys
indicate their interest in her. While innocence has traditionally marked white children’s bodies since the Enlightenment, her fearful face suggests knowledge (of sexual conquest and sexual promiscuity). This discrepancy between image and text, thus, perhaps highlights her subsequent education in attracting men’s gaze; however, it simultaneously assumes that, as a young white girl, she can neither be plain nor plump and still be desired.

Regardless, Betty’s “sense of the fitness of things,” is not just guided by his interest, but is also highly influenced by the novels, poetry, and movies she consumes, which provide a diverse range of narrative and visual possibilities that she can play with as she discovers her own romantic potential. Much like Mary MacLane, Betty uses literature and film to shape, guide, and her romantic experiences (and imagine new ones), although the narrative has few qualms poking holes in her fantasies. For example, after her unsuccessful dance with Lester, she turns to Robert Browning’s poem, “The Last Ride Together” for comfort, albeit unsuccessfully; however, when she develops a crush on her handsome English teacher, Betty moves from consuming literature to producing it. Inspired by his positive feedback, Betty begins to write her own Mary Sue narrative:

The plot she found ready as thought it had long been waiting the coming of ambition. Its scene was a large city high-school, its heroine a pretty student, its hero the English teacher. And the hero was young and tall and handsome. He had long, quizzical gray eyes and a wonderful smile. Betty spent many an hour in blissful elaboration of her plot. While scraping potatoes for dinner she named her heroine Adoris; while washing her own straight brown hair she made Adoris’s blonde and curly; while gazing at her own a bit too pump figure in almost tearful disapproval, she found unexpected con-solution in making Adoris as slender as the prettiest Sophomore.

The chapter is very much a satire of overwrought writing (for example, Adoris is soon joined by “Gardenia, Adoris’s still more beauteous successor,”) but it also models the literary imagination as a testing ground—a space for her to play with her self-presentation and her romantic future, (unsurprisingly, Adoris ends the narrative in the arms of her English teacher).
In the act of writing her own stories, she begins to see herself as an “authoress,” which for her, is an empowering stance. Writing helps her take a series of risks, for instance, to visualize a forbidden romance, to submit her story to a literary magazine, to keep writing after its rejection, to share that rejection with her English instructor. Granted, much of Betty’s bravery stems from her mistaken belief that the magazine, in writing “we shall be glad to consider any further work you may care to submit,” genuinely cared about her development as an author.\(^{170}\) And yet, when she shares her rejection note with her teacher, who promptly but not unkindly reveals that such verbiage is standard, her virulent response motivates Mr. Burt to share his own rejection letter from the same magazine, transforming them momentarily into equals. While her scribblings do not land her in Mr. Burt’s arms (an actuality that even she, at one point, expresses discomfort with) they do become closer, and afterwards, she stops writing, having accomplished her goal.

With this in mind, we can see that Betty not only “flirts” with boys but also her hobbies and interests; for while Mary Olivier found a purpose in writing, for Betty, writing is just one more tool in her arsenal to attract male attention. Over the course of the plot, however, Betty learns to better distinguish between the narratives she writes in her head and those on film or in books. When the movie studio goes up near her home, Betty visits immediately with stars in her eyes. After a meet-cute with Virgil Darnell, she thinks “romance had come to her dooryard, romance in the form of a motion-picture studio. And a dashing, strangely appealing man had looked back at her with eyes that said as plainly as words, ‘I’d like to know you better.’”\(^{171}\) Virgil’s interest, like Lester’s, inspires her to make a Cinderella-esque transformation throughout their courtship, fitting what Conor calls the “Screen-Struck Girl,” a film archetype about young women “who showed ambition for a screen career” that played on the fears that women would
“bec[o]me captivated by [a film’s] spell and imagined themselves appearing within its emotionally and sexually intensified scenes long after they left the picture palaces.”

Although Betty never wants to become an actress herself, as a fan, she finds herself compelled to repeatedly seek out the glamour, adventure, fashion, and (potential) fame represented by the movie studio. These visits fuel her subsequent fantasies about Virgil, which in turn threaten to overwhelm her life, even though she recognizes that his presence forces her to repeatedly lie to her family and friends.

And yet, as her time with the movie studio ultimately proves, Betty’s expectations of glamour and romance are repeatedly undermined by mundane realities. As she continues to visit the studio, she becomes more and more disenchanted with the process—the lead actress, once beautiful and glamorous, is aging and petty, the scenes must be reshot over and over, the stage is hot and sweaty. In short, she begins to realize that her beloved films are “not romance…but work, tiresome, grinding work;” however, it takes much longer to transfer this knowledge to the fantasy she finds most compelling: her future marriage.

After watching one of Virgil’s romantic films with her mother, albeit one in which he plays the villain, Betty begins to conflate the film narrative with her actual relationship with the actor, transforming a failed seduction attempt (on his side) into a successful proposal (on hers). Her excitement over their pending marriage, and the new status it would give her among her friends, leads her to sneak into a nearby wedding; however, the solemnity of the marriage oath soon disrupts the narrative in her head, forcing her to realize

[marriage] was no day’s frolic, no social episode for the envious discussion of friends, no question to be answered by candle-lighted dinner-tables and wonderful trousseaux. She did not know exactly what it was; there was nothing in her experience, nothing in her dreams, which did not seem futile, childish, to her when measured by the standard of this marriage oath. All of her gay carelessness had deserted her, crushed under her sudden, terrible respect for the mysterious force which could make a girl turn away from the
lights of home and set her face to the untried country.174

The stark realities of a wedding and legal ramifications of the wedding oath have a pedagogical function here, for they teach Betty to more effectively critique the overwhelming visual narratives that build her sense of reality, a lesson reinforced by her subsequent discovery of Virgil’s wife and children.

The charming movie star is the last in a series of disappointments, but while Betty’s judgement is framed as poorly developed, neither her family nor the narrative condemn her flirtations. Instead, after all her romantic adventures, Betty realizes that dating is the only way to find a good spouse, telling her mother,

not so terribly long ago...I’d have laughed at this idea, thought it was prim and preachy and old-ladyish. I thought that looks and money and—and being fascinating and things like that were what counted in a suitor. I guess it takes a great deal of experience—I’ve really had an awful lot, mother, more than you’d ever dream of—to make a girl believe this. But, mother...mother, when my daughter comes to be married I hope and pray she’ll choose a good man!175

While Moore frames Betty as a flirt, the text suggests flirting has a more practical purpose: tempering the mystique of romance. By dating multiple men at once, Betty gains the experience to know what makes a good husband and, more importantly, the ability to choose that partner wisely or not at all. Obviously, Betty’s conclusion is not particularly revolutionary for the time. Instead of chasing after increased social status, she wants marriage, a family, a husband who “will do the right thing, just because it is right,” but occasionally, the right thing is supporting her aspirations (unlike Lester) or respecting her as an equal (almost everyone else).176 Moreover, the narrative suggests that Betty needed to come to these conclusions on her own, without parental influence, in order to understand their validity; otherwise, it would simply be chalked up to intergenerational misunderstandings. Thus, while Moore paints Betty as restricted and inauthentic, it is important to note that Betty’s story, by focusing on a young girl figuring out her
options, is remarkably pragmatic and open to acknowledging Betty’s need for personal agency.

One could argue that Moore condemned the novel for foregrounding marriage over career prospects; however, Moore’s comparison novel, *Seventeen: A Tale of Youth and Summer Time and the Baxter Family Especially William* is equally focused on the marriage plot. As such, I argue that Moore found *Seventeen* to be a much more suitable replacement for young girls because the female role models are either safely contained in marriage or satirized to the point of ridiculousness. At a glance, Betty Bell and William Baxter, the protagonist of *Seventeen*, share several crucial similarities; both are from middle-class, Midwestern families, both are obsessed with clothes and status, both use novels and poetry to understand their new desires, and both must, over the course of the novel, come to terms with their romantic naivety. In introducing the novel, however, Moore wrote, “I am struck by [Seventeen’s] particular value for girls of [fifteen and sixteen] and older. Life is touched by perspective as well as humor. Where is there such another mother in a book as Mrs. Baxter, and yet how well one seems to know her!” I argue, however, that novel’s “perspective,” as Moore notes, has triple significance in the novel. First, the novel’s sympathy lies primarily with Mrs. Baxter, who functions as the voice of reason in the midst of familial chaos. When confronted by her son’s odd behavior, she comforts her daughter by stating, “Young people and children do the strangest things, Jane! And then, when they get to be middle-aged, they forget all those strange things they did, and they can’t understand what the new young people—like you and Willie mean by the strange things THEY do.” As we saw in the previous section, Hall argued the ideal mother never quite grew up so that she could better identify with her children; as such, Mrs. Baxter, in recognizing the dynamic, can stand outside it, becoming a compassionate bridge between generations. In short, while Mrs. Bell takes a hands-off approach to childrearing, Mrs. Baxter embodies the ideal nineteenth-century mother
who runs her household with relative ease while comforting, negotiating between, and occasionally disciplining her two children as they fight, have adventures, and for her son, fall in and out of love.

Second, when it comes to William’s courtship, the novel is significantly less sympathetic. While William is painted as ridiculous, over-sensitive to any slight and yet, unaware that his actions irritate almost everyone with whom he interacts, his main romantic interest, Miss Lola Pratt, is even worse, a beautiful but obnoxious flirt who treats her fluffy little dog Flopit better than any of her multiple beaux. Like Betty, she is very aware of her appearance and frequently uses it to her own advantage, an attitude rendered unremarkable when she reveals her dreams of becoming a stage actress (perhaps another Stage-Struck girl?). This, in turn, leads to a hilarious conversation in which William attempts to pin down her opinions of true love to which she repeatedly responds in “baby talk” or through the voice of her dog. She is, obvious to everyone but William, an inappropriate romantic interest, but neither parent worries about the ramifications of his feelings. While William sees his love as eternal, both his parents recognize it as no more than adolescent infatuation, a sign that he has not yet fully developed his cognitive faculties. At the end of Seventeen, the narrative skips ahead eleven years to his wedding to Miss Mary Randolph Kirstead, his younger sister’s annoying friend. Unlike Lola Baxter, Mary is no flirt, but instead has grown into “a stately, solemn, roseate, gentle young thing with bright eyes seeking through a veil for William’s eyes.”¹ eighty His new partner, framed as a much more suitable match, suggests William’s judgement—of women, of his place in world—has stabilized over the last decade and that he is fully prepared to become the head of his household.

In fact, both William and Mary from Mary Olivier end their narratives in a sexually secure position. Mary never gets married, but instead, embarks upon an affair, perhaps one of
many reasons Moore argued the novel was meant for only the most mature adolescents. (One can only imagine Moore, while drafting her essay, desperately hoping that someone in her audience would take her advice to write a more teenage-friendly variant). And yet, while she does not regret their dalliance, she realizes she must end the relationship, not only to be fair to his wife, but also to be happy and to find her “real self.” She thinks,

Could I give up this? If I had to choose between losing Richard and losing this? (I suppose it would be generally considered that I had lost Richard.) If I had to choose seven years ago, before I knew, I’d have chosen Richard; I couldn’t have helped myself. But if I had to choose now—knowing what reality is—between losing Richard in the way I have lost him and losing reality, absolutely and for ever, losing, absolutely and for ever, my real self, knowing that I’d lost it?...Knowing reality is knowing that you can’t lose it. That or nothing.181

Richard, as the grand romance of her life, is less significant than her own self-actualization; Mary has spent her entire life trying to ascertain “reality,” and giving up her lover allows her to create her own personalized vision of Christianity that she finds more fulfilling than her previous forays. While it is unclear whether Mary will stay celibate at the end of the novel, the binary of choices she creates and the self-satisfaction she gets from walking away suggests a more permanent decision has been made. In contrast, to both Mary and William, Betty ends her story still boy-obsessed, still a fan of movies and books (those two elements being strikingly intertwined) but not safely ensconced in marriage. She can still make mistakes, still follow her desires down a more adventurous path and encourage her readers to do the same.

Neither Betty Bell, nor any other novel by Fannie Kilbourne appear in Moore’s later essay, “Entering the Teens.”182 Perhaps the novel was no longer popular, so Moore felt no real need to speak of it, or perhaps she simply felt other texts were more worthy of her focus, as the essay aimed to create a comprehensive list of books, many of which stuck to her realist model. Or, perhaps her model had changed—although “Entering the Teens,” as discussed in the
previous chapter, questioned Hall’s model of adolescent reading practices, her only concrete evidence of adolescent girlhood comes from her own memories. While Hall saw his own life as archetypal, Moore saw her girlhood as but one of many, writing,

Youth always resists the classification of a stratified existence. Infinitely more individual and various are the highly sensitive growing boys and girls who may or may not develop strong group interests than are the gregarious, care-free “middle-aged” children who have not yet become to think of life with a large L who are not concerned with their subjective emotions, who regard their reading as pure sport and have not yet begun to dig down into books to find questions leading to the further reaches of the life they would explore.\(^\text{183}\)

Moore saw it as her job to scour the publishing lists for books that might answer their questions, but unlike “Books for Young People,” her recommendations here no longer were split along gendered lines; in fact, she seemed to advocate cross-gendered reading while reminiscing about principal of her school, a young man who “seemed always to be reading some classic as well,” and his influence on her own tastes.”\(^\text{184}\) In short, adolescent success looked a lot more like Mary MacLane’s reading practice, which stemmed not from following a prescribed model, but instead from open and (mostly) uncensored reading.

As I stated in the previous chapter, this does not mean that she recommended all reading material—the books she recommended in the accompanying list “In the Teens” were, for the most part, standards like Shakespeare, Keats, Dickens, and (of course) Tarkington and Sinclair.\(^\text{185}\) However, if I then questioned whether we could know why Moore stopped recommending for teens, this essay may provide a partial answer: teenage tastes were simply too individualized to provide easy recommendations. Any other option might shortchange potential development, for as she wrote “tragedy lies, I think, not in knowing too much but rather in not knowing enough to think things through.”\(^\text{186}\) This framework for adolescent reading practices, in which literature functions as a sort of “how to” manual for life, foreshadowed the development of the problem novel in the late sixties and seventies. These novels aimed for realism but
addressed a particular subject, like sex, drugs, bullying, teen pregnancy, or periods, were written to help teens navigate their changing bodies and desires by giving them the information to “think things through” and take an alternative approach—even if they occasionally took a more sensationalist route, like Go Ask Alice (1971), which illustrated a young girl’s descent into drugs, prostitution, madness and death. As we’ll see in the following chapter, however, Maureen Daly’s Seventeenth Summer became another such tool for adolescent development.\(^{187}\)

**Conclusions: Can we read the Spectacular Modern Girl?**

As we’ve seen above, both Hall and Moore carefully considered what “representative” subjectivities could be shared with adolescent girls, for fears that they would inspire the “wrong” kinds of development (although “wrong” would look quite different depending upon whom one asked). For Hall, reading too much, whether for leisure or for education, could damage a woman’s “generic” nature, thereby making her less-suited for motherhood (much less an angel of the household). For Moore, reading did exactly what Hall feared—it provided her with an opportunity to build her own career and her life options outside the traditional models, and she appreciated novels, like Sinclair’s Mary Olivier: A Life, that modelled the same. That being said, while her own experiences as a reader made her much more open to a diverse range of reading practices for her female patrons, she still expressed some reservations with books written for “girls,” particularly those, like Betty Bell, that expressed any sort of sexual agency at a young age. To a certain extent, their concerns weren’t exactly unfounded. Reading was a powerful motivator, as the practice empowered countless women, disillusioned with their lives, to imagine a variety of new paths they could take. In turn, many, like Mary MacLane ended up writing down their own “experiments in self-making,” so that other young girls and boys could find inspiration as well.
That being said, both Hall and Moore heavily policed real or literary women who, as fans, found agency by playing with the romantic and sexual fantasies provided by novels and movies. While they experienced varying levels of success, their experiments taught them an awareness of the male gaze, which they used to access stature and fame. These women, as I argued above, correlated with deeply divisive feminine icons, the New Woman and the Modern Girl, whose awareness and control of the visual medium exemplify Liz Conor’s techniques of appearing. Mary MacLane pulled together a diverse range of sources, including discourses of the “savage” West and Butte, Montana; her favorite fiction like Jane Eyre; and poses drawn from stage actresses to construct herself as both fan and “genius” and gain the fame and validation she so desperately wanted. The specularization of girlhood began to be written into fiction as well, with the eponymous protagonist of Kilbourne’s Betty Bell hyper-aware of the visual impact she should have, even though the novel frequently satirizes her for it. Both women (fictional and non-), however, lust after and love many individuals, gaining experience along the way that troubled both Hall and Moore, who preferred a more passive sexuality. I do not aim to suggest that either of these texts, MacLane’s Story or Kilbourne’s Betty, had the same visual impact as the cosmetic campaigns or films that became increasingly prevalent at the twentieth century soldiered on. But I would also think it a mistake to ignore these spectacularized images of modern girlhood became intertwined with literary production, or how young adult literature historically produced an image, or network of images, of adolescent femininity that became normative. As we’ll see in the upcoming chapter on Maureen Daly, whether in illustrations, book packaging, or in the popular press, the all-American teenage girl slowly took form over the next few years as white, boy-crazy (but not sexually active), image-obsessed, and primed for consumption.
Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008) and Marianne Martens, “The Librarian Lion: Constructing Children’s Literature
Minders of Make
Women Writers and the Am


[2] According to Lucy Bland, the public often believed the wrong books could taint a character so much that it could even lead to murder. In 1922, the British courts found Edith Thompson guilty of her husband’s murder alongside her lover, Freddy Bywaters; although Freddy had stabbed her husband, Edith was found guilty of “sexual incitement,” and the prosecution used Thompson’s voracious reading practices, which typically skewed towards romantic, trashy literature, to sway the jury against her in her murder trial. For more, see Lucy Bland, Modern Women on Trial: Sexual Transgression in the Age of the Flapper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 102.

[3] June Howard notes that the audience for Harper and Bros. family of magazines (including Harper’s Weekly, Monthly, Bazaar, and Young People) were aimed explicitly at the “emerging middle class,” and “had important, implicit exclusions—certainly all non-whites, more ambiguously wage-earners.” Harper’s Monthly and Harper’s Bazaar counted white women as its audience, although the latter more explicitly so. For more on Harper and Bros’ publishing history, please see June Howard, Publishing the Family, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 72-73.


[5] Twenty, becoming a “prig” in Miller’s estimation, implies a certain level of agency, even power over one’s parents, something young girls must avoid. For more, see Miller, “The Daughter at Home.”

[6] Notably, becoming a “prig” in Miller’s estimation, implies a certain level of agency, even power over one’s parents, something young girls must avoid. For more, see Miller, “The Daughter at Home.”


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In her opening pages, MacLane justified her suffering and her need for fame by stating, “Along some lines have I suffered. And I suffer. I am suffering. And that never yet throve on cold silences.” Mary MacLane to Harriet Monroe, “Fire of Youth,” Poetry 10, no. 3 (1917): 154.

“Deluge Greets, Mary MacLane . . .,” Chicago Daily Tribune, July 9, 1902.

In the Chicago News Tribune cited above, MacLane noted that the only person she wanted to marry was Harriet Monroe herself, although Monroe seemed to treat the impromptu proposal as a joke. In their correspondence, MacLane’s letters to Monroe frequently spoke of love and friendship, as she evocatively wrote, “There’s Friendship between us—Friendship and friendship—and that never yet throne on cold silences.” Mary MacLane to Harriet Monroe, September 10, in Human Days: A Mary MacLane Reader, by Mary MacLane, ed. Michael R. Brown (Austin, TX: Petrarca Press, 2013), 278.

In her opening pages, MacLane justified her suffering and her need for fame by stating, “Along some lines have gotten to the edge of the world. A step more and I fall off. I do not take the step. I stand on the edge an

33. MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 4.


36. Ibid., 546. Considering that the pedagogical hierarchy Hall constructed limited subjecthood primarily to white Western men, it’s unsurprising that he included only ten women (in comparison to thirty “literary men”) and that these women were primarily of French, British, or American origin. Hall includes, in order of appearance, Manon Philippin (better known as French revolutionary Madame Roland), George Sand, Countess Adaline Schimmelman, Louisa Alcott, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Sarah Grand, Helen Keller, Marie Bashkirtseff, Mary MacLane, and Ada Negri, all of whom are of Western origin. Moreover, although several women are distinguished along national lines, neither Louisa May Alcott nor Helen Keller, born Americans, nor Frances Hodgson Burnett, who moved to the United States in her teens, are distinguished as particularly American, nor as particularly bad. Gretchen Gerzina. Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 24. Please see Adolescence vol. 1, 46-62 for the accompanying descriptions.

37. Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 562. According to Hall, women could not, or should not, become entirely objective (read: attain full subjecthood) because their strong emotions tied them more firmly and permanently to their adolescent years; however, as women who reflected upon their birth, those he included in the chapter held a contradictory position these “literary ladies” held. As memoirists, each writer would have necessarily abandoned their generic nature through deliberate self-consciousness, and yet, since Hall’s primary purpose for the chapter was to support his theories on adolescence, they had to simultaneously display characteristics he thought illustrative of both age and sex. By summarizing and arranging their lives into a chorus of female experience, we can see that Hall appropriated their stories, framing them as both unique for their literary triumphs and representative of different kinds of women.

38. Alison Booth, How to Make It as a Woman: Collective Biographical History from Victoria to the Present (University of Chicago Press, 2004), 212.


41. MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 9.

42. Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies, 50.

43. MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 76-77.

44. Ibid., 38, 40.

45. Jenkins, Textual Poachers, 23.

46. Slash fiction, as defined by Hellekson and Busse, consists of non-canonical, fan-authored stories that “posit a same-sex relationship, usually one imposed by the [fan] author and based on a homoerotic subtext.” Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet: New Essays (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006), 10. Perhaps the most canonical example of slash fiction would be K/S, which posits a romantic/sexual relationship between Kirk and Spock, characters from Gene Roddenberry’s Star Trek characters.

47. MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 90.

48. The primary exception could be found in Richards’ Three Margarets, which concerned three cousins who share the same first name and end up moving in with their uncle for a vacation. One cousin, nicknamed Rita, was from Cuba and was born of a Spanish mother and American father. In the sequel, Rita, she becomes involved in the Spanish-American War and ends up marrying a Protestant captain of the Cuban guerilla army (another “half
While Fraiman is addressing an English canon of female bildungsroman, many of the same narrative threads carried over to American takes on the genre. For example, she notes that mentors in the genre often wed their female charges (thus forcing the female character into “a life-time as a perennial novice”). In Alcott’s Little Women, Jo (famously) marries her German teacher, Professor Bhaer; however, before they are married, he implicitly shames her for writing sensation stories, despite the money she earns to support her family. He later helps her (again, implicitly) develop her own style of writing; however, once they marry, her writing is seriously curtailed when they decide to open a school for boys (as described in Little Men), her husband’s dream. She only recovers her writing when the school almost fails, and “she fell back up on the long-disused pen as the only thing she could do to help fill up the gaps in the income.” As Karin Quimby notes, Alcott did not want Jo to marry anyone, as she was supposed to be a literary spinster like Alcott herself, but felt pressured by her fan base to make Jo and Laurie marry. Instead, she created Professor Bhaer as a “perverse” alternative. Susan Fraiman, Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and The Novel of Development (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). 5, 6. Louisa M. Alcott, Jo’s Boys (New York: Puffin Classics, 1994). 38. Karin Quimby, “The Story of Jo: Literary Tomboys, Little Women, and the Sexual-Textual Politics of Narrative Desire,” GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies 10, no. 1 (2003): 1–22, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/49637.

MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 139. Laura E. Richards wrote multiple girl’s series, including the Hildegarde series, the Melody series, and the Margaret series, the latter of which was published around the time MacLane wrote her autobiography.

MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 140.

Ibid., 90. Her favorite novels tended to be written by men for popular audiences, including “Eugene Fields and Edgar Allan Poe and Robert Louis Stevenson and Charles Dickens.” Of the four, Eugene Fields is perhaps the most anomalous; instead of writing popular serialized fiction for all ages filled with adventure, flawed characters, and violence, Fields primarily wrote children’s poetry, including “Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.” Eugene Field, “Wynken, Blynken, and Nod,” in Eugene Field Reader, ed. Alice L. Harris (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905), 61–65, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044097076277.


MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 62.

Ibid., 91, 141.

Ibid., 91.

Ibid., 141.

Watson, “Bringing Mary MacLane Back Home,” 225.


Erika Marksbury, “‘Kind Devil, Deliver Me’: Mary MacLane’s Textual Search for Intimacy and Communion,” Diesis: Footnotes on Literary Identities 1, no. 1 (2011), http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&sw=w&u=umuser&v=2.1&id=GALE%7CA349904980&it=r&4asid=448b56fca2b66929abc1c9838c88333.

MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 94.

Ibid., 96.

64 MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 291-297.
65 Ibid., 39.
66 Ibid., 41-42.
67 Susan Fraiman, Unbecoming Women, 118.
70 MacLane, The Story of Mary MacLane, 12-13.
75 Mary MacLane to Herbert S. Stone & Co., April 22, 1902, 262-263.
77 “Deluge Greets Mary MacLane….” and “Mary MacLane Talks The Way She Writes…,” The Atlanta Constitution, July 28, 1902.
79 Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies, 35-37. “‘Our Mary’ Talkative,” Butte Inter-Mountain, May 24, 1902. This is not to suggest young boys didn’t find inspiration in MacLane. One article in The Evening World notes a ten year old orphan boy ran away from his adopted family because “he wanted, like Mary MacLane, to know something of ‘the world, the flesh and the devil.’” “Beach Orphan Sent to Gerry: Police Gather in Young Vagrant in Staten Island’s History, Whose Home Was Under Board Walk,” The Evening World, September 23, 1902, Night Edition.
80 Mary MacLane to Herbert Stone, July 1902, in Human Days: A Mary MacLane Reader, by Mary MacLane, ed. Michael R. Brown (Austin, TX: Petrarca Press, 2013), 263, 264.
82 “Miss MacLane Is Coming…,” Chicago Daily Tribune, June 30, 1902.
83 “Deluge Greets Mary MacLane…” and Mary MacLane to Herbert Stone, July 1902, 264.
84 “She Came Not: Mary MacLane Defers Her Visit to Boston…,” Boston Daily Globe, July 20, 1902.
85 Special to The Washington Post, “Mary MacLane In Boston: Frigid Reception Awaits the Butte Au-Thoress at the Literary Center.,” The Washington Post, July 19, 1902.
http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/144347329/abstract/4AAFD0F244E3412EPQ/1. Mary MacLane to Herbert Stone, July 1902, 264.
87 Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 610.
98 Lears, No Place of Grace, 249. According to MJ Peterson, the angel’s primary goal was to “provid[e] the home environment that promoted her husband’s and her children’s well-being in the world,” and was ubiquitous enough that it, much like the New Woman, would be hotly contested into the early twentieth century. Therefore, by limiting a woman’s sphere to that of her children and her husband, Hall constructs his own version of the Victorian angel, one who could help her family into the twentieth century. For more, see MJ Peterson, “No Angels in the House: the Victorian Myth and the Paget Women.” The American Historical Review 89.3 (1984): 677.

99 Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 612. Hall writes, “...woman at her best never outgrows adolescence as man does, but lingers in, magnifies and glorifies this culminating stage of life with its all-sided interests, its convertibility of emotions, its enthusiasm, and zest for all that is good beautiful true, and heroic” (624).

90 As Ledger writes, these images came from an equally diverse number of sources, including, “the wild woman, the ‘glorified spinster’, the ‘advanced woman’, the ‘odd woman,’ the ‘modern woman’, ‘Novissima’, the ‘shrieking sisterhood’, the ‘revolting daughters.’” Sally Ledger, The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle (New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 3. Although I focus on the textual construction of the New Women more than the lived reality, like Ledger, I do not want to suggest that real women were not making important political and socio-economic maneuvers at the turn of the century; in fact, I would argue that Mary MacLane belongs in their number, albeit in a more informal manner. I would argue, however, that Hall’s construction of the “bad woman” exists at an intersection of real lives and discursive construct. Like MacLane, bad women (and their feminist brethren) haunt the pages of Adolescence.

91 Howard, Publishing the Family, 159. For example, Sarah Grand, whose article “The New Aspect of the Woman Question” inspired the term, was particularly socially conservative; Ledger notes that her book The Heavenly Twins, “championed sexual purity and motherhood.” The New Woman, 10-11. Unsurprisingly, another one of Grand’s books, the semi-autobiographical The Beth Book appears on Hall’s list of literary women, and he venerates her as having the “instability of genius.” Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 551. Sarah Grand, The Beth Book (Toronto: George N. Morang, 1897), http://hdl.handle.net/2027/aeuark:/13960/t0q6bb5s.

92 “Mary, The Elusive.: She is Here, Here, Here!”

93 Ibid., vol. 2, 609. According to Hall, excessive education, moreover, could only promote “bookishness,” which he deemed a “bad sign in a girl; it suggests artificiality, pedantry, the lugging of dead knowledge.” Even worse, as discussed in chapter one, excessive intellectualism could lead to neurasthenia, a pseudo-disease that he believed could be passed down through the generations, writing, “a bookworm with soft hands, tender feet, and tough rump from much sitting, or an anemic girl prodigy, ‘in the morning hectic, in the evening electric,’ is a monster.” While he equally condemns the “bookworm” and “girl prodigy,” his language for the latter is particularly suggestive of a young girl quickly burning through her battery of nerve force with little regard for her future progeny. Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 640; vol. 1, 204. Hall would actually use this phrase “in the morning hectic, in the evening electric” to refer directly to neurasthenia; however, in this iteration, he applies it to those men who engage in too much sexual activity, particularly before marriage, which he argues will degrade their ability to procreate, which “makes life a living death, for all sin either is or is measure by the degradation of this [sexual] function.” Hall, Adolescence, vol. 2, 125.

94 Ibid., 610. Spinsters, however, were forgiven of their procreative sins as long as they devoted their time helping other women with domestic tasks, including “self-supporting vocations of charity, teaching, art, literature, religious and social vocations, and lighter manual callings requiring skill, fidelity, [and] taste.”

95 Hall’s angry tirade continues with remarkably juvenile personal attacks. Writing “... we need no...” Howard notes that, by 1910, the number would increase to 140,000, which comprised nearly forty percent of the college student population at the time. Howard, Publishing the Family, 161.


102 MacLane, The Story of Mary Maclane, 6.


104 MacLane, The Story of Mary Maclane, 8.

105 Gale, “The Real Mary MacLane,” 125.

106 MacLane, The Story of Mary Maclane, 66-8.

107 Halverson, Playing House, 63-65.

108 Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies, Watson, “Bringing Mary MacLane Back Home.”

109 MacLane, The Story of Mary Maclane, 120

110 Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies, 45.

111 MacLane, The Story of Mary Maclane, 111-120. As Watson shows, MacLane’s later writings were less overtly critical and more ambiguous. Butte’s residents, however, weren’t university pleased with their nationally-popular authoress, “Bringing Mary MacLane Back Home,” 233.

112 MacLane, The Story of Mary Maclane, 146-149.

113 Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies, 45.

114 Several scholars have addressed her frustrations with marriage: Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies and Playing House, as well as Erika Marksbury, ““Kind Devil, Deliver Me.””


116 Mary MacLane, “On Marriage,” Loc. 42.


118 Ibid., 630.

119 Of course, during Hall’s tenure as president of Clark University, he did support women’s education (including taking them on as graduate students), but his letters suggest he did so only to appease those female donors and “save us a good deal of pounding by feminists.” G. Stanley Hall to Bullock, November 20, 1909, G. Stanley Hall papers, Clark University Archives, Goddard Library, Clark University, Worcester, MA, qtd. in Lesley A. Diehl, “The Paradox of G. Stanley Hall: Foe of Coeducation and Educator of Women,” American Psychologist 41, no. 8 (August 1986): 874, doi:10.1037/0003-066X.41.8.868.


122 Hall, “Flapper Americana Novissima,” 772, 775.

Hall, “Flapper Americana Novissima,” 733.

Mary MacLane to Herbert Stone, Tuesday, in Human Days: A Mary MacLane Reader, by Mary MacLane, ed. Michael R. Brown (Austin, TX: Petrarca Press, 2013), 267-268. Mary MacLane, My Friend Annabel Lee (Chicago: Herbert S. Stone and Co., 1903), 2, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015053141621. Several of her letters suggest, but do not confirm, that she was in a romantic and possibly sexual relationship with her various female acquaintances.


Ibid., 492.

Mary MacLane, I, Mary MacLane (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1917), https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009578217.


For more on the film’s reception, please see Julie Buck, "Mary MacLane."

Tracing Lucille has been difficult, as the article in the Los Angeles Times would mistake Lucille Williams for a “negro maid who had been faithful to the end,” while the Chicago News Tribune article would note that Williams, mistakenly given the first name Harriet, had her own photography studio. According to one newspaper report, Williams stated, “she was my friend, and she was ill and needed me to me.” Fergus Falls Daily Journal, August 9, 1929, 1, qtd. in Halverson, Maverick Autobiographies, 73. “Mary MacLane, Author, Found Dead…,” New York Times, August 8, 1929. http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/104809389?accountid=14667. “Once Famous Mary MacLane Dies Obscure: One Friend Left of Many Who Praised Her Writing,” Chicago Daily Tribune, August 8, 1929. http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/181032217/abstract/E671A31466AD4858PQ/2. “Egoist-Author Dies Alone: Mary MacLane, Whose Introspective Writings Set Critics by Ears, Expires in Poverty,” Los Angeles Times, August 8, 1929.

The Death of Mary MacLane,” 9.

Mary MacLane, I, Mary MacLane (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1917), 230, 232, 234.

Ibid., 276, 277.

Ibid., 280.

Ibid., 288.


Atherton, Adventures of a Novelist, 492.


Julie Buck, “Mary MacLane.”


Sicherman notes that in the latter half of the nineteenth century, librarians frequently debated the presence of “trashy” or “sensationalist” fiction on the shelves. While some banned it outright, others “hoped to cultivate the ‘taste for reading’ and then channel it in proper directions. For more see, Barbara Sicherman, “Ideologies and Practices of Reading,” 291-293 or chapter two of this dissertation.

147 Ibid., 178.
148 Ibid., 184-185.
149 Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 35.
154 Wilson, “The Victorian Woman Reader in May Sinclair’s *Mary Olivier*,” 367.
165 Kilbourne, *Betty Bell*, 146.
166 Ibid., 11.
170 Ibid., 77.
171 Ibid., 205.
Conor, *The Spectacular Modern Woman*, 78, 79. Conor notes that the relationship between “Screen-Stuck Girl” and “Screen Star” tend to be same-sex (i.e. emulative); however, Betty’s narrative takes on a much more heteronormative route, as marriage, not a film career, is her end goal. However, the novel prepares us for the darker realities of the film studio by opening with an illustration of Betty talking to the studio’s janitor that is captioned “Movie-picture actors as a class ain’t much.” Kilbourne, *Betty Bell*, across from title page.

In fact, towards the end of the novel, those parallels are rendered explicit as Mrs. Baxter reflects fondly upon her own adolescent lovers, “who had brought a box of candy (a small one, like William’s) to the station, once, long ago, when she had been visiting in another town. For just a moment she thought of that boy she had known, so many years ago, and a smile came vaguely upon her lips. She wondered what kind of a woman he had married, and how many children he had—and whether he was a widower—.” Ibid., 258.


CHAPTER FOUR

Are You There, America? It’s Me, Maureen: Maureen Daly, the Catholic-American Community, and Commercializing White American Adolescence

Daly, Maureen
Seventeenth summer. 1944 Dodd 255p $3.75
(United States)

The Sa. Review of Lit. article on your books ends up by saying that [sic] Jack and Angie are the kind of young Americans for whom we must make the world free (or to whom we must guarantee liberty, or words to that effect). Whereas, of course, they, and we, are the people who must do the freeing. Winning the war won’t do it; it can only give us the opportunity to bring to the rest of this country, and to other countries the rather ideal conditions under which Jack and Angie grew up. They are conditions which occur naturally, at least to a fair extent, in the American small town, and not in many other places in the world.
---William Hunt, fan letter to Maureen Daly, June 1, 1939

After Moore left her desk and retired in 1941, the New York Public Library continued to compile new book lists with the goal of increasing international understanding. Two decades later, in 1960, the New York Public Library published a book list for entitled “Interpreting People Through Children’s Books” or “World Affairs” for short. The list, aimed at both children and adolescents, was significantly more diverse than the ones published under Moore’s reign, including literature written by authors and scholars as famous as Langston Hughes, Astrid Lindgren, and Margaret Meade and set in range of nations from every continent, including Australia, Pakistan, Russia, Ireland, West Africa, Sweden, among others. As it looked outward, however, it simultaneously turned inward to think about typical American experiences. For example, on the young adult list (i.e. “aged 13 and over”), it recommended several texts that addressed immigrant or first-generation experiences in the United States, including one work of
fiction, *The Long Way Home* by Margot Benary-Isbert (1959), and two memoirs, Roosevelt biographer Hermann Hagedorn’s *The Hyphenated Family* (1960) and ceramics artist Jade Snow Wong’s *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (1950). All three texts openly grappled with marginality, or, as described in chapter two, the sense of being torn between two cultures that often “involved feelings of insecurity, alienation, and ambivalence toward both the ethnic subculture and the dominant society.” For instance, Hagedorn, the son of German-American immigrants who moved between both nations, found the experience traumatic enough that he opened his forward with “This is a true story. I wish it weren’t.” All three end, however, with their protagonists having found a home, family, or “niche” of their own in the United States, regardless of racism, prejudice, or familial difficulties.

And yet, the 1960 list contains another book written by an immigrant: Maureen Daly’s *Seventeenth Summer*, a novel that was labelled by the compiling librarian “(America).” Daly was an Irish-Catholic immigrant, born in Castlecaufield, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland on March 15, 1921 to Catholic parents. When Daly was two, she, along with her mother and sisters, moved to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin to follow her father, who had moved there sometime previously. Daly began writing *Seventeenth Summer* in her late teens, and published the novel during college, when she was twenty-one. Unlike the other three immigrant narratives included on the NYPL list, however, *Seventeenth Summer* (1941) was unconcerned with issues of ethnicity or immigration, even though Daly herself noted the novel itself was semi-autobiographical. Angie Morrow, *Seventeenth Summer*’s protagonist, does not worry about adjusting to American culture or dealing with racism or xenophobia. Instead, Daly’s novel, originally written for adults, focused on Angie’s first real relationship, as she falls in love with Jack Duluth, the son of the local baker, before heading off to college.
Daly had already become somewhat famous—at least for a small town girl—for her stories of adolescent romance and heartbreak; her short story, “Sixteen,” which won the O. Henry Award in 1938, described the romantic travails of a nameless young girl from the Midwest who, after a meeting a handsome young man at a skating ring, waits (unsuccessfully) by the phone for his call. Like “Sixteen,” Seventeenth Summer focused on small town American culture. Angie spends her last days in Fond du Lac going on dates, window shopping with her sister, gossiping with friends, and preparing to leave the family home. There is no sign that she, like her creator, came from a foreign land or struggled to identify as American; Angie’s biggest fears are disappointing her parents or making the wrong social mistakes (e.g., dating the wrong guy or whether she should drink beer at the local teen party). Moreover, Angie’s summer practically screams Americana: days are filled with trips to the local soda shop or juke joint, Fourth of July parades, boating trips on Lake Winnebago, and picnics in the local forest. There are few overt references to political or cultural events outside of Fond du Lac, giving the novel a certain timelessness, even though to the modern reader, the local slang and dating rituals might appear quite dated. In a drafted synopsis for the novel, Daly noted that she hoped for such an effect, writing

I have a special reason for writing this book. I myself am just on the tail end of what I remember as a very prolonged and agonizing adolescence. My own first love is so few months behind that I can still strong [sic] wonder of it. I want to put in Seventeenth [sic] Summer before I get too old or before I forget, all that I know of awe, the pain and thefresh [sic] joy of growing up. I never expect to feel again so thoroughly and so eagerly alive as the night I was first kissed. All this may seem trivial but I don’t think it is. The experience is universally [sic] and it seems such a shame, that because we are so busy being growing up we forget the wonder of how we got that way. I want this book to be young, fresh and very true—like a poignant memory.12

As the fan mail above illustrates, both formal (Saturday Review of Literature) and informal (William Hunt) readers responded positively to Daly’s “poignant memory,” reading the novel as
representative of the “ideal conditions” for adolescent development, conditions that the reviewers gave national and political import.

In part, her reviewers found the text a refreshing distraction that, as Amanda Allen notes, “promise[d] a normality for which they nostalgically yearn[ed], a return to an uncomplicated past” in contrast to the horrors of World War II. They found a purpose in Daly’s vision of American adolescence, hoping to ensure that future generations would worry more about navigating the emotional terrain of their first major romance as opposed to the beaches of Normandy or Pacific Ocean Theater. With the potent combination of first love and Americana, it is unsurprising that, as Allen argues, librarians—led by the NYPL’s Margaret Scoggin, who did for young adult literature what Anne Carroll Moore did for children’s literature years earlier—championed *Seventeenth Summer* as one ideally suited for young girls. Subsequently, Daly’s novel appeared on multiple booklists for young adults at the NYPL, starting in 1946, and shortly afterward, became one of the literary standards by which the librarians evaluated young adult literature. Academics celebrated the novel as well. Dwight L. Burton argued in 1951 that *Seventeenth Summer* “captures better than any other novel the spirit of adolescence,” and Jean DeSales Bertram advised using *Seventeenth Summer* as a literal self-help manual that could “lead to an effective and constructive approach to the solution of the adolescents’ problems.”

Although Daly’s novel is rarely read today, its longstanding popularity throughout the mid-twentieth century has lead multiple scholars to cite it as a formative text for the young adult genre.

Maureen Daly’s career did not end with *Seventeenth Summer*, however. While she did not write another adolescent romance until *Acts of Love* (1986) and its sequel, *First a Dream* (1990), Daly continued to write to and for American teens throughout the forties and fifties, first
in a series of advice columns for the *Chicago Tribune*, later compiled into a book, *Smarter and Smoother*, in 1944. That same year, she would join the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, where she would take over their output about adolescents, including their teenage advice column, i.e., the Sub-Deb column, and reported on teenage culture and lifestyles, the latter of which culminated in an ethnographic report, *Profile of Youth* (1951), which proudly bore her name as editor.¹⁷ Her extensive work on adolescence brings up two questions that I argue are deeply inter-related: Why did *Seventeenth Summer*, a text written for adults, become the starting point for American young adult literature? And how did that text help Irish-born Roman Catholic Maureen Daly become a representative and purveyor of American adolescence during the 1940s and early 50s (so much so that the NYPL would recommend *Seventeenth Summer* as representative in 1960)?

To understand her enduring critical acclaim, we must first quickly consider the concurrent development of the junior novel. As discussed in the previous chapters, there were several attempts to create young adult literature, like Hall’s *ephebic* literature or Anne Carroll Moore’s *Books for Young People*. But as Dunning noted in 1959, American educators (including Dunning and Edwards themselves) continued to call for a “bridge” genre of literature throughout the forties and fifties, one that would help high school students not only develop a taste for reading but also to help them adjust to more thematically and linguistically complex novels, i.e. “adult” literature.¹⁸ Dunning thought junior novels, which he defined as “extended piece[s] of prose fiction written for adolescents which ha[ve] known adolescent activities or interests as central elements of the plot [and] preten[d] to treat life truthfully,” could provide such a solution.¹⁹ Granted, he had to engage in some recovery work, as the earliest (broadly recognized) permutation of young adult literature was generally regarded as a step above trash novels like Stratemeyer’s *Nancy Drew* or *Hardy Boy* series. Since their plots typically involved
romance and careers, or “adventure and sports,” depending on their intended gender, few scholars wanted to take them seriously or introduce them in their classes, although most scholars contemporary and contemporaneous begrudgingly acknowledge their influence because of their pedagogical purpose and popularity with teens. For example, Helen Dore Boylston’s Sue Barton series, first published in 1936, was written to disabuse teenage girls of their “romantic” notions regarding nursing, and these novels were popular for years after the first, Sue Barton: Student Nurse, appeared in bookstores and libraries. And yet, Boylston’s books received a critical drubbing—poor writing, too simplistic, unrealistic in scope and theme.

While her descriptions of an idealized, even bucolic upbringing in Seventeenth Summer could have aligned Daly’s work with Burton’s, my chapter will articulate how the novel’s focus on adolescent psyche, facilitated by what Sara K. Day calls “narrative intimacy,” gave her novel an “authenticity” so prized by contemporaneous reviewers. Based upon Seymour Chatman’s diagram of the narrative process (see figure 6), narrative intimacy uses first person-present tense and direct address to invite “adolescent women readers to identify so strongly with characters that the line between fictional story and real reading experience can be blurred or disregarded entirely.” While narrative intimacy is not unique to adolescent literature, Day argues that contemporary young adult romance abounds with teenagers sharing their secrets directly with

Real author → [Implied Author → Narrator → Narratee → Implied Reader] → Real reader.
Fig. 3: Seymour Chatman’s “Narrative Process,” Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 151.

their reader; however, as an adolescent writer, readers collapsed the distinctions between Daly (as real and implied author of Seventeenth Summer) and the novel’s narrator, Angie Morrow. Subsequently, I will compare Morrow’s rhetorical choices in Seventeenth Summer with her advice columns in the Chicago Tribune and Smarter and Smoother to show how narrative
intimacy in the former irrevocably associated her authorial persona with adolescence, trapping her into the role of a middle sister giving advice to floundering youth. In order to speak as, for, and to American youth, however, Daly’s persona was stripped of her immigrant/Catholic status—even though her fanbase included a large Catholic population who hoped she could represent their interests on the American literary stage. My analysis here relies extensively on fan letters from Maureen Daly’s archives, as they provide a running commentary of fan engagement and desire, desire to become her friend, to become her lover, to get advice, to get a sequel to Seventeenth Summer, to get more explicitly Catholic literature.

Finally, I will turn to her tenure at the Ladies’ Home Journal to examine how her image of American adolescence became commercialized, a brand that the editors of the Ladies’ Home Journal could use to sell their products as authentic representations of adolescent psychology. When Daly took over the “Sub-Deb” advice column in the mid-forties, it was already something of an institution, having started in 1928; moreover, while the magazine certainly did not invent the term “sub-deb”—the Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang suggests it entered into usage in 1917—Nash notes that, in the decades afterwards, “the figure of the sub-deb—gracious, well-to-do, and largely decorative—was the dominant image of the teenage girl in popular culture.” Sub-debs were often explicitly, although not exclusively, white. For example, Baltimore’s The Afro-American newspaper featured an on-going column filled with adolescent gossip called “Sub-Deb Chatter” in the thirties; however, the 1941 Life article about Detroit teens, “Subdebs: They Live in a Jolly World of Gangs, Games, Gadding, Movies, Malts, & Music,” only showed white faces and white fun, even though only two years later, rapid overcrowding and growing racial tensions would erupt into a race riot that killed thirty-four and injured four hundred and thirty-three. As we shall see, The Ladies’ Home Journal did little to complicate
that image—their Sub-Deb was, first and foremost, white, middle-class, and certainly not Catholic. While Daly’s work on *Profile of Youth*, particularly her interview with a Chicago African-American student, Myrdice Thornton, served to counter that narrative, I argue that the pseudo-ethnography’s reliance on a commodified model of adolescence formed an extension of Cold-War imperialist ideology.

**Angie Morrow, America’s Middle Sister: Seventeenth Summer and Narrative Intimacy**

In turn, the authors of many contemporary American novels for and about adolescent women actively encourage this blurring of boundaries by constructing what I term “narrative intimacy”—in other words, by constructing narrator-reader relationships that reflect, model, and reimage intimate interpersonal relationships through the disclosure of information and the experience of the story as a space that the narrator invites the reader to share.


I don’t know just why I’m telling you all this. Maybe you’ll think I’m being silly. But I’m not, really, because this is *important*. You see, it was different! It wasn’t just because it was Jack and I either—it was something much more than that. It wasn’t as it’s written in magazine stories or as in morning radio serials where a boy’s family always tease him about liking a girl and he gets embarrassed and stutters. And it wasn’t silly, like sometimes, when girls sit in school and write a fellow’s name all over the margin of their papers...and it wasn’t puppy love or infatuation or love at first sight or anything that people always talk about and laugh. Maybe you don’t know just what I mean. I can’t really explain it—it’s so hard to put in words but—well, it was just something I’d never felt before. Something I’d never even known. People can’t tell you about things like that, you have to find them out for yourself. That’s why it is so important.

--Maureen Daly, *Seventeenth Summer*, 1942

*Seventeenth Summer* opens with a direct address: Angie, a young woman, asks the audience not to dismiss her story of love, but to take her words, her *experiences*, seriously.26 Perhaps her anxiety over reception stems from an assumption that Angie fears her audience shares, fears that adolescents cannot experience real love with all its emotional and psychological depth. Representations of adolescents in the thirties and forties, as she notes, did not help, relying instead on reductive stereotypes that rested on the presupposed immaturity of the adolescent viewer. As one review of *Seventeenth Summer* noted in 1951,
In fiction with adolescent protagonists and in our think-ing about the adolescent generally, we have never freed ourselves from Booth Tarkington's influence, which has projected itself into 1951 as the Corliss Archer-Henry Aldrich tradition, a vision of adolescence which infuriates the ado-lescent, amuses some adults, and adds nothing to the understanding of either.27

Nor did they treat any budding adolescent romance with gravitas, or as if they were important. For example, Henry Aldrich, the nebbish, adolescent protagonist of the radio serial *The Aldrich Family* (1939-1953), was the butt of the show’s jokes and his romantic troubles stemmed from needing the right kind of pin for his girl or dealing with her jealousy by pretending to have another romantic interest.28 Alternatively, Aldrich’s film counterpart, Andy Hardy from the massively popular *Hardy Family* film series, was another jokester and his romantic travails took a slapstick approach, with star Mickey Rooney, as one reviewer described him, as “the hammiest of hams.”29

In particular, teenage girls projected on the screen or over the radio waves during the thirties and forties were, as Angie notes, “silly.” As Ilana Nash writes, girls like Corliss Archer or Nancy Drew—at least in her film incarnation—skipped across the screen full of sexual potency but lacking any intellectual prowess or self-awareness, incapable of challenging their male companions for supremacy like their adult counterparts.30 In contrast, Virginia Schaefer Carroll argues, Angie finds nothing funny about her occasional missteps but instead treats them with a seriousness that transforms what could have been a “silly romance” into a more complex, even feminist, *bildungsroman* exploring “self-expression” vis-à-vis her interpersonal relationships with her friends, family, and romantic partners.31 Certainly, Daly herself recognized the cultural capital gap between “literary” *bildungsroman* written for adult audiences (i.e., like those of her inspiration, Thomas Wolfe) and “silly” romances written for teens (i.e.,
junior novels and radio serials), and she would try, time and time again, to associate her novel more with the former than the latter.\textsuperscript{32} As a frustrated Daly would write to her publisher in 1967,

\begin{quote}
I do hope the emphasis [in advertising an anniversary edition of \textit{Seventeenth Summer}] is not entirely ‘teen-aged’. As you know, even considering its subject matter, the book was first written and reviewed as a novel in the adult field. It became a teen-aged favorite some years after it had been published. Quite naturally I value the teen-aged readership but I don’t want to forget the good reviews from the NEW YORKER, NEW YORK TIMES, etc.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

With this in mind, one could argue that Angie sounds anxious \textit{because} she is addressing an adult audience, one that had systematically belittled adolescent romance as something frivolous (Tarkington’s novel or \textit{The Aldrich Family}) or gave it little cultural capital (\textit{Betty Bell}).

Her opening, however, implies a more complex audience, one that could be either adult or adolescence. As Carroll notes, introduction itself reads as an intimate moment between friends: “The tone is confessional, almost conspiratorial: one can imagine the teenage girl with her hand cupped to the reader's ear, whispering.”\textsuperscript{34} Carroll argues the opening lines allow Angie to claim a certain amount of psychological authenticity and establish a clear adolescent voice departing from typical romance narratives for adults; however, I want to examine how that voice could lead to the collapse between fictional and real worlds, thereby creating a narrative that is heavily pedagogical (and thus ideal for an adolescent reader). According to Sara K. Day, narrative intimacy undermines the barrier between real readers and imagined authors by using first person to limit the reader’s awareness that the narrative is fictional. She writes,

\begin{quote}
I focus on …first-person narrators who are the main characters of the stories they narrate, who act as their own subjects, and who focus on the presentation of their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Narrative intimacy requires this type of first-person narration precisely because it allows for insights into the choices regarding the type and degree of disclosure that must be made by the narrator regarding the reader.\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}

This confessional tone constructs a temporarily safe space for both narrator and audience to be vulnerable, thereby “allow[ing] for the possibility of adolescent women readers ‘experiencing’
the realities of young adulthood vicariously through the narrators’ stories.” While narrative intimacy is not unique to the young adult genre, Day argues that, since those aimed at young girls often explicitly address interpersonal relationships, they also function as a model for teens how to engage in interpersonal relationships, whether with friends, family, lovers. Read another way, if, as discussed in the first chapter, ephebic literature could be used as a corrective because “the young appeal to and listen to each other as they do not to adults,” we can see that novels evoking narrative intimacy are the most explicitly engaged in that process, as each book forms a new (albeit unresponsive) friend that may guide through example.

Moreover, Day writes that narrators looking for intimacy must both disclose information about themselves and make particular assumptions “regarding the audience’s possible attitudes, beliefs, and opinions, [that] necessarily shapes the narrator’s storytelling.” If we return to the opening of Seventeenth Summer, Angie’s fear of exposure (“I don’t know just why I’m telling you this”), of judgement (“Maybe you’ll think I’m being silly”) establishes a particular sense of risk—that sharing her story is simultaneously vital and terrifying—but her emphasis on the audience’s potential ignorance (“People can’t tell you about things like that, you have to find them out for yourself”) suggests that the act of narrating her story is pedagogical for both herself and her audience. At the beginning, Angie herself seems unable to define what her own romantic adventures signify beyond its importance in her life. Instead, as Carroll notes, she defines it in terms of absence or negation, “my experience was not what you or I would expect, or even what society would expect,” and although she implies that her romance was legitimate, serious, even life-changing, figuring out the impact of her relationship with Jack Duluth on her life—the why and how—is the purpose of the book itself, i.e., “People can’t tell you about things like that, you have to find them out for yourself. That’s why it is so important.” In short, her
story is invested in the process of meaning-making, making sense out of the series of intense emotions and interpersonal interactions with Jack that, by the end of the book, are left behind when she goes to college in the fall: “And I saw [the scenery] all glide past me, lopped off by fenceposts, and I felt myself ache inside with a quiet sadness. And now I knew suddenly that it could come and could come forever, slipping by in the breath of a moment, and yet never again would there be anything quite as wonderful as that seventeenth summer!” Reflecting upon her journey provides an emotional education—not only does she learn that love can be more than what’s joked about on the radio, but she also realizes she can feel nostalgia for her pre-adult, pre-college life.

It is implied, moreover, that the audience might share in those discoveries as well, either through the lens of nostalgia (“I once felt the same”) or through the text itself, for in spite of her opening claim that one must experience love first hand, the narrative provides a variety of examples detailing what it could be like. As her relationship with Jack grows, Angie constantly compares her romantic experiences with those women around her—the friends she gains once she enters Jack’s social circle, along with her sisters, Margaret and Lorraine. Angie’s interactions with her sisters privilege the reader, adolescent or otherwise. At the beginning, Margaret, the oldest and steadiest, is engaged to Art, a man from Milwaukee whom Angie initially dismisses because he “looks and acts like a giant baby panda.” In contrast, Lorraine, a junior in college, embarks on an ill-fated affair with a traveling salesman, Martin, who dates Lorraine for a short while before moving on to other women, leaving her heartbroken. While the sisters do, on occasion, give each other advice or try to communicate their feelings about romance, Angie marks these occasions as filled with misunderstandings and missed connections. For example, when, at the end of her first date, Angie worries that Jack won’t call her again, she
realizes she forgot to ask her sisters how to end a date, noting “you can’t ask a boy, ‘When will I see you again?’ or ‘Will I ever see you again?’” Moments later, however, she moves from novice to expert and repeats the sentiment to her audience, warning them, “You can’t say to a boy ‘Have I been fun tonight?’ or ‘Don’t you like me more than other girls—wouldn’t you like to go out with me again?’ A girl can’t just say that sort of thing to a boy..." This confidence does not translate to the narrative proper, as Angie stays silent until saved by a sudden downpour, which forces her inside. And yet, when she walks by her sisters’ room, where she could conceivably ask them for advice, they are “sleeping quietly, their hair in metal curlers and cold cream shining on their faces.” The next morning, still in bed, Angie imagines telling her family about her date, thinking

and I would put cream in my coffee and tell them all about the boat and how good [Jack’s friend] Swede was at sailing it and how it had started to rain just when we got home…but I would never mention the moon or the cool clean smell of the wind or that I had worn Jack’s sweater all evening or all the other small, warm thoughts that kept nudging at my memory even as I lay awake watching the sun grow brighter on the ceiling.

In contrast, she tells her readers (almost) everything, from the feeling of Jack’s arms around her, to the warmth of the sun as it enters her room; her audience, she implies, are better listeners, more understanding listeners, than her family or friends.

Angie does not tell her audience everything, however. When it comes to sex, while Angie experiences intensely physical and emotional desire, she cannot (or will not) discuss them openly. When Lorraine tries communicate her sexual experiences with Martin—including “neck[ing]” and other implied sex acts to Angie, however, the latter’s unfamiliarity and downright panic when discussing the topic renders the conversation useless. Granted, Angie can certainly articulate the feeling of lust: “I knew how [Lorraine] felt …There were little warm thoughts in her mind like soft fur, just as in mine: there were thoughts that made her lips tremble
and set a quiet, steady beating in her throat when the gentleness of the summer night touched her cheek and the air was fragrant with the smell of flowers hidden in the darkness. I knew how she felt.”

And yet, when Angie tries to soothe Lorraine’s worries by stating “If you really like a boy--it’s all right to kiss him,” she exposes her sexual ignorance, to which Lorraine replies, “You don’t understand at all...You don’t even know what I mean!”

Later, after Martin leaves Lorraine, she tries again to talk about sexuality, but cannot bring herself to be explicit, telling Angie, “…I don’t know why I’m pretending when it isn’t true. This isn’t how I meant to grow up. I’ve heard of other girls…but that isn’t how I meant to be. I don’t want to pretend…but nothing will ever be the same anymore!” (ellipses in original). The ellipses mark the growing distance between Lorraine and Angie, a distance that Angie eventually regards as sad but a natural part of growing up.

And yet, even with her audience, Angie refuses to break that silence in regards to her own sexual activities. In an early swimming scene, she nervously observes her growing sexual attraction to Jack, which terrifies her, noting, “I had a sudden impulse to reach out and run my finger lightly over the even, dark arch of his eyebrows as he stood looking at me. But there was an odd look in his eyes, an odd, warm look that made my lips tingle as his eyes met mine, and I knew it would be better not to touch him, not even to talk to him, just then.”

Angie’s growing desire provides a sexual pulse undergirding the novel, but she never explores it fully, although that didn’t stop actual (as opposed to implied) audience members from reading it into the narrative. In a 1993 article, Daly reflected on how the audience responded to Angie’s desire, noting,

[Angie’s] innocence, possibly, was that she never faced squarely what she meant to do...There is a section in the book in which the characters, Jack and Angie, go on a picnic. Eventually they leave the group around the fire and go off into the woods together. Librarians have told me that the four to five pages covering that incident are
often torn out of books, and though it wasn't my intent, there is a distinct feeling there that Jack and Angie's romance had become ultimately sexual. I guess it was suggested strongly.\textsuperscript{47}

This sexual reticence, whether in the text or merely implied, fits certain models of sexual desire described in the previous chapter. Sexuality, on its own, was not necessarily detrimental; however, to speak \textit{and} act upon it, like Mary MacLane does, would be dangerous for young girls to read. (It is notable, too, that Lorraine, who transgressed those sexual boundaries, ends up leaving for college early, heartbroken, where Angie leaves equally single, but with Jack’s school ring). In short, \textit{Seventeenth Summer} found an ideal middle road—one that allowed adults to, as Amanda Allen states, indulge in their nostalgia for a particular all-American narrative while providing sexual hints that would tantalize both adult and adolescent reading publics.\textsuperscript{48}

In particular, Allen’s examination of Daly’s fan mail archive shows that \textit{Seventeenth Summer}’s readership came from wide spectrum of backgrounds, including teens of both genders, young men on the frontlines during World War II, parents and librarians, even nuns and friars, a combination that contradicts current assumptions that \textit{Seventeenth Summer} is, and was, a romance firmly aimed at young girls. For example, she notes that even though many of the soldiers who wrote to Daly expressed “romantic and/or sexual responses to Angie,” others identified with her or her sisters and the pre-war world that they represented.\textsuperscript{49} Therefore, while Day argues narrative intimacy requires its young female audience to identify with the narrator and thereby share in her experiences, Allen’s examination of the fan mail archive for \textit{Seventeenth Summer} prove that any identifications based on age and gender are remarkably difficult to predict or track.

With this in mind, while I will address fan response to her works later in the chapter, I first want to articulate how Angie’s use of narrative intimacy allowed her (and subsequently
Daly) to function as a guide, even an expert to the adolescent culture so clearly described in the narrative. As established previously, while Angie’s relationship with her sisters and mother is marked by silence, even overt misunderstanding, when it comes to her reader, Angie often functions as a sister herself, guiding them through the complex social routines that mark her interactions with other adolescents in Fond du Lac. At times, her descriptions, like those of Anne Carroll Moore, are almost ethnographic in tone—when Angie and her friend Margie go out for Cokes at the local drugstore, Angie frames the scene thusly:

The young fellows in our town have a system. To an adult or to someone from out of town it would mean nothing to see a group of young boys standing in front of McKnight’s or on the nearest street corner. But I knew what they were there for—Jane Rady had told me before I had even known Jack—and all the other girls knew too. These are the “checkers.” They are the more popular crowd at high school and every evening about half-past seven they gather to stand talking together with elaborate unconcern, while in actuality they are sharply watching the cars going by to see what fellows and girls are out together; they watch to see who is having a Coke with whom and to report any violations on the part of the girls who are supposed to be going steady. It’s almost like a secret police system—no one escapes being checked on. At least no one who counts. The checkers also keep their eyes open for new prospects among the young sophomore girls who are growing up and show signs of datable promise. They only watch out for the very pretty or very popular girls, so it is the most serious catastrophe of all not even to be noticed by the checkers. Here, Angie becomes a Virgil to the reader’s Dante, guiding us through the second circle of teenage hell. Adults or outsiders have no place here—power is dispersed amongst the popular and the pretty, consigning those who are neither to the dustbin, a place Angie found herself until Jack noticed her (as Margie notes, “any girl that goes with Jack Duluth is checkers material from then on”).

This was not the first time Daly broke down drugstore culture for a broad audience; in a 1941 *Vogue* article entitled “Americana: Drugstore Forum,” she argued that drugstores were, like libraries for Anne Carroll Moore, an alternative “classroom” where teens could explore their passions alongside their peers. Produced shortly after she won the award leading to
Seventeenth Summer’s publication, her description appeared to be yanked directly from her (at the time) unpublished manuscript. Here we see the “checkers,” framed less subtly as the local “Gestapo of the locker-room,” and Margie, no longer a character but a nickname used as “an unadulterated compliment to any girl, carrying with it implications of prettiness and smoothness.”52 Filled with slang and social cues, the article defends the drugstore as space for dialogue and debate, for the exchange of social power outside the all-seeing eyes of adults, and her language is highly voyeuristic, calling upon “Fifth Columnists wish[ing] to discover the innermost ambitions and schemes of a great part of American youth” and “Gallup pollists” interested in the opinions of “many of our future citizens.” In this tantalizing glimpse of adolescent culture, Daly proves her ability to move between drugstore and college, fiction and magazine, an ability that she suggests gives her (and other teens) significant power (and with allusions to military maneuvers and Nazi forces, she reminds her reader that the stakes, in a world fraught with war, are high.)

In contrast, the stakes in Seventeenth Summer remain comparatively low, thanks to the pre-war setting; however, for Angie, whose dating life takes up her entire world that summer, the wrong step could lead to social (and more likely romantic) suicide. As Angie gains access to this inner circle, she takes the reader along for the ride, teaching them how to fit in through example. While sipping her coke and chatting with Margie, Angie notices a pair of young girls, carefully dressed, “with their hair very carefully set in neat waves and very little lipstick. One of them had on flat black oxfords—and everyone knows that no high school girl should wear anything but saddle shoes or collegiate moccasins!”53 Such disgrace, according to Angie, is met with swift dismissal from the filled booths. While Angie identifies with their pain, she joins in with the rest, noting “I wouldn’t be stupid enough to wear flat black oxfords. Any girl who does that almost
deserves not to have fellows look at her.” Angie does not critique or even fight the (oft-illogical) standards offered by the “smooth” girls and boys in Jack’s social circle, a group she desperately wants to join at the beginning of the narrative. For instance, when she goes on a date with Tony, a local “fast” boy, she accidentally violates the rules herself; as Margie warns her, “Honestly, Angie…I can’t see why you had to go out with a boy like Tony when you were dating someone as swell as Jack Duluth.”

She continues, “boys like [Tony]…and girls like him too—but, well, they don’t go out with him…unless they are that kind” [emphasis original]. Although Angie likes Tony, she immediately drops him without a thought, knowing that his reputation would destroy her own.

Angie’s decision is additionally informed by her Catholic upbringing. In a previous scene, Jack suggests they attend Benediction together before a double date with Margie and her boyfriend. Angie is reluctant, uncomfortable that “there is something so final, something so husband—and wifelike about going to church with a boy. Religion is too personal a thing to share promiscuously and the thought of being there with Jack filled me with a kind of awe; made me feel as though I should tiptoe up the aisle and genuflect in careful silence.”

Unfortunately, Angie cannot tiptoe or genuflect; she remains out of sorts, watching Jack easily and calmly fall into the routines of service while she is distracted by his beautiful hands, by memories of Jack standing in the moonlight. When Jack catches her smiling, she refocuses, but after they leave, Angie thinks, “I realized then with a half-proud, half-ashamed feeling, that Jack was a better boy than I was a girl.” That shame—over her inability to contain or control her desire—could align her (or sexually marginalize her) with Lorraine; however, her sense that Jack “is a better boy” implicitly provides a moral model for her romantic development. While she still accepts a second date with Tony after the Benediction scene, if her date with Jack is uncomfortable but filled with
awe, her next date with Tony provides more disquieting emotions. For Tony, his house of
worship is the local bar, and there, he indulges his taste for whiskey and penchant for long,
lustful looks at Angie. Despite enjoying his attentions, Angie finds that, much like in church, she
struggles to keep her mind off of Jack—transformed here into a representation of Catholic values
vis-à-vis Tony’s more secular (and more overtly sexual) dating style.

Angie’s implicitly pedagogical stance takes greater weight when compared to Lorraine’s
story, for not only is her more secular romance unsuccessful, but the narrative passes judgement
upon her more worldly approach to dating. Before her first date with Martin, Lorraine debates
how to present herself, telling Angie, “I don’t know if I should pretend I’m the real intelligent
type or pretend I’m sophisticated and have been around.”57 Her emphasis on self-presentation
recalls Betty Bell’s own recognition and manipulation of the male gaze, as discussed in the third
chapter; however, in Seventeenth Summer, Lorraine’s desire for glamour (while she talks to
Angie, she paints on her lips and fixes her hair) or sophistication is framed as both desperate and
unnatural in comparison to Angie’s, who ponders, “I’d never thought of ‘pretending’ with a boy.
I’d thought either you had been around or you hadn’t, either you were the intelligent type or you
weren’t. Lorraine talked as if she were dressing up a paper doll.” Her judgment of Lorraine
parallels Anne Carrol Moore’s earlier claim that the best literature for girls should “bear so clear
a stamp that what a girl really is—not what she is made to seem to be.”58 Angie is no more nor
less self-conscious than her sister (her sharp judgement of the oxfords later in the text proves she
connects self-presentation with male attraction), but Lorraine’s willingness to change herself and
her personality goes too far to be truly authentic. In short, by creating an intimate link between
narrator and the implied audience (either unwitting adults or unfamiliar teens), Daly’s
Seventeenth Summer could convey both explicit and implicit pedagogical lessons covering
socialization, romance, and self-presentation, with an emphasis on psychological realism that made it an effective (if not actual) answer to Moore’s desire for a teenaged *Mary Olivier: A Life*.

Moreover, one could argue that Lorraine’s sexual promiscuity, in clear violation of Catholic doctrine and her own sense of “how [she] meant to be,” reads as a subtle critique of secularized dating. Angie’s destiny—driven by authenticity and an adherence to Catholic values—is a glorious summer romance that ends when Jack moves to Oklahoma and she moves to college. It is only one (successful) step in her developmental path. Lorraine’s destiny—marked by pretense and expressed sexual desire—is to leave Fond du Lac filled with mental turmoil and potential trauma, a narrative thread left mostly unresolved. As we’ll see in the third section, the Benediction scene would be very positively received by the Catholic community, who excitedly wrote to Daly that they hoped she would write more explicitly Catholic literature.

Regardless, since Daly herself was almost the same age as her narrator, the text was read as a convincing portrait of adolescence, one that a broadly American audience could interpret as both timeless and contemporary. The *New York Times* raved that *Seventeenth Summer* was, due to its young author, “completely up to date in its idiom and its atmosphere, vividly authentic in a warm and homely way…simply, eloquently, Maureen Daly tells one how youth in love really feels—how it felt yesterday and how it feels today.” Fans, too, noted how the characters felt “real,” like F. Majorie Ryan, who gushed, “[y]ou see, Maureen, you’ve captured all the feelings of teen-age girls like I [sic] and put them on paper… I never thought other girls could feel the way I did, or that other people could be like I am. You’ve made everything very lovely—thank you.” Many readers took it a step further and questioned if Daly based Angie’s narrative on her own experiences. As one soldier, another family friend, wrote, “I can see Pete himself,
McKnights—your home and family so clearly. It’s a book that will bring to the many people who aren’t fortunate enough to know the Dalys as I do—the ever-loving bond of family life that I found existed in your family…perhaps it’s a professional secret but sometime I would like to know the true identity of Jack-Swede-Dolly-Jane Rady-and Kay’s Marty.”

Another eighteen-year-old boy begged, “Tell me—was there really a “Jack”? Did the beautiful little love story of yours end when the train pulled out? I’d like to know! Of course, Daly didn’t keep the semi-autobiographical nature of her text a secret between herself and her publisher. In a 1942 interview with The New York Times, she revealed that Seventeenth Summer was based on her own experience and that she didn’t worry if anyone in her hometown would be offended because “when I think I am telling something bad about some one I sort of smooth it over. You can fix things” (These fixes didn’t keep one of her sister’s beaus from getting offended, however, when he associated himself with the wrong character).

That being said, for other readers, the boundary between fiction and reality (whether between Angie and Maureen or Angie and the reader) disappeared entirely. As one seventeen-year-old wrote,

I know what I want to say but I just can’t form it into words. I want to tell you that since I’ve read “Seventeenth Summer,” Angie & Jack & Kitty & Swede and all of them have become a part of me. I can’t eat or sleep without thinking of them. This probably sounds like another of your raving fans, but you’ve got to believe me. I have never read anything quite like “Seventeenth Summer.” It’s so much like my own life that it’s uncanny. I love that book so much that I cry when I think of it. Tomorrow I have to take it back to the Library [sic] and I can’t bear to part with Angie and Jack… I was wondering if I sent [my personal copy] to you—if you’d write some little thing in it. I want you to so bad--cause I know that you’re Angie.

Another asked, “if you feel you’d like to tell me, I’d be very interested to know whether your ever saw Jack Duluth again or not? Do you still know those young girls and boys, Jane Rady,
and the others? Do you still go with Jack and did you really love each other? Whatever happened to your sister, that waited so long to hear from Mike, I believe his name was?"67

Still others responded viscerally to Daly’s use of narrative intimacy: one junior girl wrote, “[a]lthough we do not know one another I feel that we are close friends for I have just finished reading Seventeenth Summer,” while another sixteen-year-old girl hoped to start up a correspondence with Daly, begging her pardon for “tell[ing] you things about myself I never told anyone before.”68 A soldier about to be sent overseas opened his letter with “Dear Maureen, One could hardly address you as Miss Daly after having enjoyed the friendly, even style of ‘Seventeenth Summer,’” before shifting into his own gossip about camp life, noting “What I am going to tell you is now strictly entre nous you see, and not to be repeated to the major.”69 In other words, they saw Daly/Angie as their friend, someone who they could invite into their lives and share their secrets, something she would capitalize upon in her later work.

Creating a Smarter and Smoother Adolescent: Advice Columns, Jive Talk and the Intimate Publics of the Teenage Market.

And forgetting what necking does to your reputation, think what it does to yourself. At the time it may seem like fun but this isn’t worth it. You don’t want to be the kind of girl other fellows and girls talk about. You don’t want to be the kind of phone number that boys call after ten o’clock at night or as a last minute resort on Saturdays…when you thought of yourself growing up, you had something wonderful in mind. You didn’t want to be stuffy by calling it an “ideal” but that is just exactly what it was. You wanted people to like you; you wanted to be smooth…but you didn’t want to be worn smooth by rough experience. [latter ellipses original] --Maureen Daly, “Nix on Necking,” Smarter and Smoother, 1944

I have read your other book Smarter and Smoother and I learned a lot from it. I thought it was a swell book and intend to add it to my collection also…P.S. I have always been wondering about things like my first date and such. I have never necked and never intend to. Once again, I want to say that Smarter and Smoother has taught me many important things.”

---Marguerite Gilard, Fan letter to Maureen Daly, n.d.

It is perhaps unsurprising that many of Daly’s most vehement fans were also following her columns in the Chicago Daily Tribune, which started running only a few months before
Seventeenth Summer was published. These columns were intended to “help young America get more fun and value out of life,” and their audience was mixed, as both teens and adults read the columns or their compilation, Smarter and Smoother, alongside Seventeenth Summer. As one girl wrote, “I read your book [Seventeenth Summer], finally, after having waited for it all summer. It was surely worth waiting for, though, and I really loved it. All of the kids have been reading it… My mother also read the book and liked it immensely. I read your “Sunday Tribune” columns and I think they are grand. You certainly give good advice to girls, especially ones of my age, as that is when most of them start dating.” Another reader recorded that she loved both Seventeenth Summer and her columns, which she considered “tops for ‘sugared sermons’!” Of course, to a certain extent, it is not surprising her fans would read both texts—many noted they were desperate for a sequel to Seventeenth Summer and would read anything Daly wrote. Plus, the columns combined advice and fiction, including a series of short stories by Daly that “dramatizing the everyday problems of young America.” These tales usually revolved around the adolescent adventures of Ginie Owen and her friends Lynn, Tom, and Dick; extremely didactic, each short contained a little mini-lesson that paralleled her non-fiction advice, whether around cheating or entering the army, dating or spending an evening with the girls. These short stories, however, did not make it into Smarter and Smoother, thereby limiting the scope of their audience, and Daly herself seemed to step away from the narrative format after April of 1942.

Seventeenth Summer and her advice columns can and should be read in concert with each other, if only because the advice columns functioned as a more explicitly pedagogical version of Seventeenth Summer (with the Ginie Owens stories providing a bridge between the two). That being said, if the implied reader in Seventeenth Summer was adolescent and adult, her columns for the Chicago Daily Tribune, entitled “On the Solid Side” and Smarter and Smoother were for
adolescents only. According to Daly’s archival notes, her columns were “the first newspaper columns ever aimed directly, and regularly, at a young audience” and were “widely syndicated.” Of course, by the early 1940s, teens were a major marketing force. Thanks to the efforts of the child study and child guidance movement, teens began to stay in school much longer, which meant teens spent more with their peers than their parents; high schools allowed for, as Kelly Schrum notes, the “development and the dissemination of teen culture” on a massive scale previously unseen. In short, teens started setting their own fads and making their own social rules and codes, fueling their participation with money from parents or by getting part-time jobs (particularly once the World War II had ended). Marketers took notice, providing products and advertisements directed towards adolescents in the form of fashion, magazines, films, and other forms of mass media. One such marketer, Eugene Gilbert, argued in 1948 that adolescents (aged twelve to eighteen) were “the market in which almost all mass buying trends originate,” and his company, started in 1945 when he was only nineteen, would hire popular teens to keep him up to date with the latest trends.

This is not to suggest that adolescent cultures were unified or universally understood (by teens, parents, or marketers). For example, social expectations often split along gendered lines. Young girls were a particular target of advertisers, starting with the flappers in the twenties and moving into “sub-debs” or bobbysoxers in the thirties and forties, who saw women as more natural consumers. Additionally, slang and styles popular in one town would be different in another—regional differences were not to be overlooked. That being said, as we saw in the previous section, if Seventeenth Summer was particularly adept at describing local traditions in Fond du Lac (attracting the notice of checkers or wearing collegiate moccasins instead of black
oxford), in Daly’s short story, “Sixteen,” the unnamed narrator’s opening suggests teens were increasingly aware of what *American* adolescents looked like.⁷⁹

…I know what a girl should do and what she shouldn’t. I get around. I read. I listen to the radio…I know it’s smart to wear tweedish skirts and shaggy sweaters with the sleeves pushed up and pearls and ankle socks and saddle shoes that look as if they’ve seen the world. And I know that your hair should be long, almost to your shoulders, and sleek as a wet seal, just a little fluffed on the ends, and you should wear a campus hat or a dink or else a peasant hankie if you’ve that sort of face. Properly, a peasant hankie should make you think of edelweiss, mist and sunny mountains, yodeling and Swiss cheese. You know, that kind of peasant. Now, me, I never wear a hankie. It makes my face seem wide and Slavic and I look like a picture always on one of those magazine articles that run—“And Stalin says the future of Russia lies in its women. In its women who have tilled its soil, raised its children”—Well, anyway. I’m not too small-town either. I read Winchell’s column. You get to know what New York boy is that way about some pineapple princess on the West Coast and what Paradise pretty is currently the prettiest, and why someone, eventually, will play Scarlett O’Hara. It gives you that cosmopolitan feeling. And I know that anyone who orders a strawberry sundae in a drugstore instead of a lemon coke would probably be dumb enough to wear colored ankle socks with high-heeled pumps or use Evening in Paris with a tweed suit.⁸⁰

Mass media—radio, magazines—provided a common source of American adolescent culture for the protagonist, where she could learn about current fashions or Scarlett O’Hara or the latest pineapple princesses. Moreover, her reading and listening habits helped her determine when she transgressed those boundaries, i.e. to avoid aligning herself with political structures diametrically opposed to American democracy. Considering, as Cross argues, that democracy, liberty, and consumerism became inextricably intertwined in early twentieth century, the narrator’s juxtaposition between herself, who knows and purchases the right products, whether dinks, tweeds, or *Evening in Paris*, and the communist woman, whose life revolves around various forms of paid and unpaid labor, suggests that purchasing was an American adolescent’s right, that it was a part of “The American Way.”⁸¹

That being said, there were few sources of advice for dealing with this dizzying new social sphere that emphasized conformity. Dating manuals had been around for some time. In
1912, Margaret H. Sanger wrote a newspaper column for working girls, but it addressed sexual education, not adolescent culture—moreover, her tone was formal, a teacher instructing her pupils.\textsuperscript{82} She wrote, “I shall try to free the subjects from technicalities and give the opinions of writers who have made these subjects their life studies and also the facts as I myself have learned them. It is not my intention to thrust upon any one a spe-cial code of morals, or to inflict upon the readers my own ideals of morality. I only presume to present the facts for you to accept according to your understanding.”\textsuperscript{83} Few girls got to read them, however, since the book was quickly labeled obscene for its frank talk about masturbation, bodily changes, and sex, and subsequent dating and sex manuals, more generally, were carefully monitored.\textsuperscript{84} As for more socially-oriented advice, before Daly began writing for the \textit{Chicago Daily Tribune}, the options were generally directed at young girls and published in women’s magazines. \textit{The Ladies’ Home Journal} published a “Sub-Deb” column starting in 1928, which Daly herself would take over in the mid-forties. and \textit{Parents’} magazine started the fashion-oriented “Tricks for Teens” in 1942. \textit{Seventeen}, the premier magazine for teenage girls, would not be published until 1944.\textsuperscript{85}

In contrast, Daly’s columns deviated from previous adolescent advice columns in two ways: first, while recognizing the way that gender structured adolescent interaction, her advice was aimed at both girls and boys. Second, while her articles were published in newspapers, they did not initially follow the question and answer format typical to most newspaper advice columnist. In fact, unlike Sanger (or even Angie in \textit{Seventeenth Summer}), Daly’s columns never even invoked the first-person singular. Instead, she initially spoke in a series of hypothetical situations that were avowedly anti-autobiographical, which read more like material from etiquette manuals, i.e., works written by Emily Post or Lillian Eichler, both of whom began publishing in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{86} For instance, her first essay, “Maureen Daly…Tells You How To Be
A Smoothie,” opened, “So you’ve got your back to the wall? That must have been where you
made your mistake. If a bunch of wallflowers are huddled together in a corner, no boy—no
matter how much he wanted to dance with you—would know which one to pick.”87 There’s no
mention of Daly’s experiences in Fond du Lac, so these first essays (the majority of which would
be revised into Smarter and Smoother) were not about what she had learned personally, but
instead, about all the possible problems that plagued “young America.”

In spite of avoiding “I,” however, Daly’s voice still functioned like Angie’s because she
constructed what Lauren Berlant calls an “intimate public” entrenched in adolescence
experience. In The Female Complaint, Berlant argues,

[b]y ‘intimate public’ I do not mean a public sphere organized by autobiographical
confession and chest-baring…what makes a public sphere intimate is an expectation that
the consumers of its particular stuff already share a worldview and emotional knowledge
that they have derived from a broadly common historical experience…whether linked to
women or other nondominant people, it flourishes as a porous, affective scene of
identification among strangers that promises a certain experience of belonging and
provides a complex of consolation, confirmation, discipline, and discussion about how to
live as an x. [emphasis original]88

Teens, disenfranchised by their age, certainly constituted a minority, and as Daly’s short story
“Sixteen” showed, they were increasingly aware of what it meant to be an American teen, a fact
that Daly utilized in her columns. In Daly’s first article, titled “Maureen Daly…Tells You How
To Be A Smoothie,” she set herself up as just another adolescent, describing her age (twenty, and
a college senior to boot!), and explaining that she still lived at home with her parents, much like
her audience. Later articles would note that the essays were “based upon the experiences of
Young America,” universalizing her particular voice (Irish, Midwestern, girl) into the abstract.89
By setting herself up as one adolescent speaking to another, she could create a shared worldview
about what adolescence could be like, implying that she had the same fears about friends, dating,
academics, and family struggles.
In turn, she could also discipline her audience by telling them what it meant to be an American adolescent. For Daly, being an adolescent revolved entirely around being popular, or a “smoothie.” Like Angie, who spends her seventeenth summer angling to join the popular crowd, Daly’s mission was to encourage girls and boys to become “smarter and smoother,” a project that, in practice, complimented the lessons she gave in *Seventeenth Summer*. Smooth girls, were clean, neat, thoughtful, good-mannered, obsessed with self-improvement and yet truly authentic—they were no Lorraine, who necked with fast men and flirted with “sophistication.” Instead, they knew the right amount of culture (pop and classical), helped their mothers around the house, got part-time jobs, dated the right number of men, and supported the war effort.

Somewhat surprisingly, smooth boys were held to similar standards, i.e., clean, thoughtful, hardworking, and not too fast. In fact, many of her essays targeted both boys and girls in equal measure, although she emphasized appearance for women and proper manners on dates and with date’s family for boys. In short, we can read “smooth” or “popular” here to be firmly middle-class and white, an identity backed up by the accompanying images.

That being said, Daly’s general argument, however, was predicated on social uplift, i.e. she argued that all teens, regardless of background or class, could “make it” if only they worked hard enough. As Cas Wouters argues, while proper etiquette is exclusionary in nature, etiquette books in the twentieth century—particularly those in the United States—increasingly emphasized etiquette as democratizing, a method for a diverse (and often divisive) nation to find a common language that would unite them. In the process, etiquette books could provide emotional coaching, helping their readers fight “feelings of embarrassment about inequalities” through careful emotional and physical self-control. Ideally, this control would be so carefully practiced that one could appear at ease, unrehearsed and entirely natural with one’s friends and
social superiors. In one essay, entitled “Lucky You,” she admonishes the upper-class teen who “classifies] others according to the clothes they wear, the houses they live in and the money they have to spend and form friendships accordingly…it is an unfairness committed almost without thinking.” She argued that recognizing class differences was uncouth, noting “[i]f for the time being, things seem to be in your favor—you’re just lucky.” That being said, her other essays maintained that it took hard work and dedication to become smooth; privilege had nothing to do with it:

It can get to be a habit—this covering-up with a little self-pampering. You can develop into a sad case…and no matter ow you try to justify your pouts and discouragements with yourself; no matter how you pretend that you just didn’t the breaks; that you were off somewhere when playing gin rummy when the talents were being passed out—you can’t fool yourself. You can’t excuse yourself into second place and you can’t cajole yourself into being contented with second fiddling—its your own fault and you know it. Sulking and brooding doesn’t help. Do something about it…You can make yourself what you want to be.

In short, Daly fully believed the “bootstrap” ethos of etiquette manuals. If one failed, it certainly was not due to institutional inequalities but instead individual fault, usually an inability to maintain proper self-control. Granted, Daly herself had not grown up wealthy. Her father was a traveling salesman, her mother a homemaker, and Daly helped support the family finances with her own part-time job at the local department store, so it’s likely that she found the concept appealing. As we will see in the final section, however, her later work for the Ladies’ Home Journal would start to push against self-improvement or at least recognize the ways in which institutional forces provided roadblocks based on class and race.

With this in mind, if the Benediction scene in Seventeenth Summer gave Angie’s experiences with Jack a moral and spiritual direction, one derived from Catholic sources, Daly’s columns did not link self-improvement to religious thought. In fact, Smarter and Smoother avoided almost any mention of church activities outside the occasional casual reference, say, in
an article about going to bed early. Instead, Daly’s advice in *Smarter and Smoother* recognized that self-improvement carried nationalist implications. Like Anne Carroll Moore over twenty years earlier, she carefully directed adolescent self-improvement in ways that might benefit a nation at war. Since many of the boys in her audience were already drafted, Daly concentrated on disciplining her girls into growing victory gardens and ration coupons, letter-writing and providing non-sexual forms of moral support to the boys abroad, although not everyone agreed with her advice. Regardless, she argued that all teens should mentally prepare themselves for battle:

You’re learning for keeps now. Whether it’s a snap course with a push-over for a teacher or whether it’s something that actually takes some concentration to get into your mind, you have to do a permanent job. No surface learning or last-minute cramming. A few years from now you will be called to give back the know-ledge you were able to get while the fighting was going on. Your mind will be needed…Everything you learn in school these days is yours to keep and to give back when the time comes. And you haven’t a minute to lose…every moment wasted now means that you are spoiling your own chances of a better understanding of the conflict now going on; what went before it and what lies ahead.

In other words, her audience had a duty—to support the war effort fully and to help the nation survive once the war was over.

Considering Daly was writing for a major Chicago newspaper, Daly’s choice to avoid including Catholic doctrine may seem odd since Chicago was known for its large and longstanding Catholic population. And yet, if Daly wrote her column with an eye towards syndication, she may have feared overt Catholic references would have alienated a broader American audience. Previous to World War II, the United States was largely seen as a “Protestant nation,” and anti-Catholic and nativist movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth century had targeted Catholicism as inherently contradictory to American governmental structures, i.e., the separation of church and state because of papal influence.
As Elizabeth Fenton argues in *Religious Liberties*, anti-Catholicism helped Protestants in the nineteenth century frame themselves as able to “accommodate a plurality of beliefs, including Catholicism, because of its commitment to liberal individualism…unfettered, [the figure of the “Catholic”] appears as the greatest threat to a liberal democratic order; privatized and contained, it becomes proof of that order’s success.” While patriotic rhetoric (and military diversity) in World War I would help integrate both Catholics and Jews into the American imaginary, the largest strides in incorporating (and some would say, assimilating) Catholics into American culture would not happen until after World War II. One could argue that, when Daly returns repeatedly to adolescent patriotic duty (while avoiding any specific religious references) throughout *Smarter and Smoother*, it suggests that she framed national responsibilities over religious ones; however, considering “American” frequently meant “Protestant,” one could read her omission more cynically as a method to increase the size of her audience.

Regardless, at least when it came to pleasing her audience, whether adult or adolescent, she succeeded. Adults further promoted her work because they read her as belonging to an older generation of thought. Like Emily Post, whose advice for the jazz set read suspiciously similar to that of the Gilded Age, reviews of her work noted that her advice would certainly align with parental, not adolescent, values; however, thanks to her adolescent stylings, teens might actually listen. As *Kirkus Reviews* noted, “written in breezy, slangy style, the author gets across good stuff on a variety of subjects from ‘What makes one guy the super-man of the study hall, and another the droop-of-the-troop,’” to “Smooth Dates” and “Fatting.” Parents should be thankful for Maureen Daly, for she gives all the advice and council that teen agers think is sermonizing from parents, but that they’ll lap up in this form.” Parents agreed, writing to the *Chicago Daily Tribune* their warmest praise, noting how sensible she was and how their teens loved reading her
advice. For instance, her advice on dating—no necking or sex, but no going steady either—reflected contemporary anxieties over new dating models spurred on by the advent of World War II. As discussed in chapter three, the previous generation engaged in what Waller called the “rating and dating system,” which was based on intense competition. Men proved their dating prowess through material goods, whereas women had to prove they were popular with men: “be seen with popular men in the ‘right’ places, indignantly turn down requests for dating made at the ‘last minute’ (which could be weeks in advance), and cultivate the impression that they were greatly in demand.” The whole system required that both conformed to strict standards of attraction that were frequently policed by the friendship group.

And yet, during World War II, the competition decreased dramatically as men were drafted into service or killed at the frontlines, resulting a more conservative, marriage-oriented, dating system that began in junior high or high school. As Beth Bailey argues, parents worried about this new dating system, not only because it rejected the courtship rituals they were used to, but also because “going steady,” as it was called, implied all the privileges, and drawbacks, of marriage, like a closed dating market and sex. As we can see in both Seventeenth Summer and Smarter and Smoother, Daly provided variations on the rating and dating complex. For example, Lorraine’s ill-fated romance stems from attaching herself to Martin, the salesman, too fast. She pursues him (going so far as to call his home) and agrees to last minute dates, to which Art, Margaret’s fiancé, remarks, “Do what you like, Lorraine, but I know what I’d think if I could get a girl at the last minute.” Angie is almost punished for the same—going with a fast boy in the wrong crowd—but as we saw in the previous section, Angie saves herself (and her reputation) by apologizing to Jack and tossing Tony aside. And yet, while Angie spends most of her summer with Jack, she does not tie herself down; when he proposes, she refuses, knowing that college
and a career await her at the end of the summer. *Smarter and Smoother* continued to advocate for the rating-dating system, even though, as her entry entitled “Going Steady” admitted, it may be old fashioned: “Going steady is a difficult subject to talk about without pulling at the old white beard and taking a ‘when I was young, child’ attitude. When you find someone you really like it is difficult not to go steady because it seems the natural thing to do.”

Instead, she advised dating around because going steady could lead to missed dates, necking, or worse, going through a break-up “without even a padded shoulder to cry on!” Necking, moreover, was too dangerous, and, as we saw in the opening quote, she warned it would cheapen a girl to be “worn smooth by rough experience.”

Thanks to her relatively conservative views, Daly’s advice would get picked up as a bridge between adolescents and a variety of institutions devoted to their care. Over the next twenty years, *Smarter and Smoother* would be endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English, added to a reading list for secondary education teachers in Michigan, cited in other advice books aimed at teens, and included in book lists for Catholic teens and Indian schools; one judge, in a 1944 reckless driving case, even gave the offending adolescent a copy of *Smarter and Smoother* to read because it was “interesting and instructive…and full of good advice for adolescents.” His literary prescription, to an extent, made sense, for as the *Chicago Daily Tribune* would claim, Daly would help American youth “to be strictly in the groove—to be decent, proper citizens, happily adjusted to their environment socially and mentally.” Adult readers saw these texts as constructing the right kind of American adolescent, smart and smooth and devoted to standards that would fit a white, Protestant middle-class lifestyle.

Over the next two years, Daly grew more adept at constructing an adolescent intimate public. For example, in one of her earliest essays, “Maureen Daly Says…Heads You Win!,” she
wrote, “LET'S GET THIS straight! All those problems that you've hashed over a coke in the drug store or those troubles you have kept to yourself, mulling and moaning and not getting anywhere—let's get them decided right now!” The rest of the essay, however, remained monologic in nature, a universalized adolescent voice coming from the ether. In a 1943 reboot of the series, she took a similar approach, plagiarizing her earlier article with a few key changes: “This is for you. All those questions you’ve hashed over a coke in the drugstore, knocked around with your best friend, or have kept to yourself, mulling and moaning and not getting anywhere—let’s get them decided right now. This is your chance.” Daly’s emphasis on her adolescent audience shifted the conversation from “voice on high” to a dialogue, a whispered conversation between two friends in the back booth of the drugstore.

Her move was more than just rhetorical, however. “On the Solid Side,” as the new column was titled, solicited conversation, asking their audience to submit personal questions, new styles, complaints about school and romance, noting “this is your column and it will say what you want it to say.” To a certain extent, the column did. Most columns contained two or three short questions about adolescent life; for example, a single column might include questions about balancing two different boyfriends, warding off a man-stealing friend, or whether punishments for missing curfew were fair. Others would include longer letters, sometimes less of a question and more of a complaint, like one from a soldier discharged from the army due to injury. Worried his 4F status would ruin his dating life, he raged against superficial girls unwilling to give a downtrodden man a break. (Daly’s response? “He forgets [most girls are] a kind understanding group of characters who have sense enough to sympathize with some one else’s bad luck and appreciative enough to thank a chap who’s done a good job.”)
Daly’s language, moreover, increasingly used slang to connect with her adolescent audience; for example, in two-part article series entitled “Jive Talk,” and “More Jive Jargon!,” Daly created a dictionary for “an original high school language so colorful in sound and with such concise accuracy of meaning that one word can often do the descriptive work of a whole sentence.” The articles themselves were fairly bare of description, but instead filled with lists of synonyms for words like “Smooth Girls” and “Drips” or various expressions to use when saying hello or when surprised. According to Daly, “boy-crazy” became “lap-happy” or “a bundle bunny;” money was “moola’ or the “green stuff;” smoothies were called “honey chile” or “hep chick” and a “hagfest” was a “girls’ party.” While Daly sprinkled “honey chile” or “neatly stacked” (“a good figure”) throughout her columns starting back in 1942, her inclusion of a glossary at this stage is highly suggestive. First, it promulgates Daly as an expert on adolescent culture, a status she had been promoting since her articles in *Vogue*, to great success. Shortly after these were published, an advertising manager would write to her “as one of the world’s foremost authorities on America’s new language, ‘jive’” to get new words for “water” and “drinking fountains.”

Second, these articles make a strong linguistic claim: high school slang was creative and could add, not detract, from the American lexicon. Language manuals and mavens, stemming back to the 1500s, argued that standardized languages could promote national unity, increase understanding, and police borders of society, manuals and dictionaries could be used as a kind of linguistic etiquette manuals, and Daly’s adolescent “slang” dictionary was not the first of its kind. In a 1941 *Life* article, an unnamed author would trace what they called “subdebes, or subdebutante slang;” however, unlike Daly’s series, this one article clearly sided with an adult
audience mystified by their teens’ new linguistic creativity. Although the headline described adolescent girl slang was “too divinely super,” the article argued that psychologically, [subdebese] is used as a cover-up. It is a formula for sophistication … with regional variations, it is a linguistic hodgepodge of the superlative, the vehement and the extravagant, culled from the comic strips, the movies, light doses of literature and books like the famous Maudie series by Graeme and Sarah Lorimer, lexicographers to the independent young American female.\textsuperscript{121}

In other words, subdebese is not original, but a copy, not authentic but affected, not artistic but accidental, not rational but emotional, not adult but adolescent, not male but female.

Their dismissal reflects broader concerns about American dialects of English. Joshua L. Miller argues that, as immigration grew exponentially both before WWI, speaking English became central to the Americanization process and yet, there was little sense of what constituted a uniquely “American” variant of English—increased contact with other languages provided a significant number of loan words and deviations from British English, giving many purists the sense that “American” was a “mongrel” language.\textsuperscript{122} That being said, as alluded in chapter two, popular American language maven H. L. Menken rewrote the linguistic narrative in the interwar years, framing American as “decisive, outside, ingeniously inventive,” a rationale that bore no little similarity to Daly’s argument.\textsuperscript{123} If Menken’s work posited the American language was indicative of “national character,” then Daly’s articles placed that same dynamism on adolescent modes of thought. Instead of regarding slang as ephemeral, or worse, degrading to American English language, Daly granted it cultural capital for artistic and economic reasons, and by publishing it in the newspaper, she gave the intimate public of adolescence institutional backing.

Third, a “jive glossary” could help teens perform their own adolescence more effectively. As Rosina Lippi-Green argues, “we exploit linguistic variation available to us in order to send a complex series of messages about ourselves and the way we position ourselves in the world we
live in;” that being said, linguistic variation, whether in the form of word choice, syntax, or accent, has historically been used to discriminate against those with less power, to determine those who were “in” and those who were “out” to varying degrees. While at first, these columns suggest a more descriptive function (this is what *is* rather than what *should be*). And yet, *not* using these words could have a punitive function within one’s cohort of peers, leading one to be read as an outsider if one didn’t call their girl a “doll” or their boyfriend a “Good Joe” For example, in “Honeychiles: a Lumberjack’s Shirt Isn’t Hep,” a boy writing to complain about girls wearing too casual clothing starts, “I’m from a small town and not quite hep to this jive talk so what I’ve got to say is going to be told in straight English.” While the unnamed writer (who Daly calls a “poor he-male”) tried to include some slang (calling girls “lovelies” or “a weak young thing”), the level of discomfort is obvious; but Daly quickly translated his “straight English” in her response: “For those gals who would like to get out of the rut and into the groove, there’s a bit of solid, straight-from-the-shoulder advice…the pigeon in a pretty dress, spectators, and a little Blue Grass behind the ears rates more dates than the sloppy susie [sic] in blue jeans who looks as if she just combed the hay out of her hair!” In other words, her column simultaneously advised sloppy girls to follow proper gender performance and proper boys to use slang. Therefore, if we understand that etiquette books aimed to teach (and standardize) American conduct and character, and language manuals sought to teach (and standardize) American language rules, Daly’s columns taught teens how to act and sound like *American teens.*

And yet, this “performance” of adolescence applied to Daly as well—regardless of whether it was called slang, jive, or “teen-talk,” *sounding adolescent* became central to her brand as the author of *Seventeenth Summer* and a particular image of American teenage life. By
decentering her now twenty-two year old voice in “On the Solid Side,” Daly could maintain the illusion of adolescent authenticity (and allow for her replacement, as her sister Sheila Daly would take over the column in 1948 and write for it into the fifties.)

When Maureen Daly moved over to The Ladies’ Home Journal to run the “Sub-Deb” column and later, the “Sub-Deb Clubs,” she would send out surveys to the participants about likes, dislikes, fashion trends, and slang, much like G. Stanley Hall’s team of child study members or Eugene Gilbert’s teen researchers. Daly asked her Sub-Debs to run around school gathering information from their friends, but slang seemed to be Daly’s first priority, devoting a third of the quiz to getting new expressions she could feature in her column. While the archive is not clear on how many teens responded, Daly gained new slang in both questionnaire form and in fan mail. Teens noted how much they enjoyed her lingo and shared their own; one group, the members of the Flushing and Bayside Sub-Deb, noted “some of the phrases caught our eye and I wouldn’t be surprised if soon they didn’t become part of our ‘slanguage.’” Subsequently, they provided a list or a mini-dictionary of their favorite slang, including “reef your sails” (“shut up”) and “rebisdat,” which they used to “substitut[e] for almost any noun, pronoun or verb. Ex/--“put the rebisdat (book) on the table.” These letters and questionnaires helped Daly craft an imagined public of American adolescents, one that was based on actual teens and not a mimicry. As we’ll see in the next section, her success inspired America’s Catholic population who hoped she would help them step from the margins of American culture to the center like she did.

A Bridge to Protestant America: Maureen Daly and Catholic American Community

My mind was puttering with small thoughts as we walked, thoughts about the people rocking on the porches and the funny way the wind in the trees made restless shifting shadows on the road, when Jack said, “Angie, we don’t have to meet Fitz and Margie at the movie till a quarter-past eight, and if we walk just a little faster we’ll be in time to stop in at church for Benediction on the way.” The first chapel bells for Sunday service had rung just as we left home about fifteen
minutes ago and I remembered brushing the sound from my mind. It made me ashamed now that I hadn’t had the courage to suggest going by myself.

--Maureen Daly, *Seventeenth Summer*, 1942

I know the critics speak of “freshness, sweetness, deep psychological insight” and so on, and I suppose they got a pleasant surprise to find that pure literature about young people in love can be, and is still being written, but I think it’s boys and girls my age (17) and Catholics especially, who will most understand and enjoy this books…The things Angie and Jack thought, and said, and did, we thought, and said, and did just the other night. There were many times when I sat back to think, “Sure, I know just how it must have been. Like when Mary and I went to Midnight Mass, for instance. I wonder if Mary felt that way when I kissed her; I hope so.” Yes, Miss Daly, your story has been a pleasure to read, I won’t forget it for a long time.

--Tris Coffin, Fan letter to Maureen Daly, April 1, 1943

Because of the success of your book, “Seventeenth Summer,” every Catholic high school girl is interested in you, the book, and your activities. Therefore, Mercy High School would like to print, in the first issue of *The Mercedian*, the school newspaper, a report of the book and a little about your life. Most young girls think that books written by Catholic authors are “stuffy.” This year, *The Mercedian* wishes to prove that this isn’t true by printing interesting book reports based upon novels by Catholic authors.

--Jean Ellington, editor of *The Mercedian*, fan letter to Maureen Daly, September 1, 1942

Parsing out Daly’s audience based upon her fan mail is difficult. As Amanda Allen rightly notes, Daly’s fan mail is not representative of what she received but instead “those that she received and kept.” For the most part, we cannot know why she kept some and not others, outside of the small yellow notes she filled with type-written commentary that dot her archive.

While few are attached to letters, those that were acknowledged her own curating process; in one she wrote,

I include this letter, received and answered this morning, because it is probably the 5,000th letter received over the years asking whether Jack and Angie of *Seventeenth Summer* ever married and/or insisting on or suggesting a sequel. Many have sent possible plot outlines, including their own idea of a happy ending. Others have sent suggestions for the bridal attendants based upon characters from the book…all are rather sad but sweet.

The overall tone of her note suggests that, while Daly found the letter representative in 1973, others were likely thrown away, erased from the archive for being too similar or too invested in their own attempts at fan fiction. And yet, I find this note brings up additional questions: what
lead Daly to save particular letters? Toss others? And what other erasures mark her archive?

For example, her archives suggest that few Irish-Americans wrote in specifically because they were of Irish descent; among hundreds of letters she collected over three decades, only thirteen openly acknowledged a shared Irish heritage. One girl proclaimed that “I did so enjoy “Seventeenth Summer” not only for the beautiful piece of literature you gave us but also because I felt most companionable with Angie all the way through. I knew exactly how she felt when the phone didn’t ring. I also have an Irish mother who has the same reactions to sirens, whether on an ambulance or a fire engine” 133 Others simply wanted to talk about Ireland, like one American soldier, also born in County Tyrone, who excitedly wrote that “it is creditable, also, to note that County Tyrone is the reason for ‘Seventeenth Summer.’ I, of course, have not had an opportunity to see or read the book, but in view of the heredity of the authoress, I am certain that it must be every bit good,” ending his letter with a quick request to “swap ‘yarns’” about the home country. 134 Granted, this absence may not be surprising. Other than Angie’s family name, Morrow, there was little evidence connecting her romance to the Irish-American experience—she was firmly American, and a Midwesterner, at heart, so her audience may not have recognized any Irish heritage. Daly’s own immigrant history, moreover, while not hidden, was usually glossed over in interviews, articles, or in her own work. For instance, the accompanying byline in her first column noted she was born in County Tyrone, but this note disappeared shortly afterwards, replaced by a simpler byline describing her as the author of Seventeenth Summer.

And yet, the novel’s Benediction scene seemed to have struck a chord with a more broadly Catholic audience, as she received over a hundred letters from fans who either acknowledged or celebrated their shared association with Catholic America. 135 Students, parents, teachers, nuns, seminarians, missionaries sent her fan mail. Some merely noted that
they attended a Catholic high school or college (with no guarantee that they actually practiced
the religion) but others—like the aforementioned F. Majorie Ryan and Tris Coffin—responded
in raptures, excited to see a representation of themselves, their lives, and their interests in
*Seventeenth Summer* or *Smarter and Smoother*. Beyond the letters themselves, Catholic
newspapers and magazines too promoted the novel: in a collection of reviews found in Daly’s
archives, the compiler mistakenly noted that “while there is no discussion of religion in the
book,” it reviewed particularly well in both Protestant and Catholic publications, which they
sourced to Daly’s own religious practice.\(^{136}\) Granted, the unnamed compiler might be forgiven
for not thinking *Seventeenth Summer* addressed religious issues. While Angie’s short-
romantic triangle between Jack and Tony could easily read as a choice between Catholic and
secular lives, once outside the Benediction scene, Angie no longer contemplates her faith vis-a-
vis her continued relationship with Jack. Moreover, *Smarter and Smoother* and her other
columns almost completely ignore the impact of religious (Catholic or Protestant) practice on
adolescent culture. One cannot help but wonder why her Catholic fans were so excited over
books that could just as easily be written by a Protestant, or even secular, writer. Daly herself
remained silent on the issue, but I argue that Daly’s identity as a practicing Catholic allowed her
Catholic fans to read their lives and concerns into texts that remained largely areligious;
simultaneously, they hoped her success would not only de-marginize Catholic voices but also
help spread the doctrine of the Catholic Church in the United States and abroad.\(^{137}\)

As discussed in the previous section, Catholic populations had long faced persecution and
marginalization in the overwhelmingly Protestant United States, so for Daly’s Catholic audience,
seeing one of their own gain broad success on the national scale was not only exciting on a
personal level, but for its larger implications: greater acceptance of Catholic thought. Several
noted the subtlety with which Daly included details of Catholic life; for example, the editor for the *Catholic School Editor*, noted that her broad acceptance was “a success story of which every young Catholic writer in the country is proud.”\textsuperscript{138} She continued,

was it your aim to weave Christian principles in your writing, or did it come naturally as a product of your background…this seems rather important since many go to pietistic excesses in their writing, and others think the open sesame to success is to secularize. Since you have managed to capture the interest of all readers without prejudicing them, and yet, have built a Catholic atmosphere, your opinion on this matter would help iron out the quirks in much student writing.

This concept of “a Catholic atmosphere” was a running theme throughout fan letters—as another fan wrote

As I [sic] fellow Catholic, I have another reason to congratulate you. Today the novels and articles written by Catholics are usually of a very religious verse; consequently, they are not widely read even by Catholic boys and girls, much less Protestant. It is a pleasure to come across a writer whose works reflect a Catholic train of thought and yet are so timely and interesting that their [sic] is always a waiting list for them at the library.\textsuperscript{139}

Another nun wrote in, “I shall ask Our Lord to bless your work. We need more Catholic authors will be unafraid to give the world our beautiful Catholic doctrine in attractive forms.”\textsuperscript{140} For these women, Daly struck the right balance between religion and secularism, one that could either attract new adherents or increase representations of American Catholics in the public imaginary.

This balance seemed to help older clergy connect with their young audience who, like Jean Ellington, may have seen contemporary Catholic literature as “stuffy.” Several young adults noted their emotional connection to Daly’s text, like Tris or a young Catholic serviceman who wrote that her novel “brought back to me the realization and remembrance of the niceties of life and the sweet sentimentalism that is in such dearth among most of the personal lives of us servicemen.”\textsuperscript{141} In fact, much her fan mail suggests that Catholic educators, librarians, nuns, priests, and army chaplains often taught *Seventeenth Summer* and *Smarter and Smoother* or
recommended it to their students and parishioners to promote religious pride, doctrine, and culture, with sometimes hilarious results.\textsuperscript{142} For example, one teenaged fan shared the story of Brother Xavier who, having met Daly and gotten an autographed copy, shared the story with his students. She wrote, “all who heard Brother Xavier were teary-eyed, when he sadly announced that ‘Jack had died,” until he hastily added, “when you laid down your now famous pen.”\textsuperscript{143} Some adults even admitted that they learned a thing or two, like one recent missionary who confessed that after reading \textit{Seventeenth Summer},

> Now I feel I know the seventeen year olds a whole lot better. They are \textit{such} a puzzle! You should see them through the grate of a confessional when they look at you and say, “Father is it a sin for a girl to kiss her boy friend?” You \textit{knew} they are saying to themselves, “Despite your background of nineteen hundred years of Holy Mother Church’s experience in guiding souls, no matter what you say you don’t really understand and your judgement won’t be quite correct. I intend to kiss him anyway.”\textsuperscript{144}

In this letter, Daly’s work became a bridge between generations; if, as Marah Gubar writes, children, and adults are simultaneously “scripted” by the cultural narratives that surround them while “scripting” themselves into being, then no longer would Catholic doctrine be, as the missionary implied, old-fashioned, but through Daly’s adolescent eyes, religious rites and Catholic culture could become new and relevant for younger generations in a more modern world.\textsuperscript{145} Simultaneously, her text, written as a teen, could construct a new alternative image of Catholic teen for adults to consume, an image that involves kissing and trips to the soda shop.

Daly received additional encouragement and advice from Catholic readers who hoped she would continue to polish her craft and “write the great Catholic novel” that would evangelize Catholic values on a national and international stage.\textsuperscript{146} One adolescent fan of “Sixteen” wrote, “[t]he Catholic faith needs a Catholic novelist to pour forth its ideals and ideas in such a heathen world. So keep up the good work!”\textsuperscript{147} Some saw \textit{Seventeenth Summer} as a form of Catholic imperialism, spreading the message of the Catholic church (while protecting its sanctity from
outside forces). For example, one seminarian argued that those in his line of work must be familiar with Catholic reading material:

   Along literary lines we get around and furthermore, we are the most critical group of readers alive. We must be; the future of Christ’s church depends upon us; and moreover our work, the missionary work, depends upon us. It is up to us to preserve it, and one of the ways is by reading, but reading with an open mind along a critical but nevertheless advisable standard. Your book has been received with our upmost approval.”

The letter writer, Walter W. Winrich, was a Catholic missionary who, upon his ordainment in 1950, would work with “Mayan Indians” in Mexico, where he built multiple churches along with “one of the worlds [sic] largest crosses,” fulfilling the promise he made in his 1942 letter to Daly, while he was still in seminary. That being said, some found Daly’s current work too secular; as one fan wrote, while the “novel was very Catholic in spirit,” he wanted “one that is Catholic in fact as well as in spirit” to “help in building an American Catholic culture.”

I do not want to suggest, however, that the entire Catholic population saw Daly as a sort of Great Catholic Hope—as stated previously, her letters were clearly curated, and while she saved the occasional negative letter, none seemed to come from Catholic readers (except for Rev. John J. Byrne, who simply noted that he were tired of waiting for her new work.) In fact, according to two letters in her archive, a Mr. Doran Hurley from The New World, a newspaper aimed at the Chicago archdiocese, reviewed her novel as sinful and “definitely pagan,” particularly because Angie went to church without her rosary. Granted, Daly’s two defenders, both women, ridiculed Mr. Hurley as “righteous” with “a mind so vulgarly conceived” to critique a novel that has been chosen as Catholic Book of the Month. As one wrote, “I fear that if Miss Daly had allowed herself to insert a few of Mr. Hurl-ey’s ‘holier than thou’ suggestions into her book the result might have been as dull as Mr. Hurley’s own literary attempts.” A quick comparison of Daly’s and Hurley’s novels, however, suggests another critique, albeit one
implicit. Hurley, who had written four novels, *Monsignor* (1936), *The Old Parish* (1938), and *Herself: Mrs. Patrick Crowley* (1939) and the sequel *Says Mrs. Crowley, Says She!*, all of which revolved around Irish-Catholic life. While the former two novels considered how Irish-Americans interacted with Catholics of different ethnic backgrounds (primarily French and Portuguese), compared to Daly’s *Seventeenth Summer*, his latter novels were representative of Irish-American isolationism. *Herself: Mrs. Patrick Crowley* opens:

> Only twice a year in the parish is there a rush for the afternoon paper, and a quick scanning of the front page. The President may win huge headlines for new plans for a more abundant life; the sons of the son of Heaven may make waste increasingly larger sections of the gardens of the Flowery Kingdom; Eden may fall and Clem Attlee rise to power; Stalin may shriek ‘off with his head’ until the Union of Soviet Republics topples like the like the playing cards in *Alice*; King Zog of Albania and Miss Garbo of Sweden may announce their engagements on the same day; all matters little in the parish.

Granted, the Mrs. Crowley novels were fairly satirical—the first one’s subtitle was “A Romantical Tale” and was “intended to lie just within the widest bounds of probability…and to have no faintest connection with realism, at all, at all”—all of his novels were firmly entrenched in Irish-Catholic life, unlikely to be read in the same “universal” tones as Daly’s work.

Ultimately, Daly’s Catholic audience seemed excited that her success implied a growing acceptance of the Catholic community in the United States, an acceptance that could be read as assimilative. For example, one Catholic magazine, *The Commonweal*, which did not refer to her religion at all but instead labeled her work as more purely and truly American than most literary efforts: “[*Seventeenth Summer*] is the reality, not the nightmare Krafft-Ebing and melodrama, as most American novelists and critics seem to define the word, but the reality of a middle-class Wisconsin home, much like the thousands of other American homes where life placid and thoughtful and kind. The neuroticized melodrama of a Steinbeck or a Faulkner is missing here…”). In other words, Daly’s story was more American than the most lauded contemporary
authors. While Daly would receive requests to write for *The Annuals*, a Canadian Catholic magazine, and would publish a short story, “Postlude to Summer,” in *The Sign*, a Passionist magazine published in New Jersey, she would spend little time on Catholic publications after her time at the *Chicago News Tribune*—a decision, again, left unexplained by the archive.\(^{157}\) Instead, as discussed previously, she began writing and editing for *The Ladies’ Home Journal* in 1944, a publication that one Jesuit magazine dubbed “anti-Catholic,” due to their discussion of birth control.\(^{158}\) There, she was either the author of *Seventeenth Summer*, a reporter on teenage lifestyles, or in the following year, the editor of the “Sub-Deb” column, an advice column originally aimed at upper-middle-class readers, i.e., those girls yet to debut. Here, as we’ll see, she moved even further away from her Catholic roots into firmly WASP territory, leaving those fans who hoped for a book more “Catholic in fact” waiting for a very long time.

**Sub-debs, Maudie or Myrdice?: The Ladies’ Home Journal, Race, and the Adolescent Consumer**

Robin Roberts is sixteen. The town is Nyack, New York, a small, one-theater village in the hilly wooded district overlooking the Hudson River. The steep hills are covered with thick underbrush and heavy trees in the summertime, chilled bare by winds from the river in the winter, a vigorous climatic background for a girl whose great love is Nature and who glows with health and energy like a ripe, red apple...Vivacious, good-natured, and startlingly pretty, Robin has difficulty trimming her weekly date schedule down to the Friday and Saturday nights her mother allows...Robin’s problems are those of the average sub-deb. Results of the recent Journal questionnaire point out that difficulties between teen-agers and their parents most frequently arise over dating, hours and necking. [emphasis original].

--Maureen Daly, “Meet a Sub-Deb,” 1944

I wish to thank you for the page called “the Sub-Deb.” In reading it I find the answer to a lot of questions that bother me...I know it is written especially for readers like me and I want you to know I appreciate it greatly.

Lucille Jones, fan letter to Maureen Daly, March 8, 1948

High-school girls are the most violently gregarious people in the world and Sub-Deb Clubs are one way they get together. Sub-Deb Clubs are particularly popular in the Middle West...schools prefer Sub-Deb Clubs to sororities. The Sub-Deb Clubs have no secret rituals and confine their activities to hours after school. On the whole they seem to be less sanctimonious than sororities and more fun.
Robin Roberts, subject of one of Maureen Daly’s first articles for the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, strikes a significantly different picture of adolescence than Angie Morrow. To be sure, there were some similarities: both girls were smart, Irish-American, lived in the rural countryside, and had fathers whose work kept them outside the home. If Angie was a good girl, however, Robin’s behavior more resembled Lorraine’s. She kissed her first boy at fourteen and occasionally came home with beer on her breath; she almost got kicked out of summer camp for smoking and ran around barefoot; and she stayed out late and had raucous parties that went on even after her mother threatened to call the police. Daly did not judge her for her excesses; rather, she interrupted Roberts’ narrative with data from a recent *Ladies’ Home Journal* questionnaire, to frame Roberts’ struggles and triumphs as average, normal, even a little fun. Little real trouble stemmed from her occasional shenanigans (other than the occasional parental headache) and her overall innocence recalled *Seventeenth Summer*’s pre-war nostalgia—Daly quotes her as saying “school is all right and most of the kids are wonderful. If it weren’t for war and maybe a little intolerance…I don’t think there would be almost anything wrong with the world!” While Daly satirically undermines her optimism with a quip, “Robin, of course, is sixteen,” the overall text implies that her happiness is normal (brushing aside the compelling hints of darkness waiting in her claims of “maybe a little intolerance.”)

The *Ladies’ Home Journal*, of course, was in the business of defining what the terms “average” and “American” looked like. In the years leading up Maureen Daly’s tenure, the *Ladies’ Home Journal* was one of the premier women’s magazines in the United States. Founded in 1883 by Cyrus Curtis and his wife, Louisa Knapp Curtis, the *Ladies’ Home Journal* was a rampant success, with over one million subscriptions by 1904. Their success, Jennifer
Scanlon argues, stemmed from their ability to craft a unified, even singular, image of their audience. She writes:

At the dawn of the twentieth century, women in the United States had no few lifestyles; their varied roles were determined in part by region, race, age, and ethnicity. But by 1930, women’s magazines and the consumer culture they offered related the story of a common woman, the “average women,” the “American” woman. That image obscured the many differences among women and offered instead a promise: if you did not know your neighbor, as people moved from towns to cities and as definitions of community change, you could tell a lot about her by the brand names she chose.  

By describing and marketing to the “average” American women, the *Ladies’ Home Journal* provided a model to *become* the average American woman—a model that could appeal to not only the average American but, as Cross notes, to immigrants and minorities who often used conspicuous consumption to assert their (potentially new) American identity. The *Ladies’ Home Journal*, however, targeted “white, native-born women” who were ideally wealthier and “cosmopolitan;” immigrants and women of color were never the central figures but instead jokes or servants while Catholics were almost universally ignored in its pages.

By ending her survey at 1930, however, Scanlon misses the way that adolescent girls were incorporated into the *Ladies’ Home Journal* model of democracy through consumption, which the company managed through advice columns, short stories, and later, the “Sub-Deb” committees. While the column initially was directed at late adolescents planning for college life, Elizabeth Woodward, who took over the column in 1931, created a “breezier” style targeted towards younger teens, still in high school, and eventually, the column would expand the scope beyond the wealthiest girls, although as we shall see, it did not stray very far. These columns were popular enough, however, to be recommended in school libraries by 1935—the advising librarian noted that “the ‘sub-deb’ column alone is worth the subscription [to the *Ladies’ Home Journal*]. It has a real message for girls, and gets manners and morals across to them in an
intimate, straight-from-the-shoulder way that they like and—better yet—take.” When Daly took over in 1945, messages included why and how to hold a job, wear (and afford) the latest fashions, and advice from the boys. In short, the columns do not seem to have veered much from the formula established in Daly’s *Chicago Daily Tribune* article.

Concurrently, the sub-deb would take literary form in Maudie Mason, a wealthy, blonde teenager from Philadelphia whose adventures (romantic and otherwise) were serialized in the *Ladies’ Home Journal* throughout the thirties and early forties. Created by husband and wife team Graeme and Sarah Lorimer, Maudie embodied the idealized adolescent figure—white, middle class, and sophisticated in the right kinds of ways. In *Men are Like Street Cars*, Maudie’s voice sounds like Angie’s—first person, highly confessional—and the text itself reveals a pedagogical purpose from the first chapter, entitled “What Every Girl Should No.” These lessons range from courtship rituals, personal appearance, and sexual politics: for example, “What Every Girl Should No” concerns a competition between Maudie and Lysbeth, a worldly “fast” girl who characterizes petting as “a system,” over the boorish Chi. Maudie easily wins because of her refusal to kiss, neck, or encourage a man’s “B.U.” or “biological urge,” ending her story with an explicit message: “And I just thought quietly to myself about how it pays to have morals, because the less you give a man the more you get out of him.” In other words, lest one think Maudie’s refusal to kiss boys makes her old-fashioned, Maudie rewrites her sexual conservatism into its own system for dating success. With this in mind, Maudie invokes all the generic tropes of narrative intimacy to instruct her audience in the ways of thirties-style romance. The next short story, “The Line’s Busy,” makes explicit her role as advisor to the audience—when her “dumb” friend Joy cannot seem to figure out how to date, she jumps in to help, noting “well, I’ve never pictured myself as giving advice to the lovelorn like
Dorothy Dix but I must admit I seem to have a way with men.”

Her advice works almost too well—Joy gets all the dates—implying that if the adolescent audience were to try out the tips, they too may triumph romantically.

Maudie was a literary success, labeled by Kirkus Reviews as “[t]he perfect sub-deb, of the 1930’s,” while the New York Times would give each collection, starting with Men Are Like Street Cars in 1932 and ending with First Love, Farewell in 1940, rapturous reviews. That being said, while Maudie might have sounded like Angie, shared romantic insights like Angie, and gained a similar critical acclaim, the similarities end there. Much like Tarkington’s Seventeen, the Maudie stories had a satirical edge—Maudie doesn’t take romance seriously because “…love is such a fickle thing. I have been truly in love with four boys at one time.”

If novels invoking narrative intimacy imply risk, Maudie has none. Each short story is self-contained, and there’s little overall growth for her character. She flits from boyfriend to boyfriend (returning continually to Davy, her sometimes steady), moving through these romantic encounters with ease, confident that they will have no real meaning beyond the immediate moment. Subsequently, it’s unsurprising that her popularity lead to a radio series in 1941 meant to compete against the same radio serials (The Aldridge Family and Date with Judy) that Angie ridiculed at the beginning of Seventeenth Summer.

If the Sub-Deb column gave advice on how to act like the idealized teen, and the Maudie stories helped their readership imagine (the shenanigans of) the idealized teen, the National Sub-Deb Federation helped the readership embody the idealized teen in real life. The Federation, which began during Woodward’s tenure and continued through Daly’s time at the Ladies’ Home Journal, was comprised of a collection of Sub-Deb Clubs that, according to a 1945 Life article was popular enough to have 700 clubs and 6000 members in Indianapolis alone. Supposedly,
Sub-Deb clubs were seen as safer alternative to secret high school sororities and fraternities, which were often considered quite dangerous to cohesive school spirit and democratic life.\textsuperscript{175} Admittedly, the \textit{Life} article struggled to clarify the distinction between sororities and Sub-Debs—both involved initiations and hazing, but as the article reassured the audience, these groups were “not snobbish” as “[a]nyone with a friend can start one.”\textsuperscript{176} Instead, their primary goal was to host parties, including “slumber parties, hayrides, formal dances” or “party-meetings, where people interested in the same thing can get together.”\textsuperscript{177} Once started, they only needed to apply to the \textit{Ladies’ Home Journal}, who would provide a club handbook and associated materials for purchase, although registration was not a requirement.

When Daly took over the Sub-Deb column, her name was blazoned across club materials, including the monthly newsletters, the club handbook, quizzes, advice booklets and, most importantly, the club bible, a massive scrapbook containing descriptions of the club’s purpose and samples of the ephemera pumped out to support the Clubs.\textsuperscript{178} Journal representatives would use the bible to convince local department stores to host the group’s headquarters, finance parties and assorted goods, even run a radio show. By doing so, they argued, stores could not only connect themselves to popular ethos associated with the “\textit{Ladies’ Home Journal} identity,” but more importantly, they could also help “kids ‘get the habit…know their way around [the store]…and feel at home” which would lead to larger purchases both by the teens themselves and by their parents. According to her manuscript addendum, Maureen Daly didn’t exactly approve of “this madness,” noting, “[t]he Sub-Deb clubs were a strong social power in the U.S. for a couple of decades. I urged the Goulds [editors of the \textit{Ladies’ Home Journal} from 1935-1967] to discontinue this part of their magazine’s promotion and ultimately they did.”\textsuperscript{179} Her resistance to
the Federation is not exactly surprising—the club bible’s opening quote boiled down the sub-deb

to her most salable parts.

What is a Sub-Deb?
She’s teen-age…13-17
She’s affiliated with *Ladies’ Home Journal*
She’s known in her high school
She helps at home
She lends a hand in community affairs
She organizes and runs social affairs…work or play is fun!
She perplexes her elders
She looks young…feels grown up
She wants understanding
She speaks a colorful, expressive, inhibited language,
is part of one of the most important groups in America!¹⁸⁰

The vague language, to a certain extent, allowed for a particular freedom in group construction,
and the Federation encouraged each group to come up with their own name and purpose; one
group in Indianapolis chose the acronym WITCH (We In This Club are Hellcats) while another
mixed-gender dramatic club called themselves Genius, Inc.¹⁸¹ And yet, if Daly’s column in the
*Chicago News Tribune* constructed an intimate public of adolescents based on *authenticity*, the
Sub-deb Federation took that public and stripped it of meaning.

In fact, the club materials frequently promoted a narrow depiction of Sub-Deb life, one
deeply embedded in consumer culture. Images always showed thin, white, middle-class girls
wearing the latest trends and fawning over the most popular movie stars, and the handbook
suggested that participants’ starting conversation points should include ways to help these girls
fit that model, including make-overs and general etiquette; how to dress, act in public, speak
properly; or to even chat about Sub-Deb products or the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. Only once these
topics were covered could they turn to doing “good deeds.”¹⁸² To raise money, moreover, girls
were advised to babysit, sell their dolls, or even sell themselves by setting up box supper parties
in which “the girls decorate the boxes, fill them with food, then auction them off to the boys.
Each lad claims the owner of the box for his supper partner." Variously, they could host a waistline party that charged “one cent for each inch of waistline!” In both, the Sub-deb clubs advised literally transforming their flesh into cash. The “natural, authentic” teen advocated by Daly’s early columns (contradictions though they were), were gone, replaced by teenage girls constantly worried about their appearance, their looks, and their dating life. Luckily, the “Sub-Deb” Federation would provide the very products to solve those ills.

Daly herself was a part of the products for sale, perhaps in an attempt to cash in on her “authentic” adolescent voice—not only was her name at the bottom of almost every document sent to the Sub-Deb clubs, but once they filed with the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, the club would also receive “a complete file of Maureen Daly’s *Sub-Deb Booklets,*” and “[a]utographed copies of Maureen’s two books—*Seventeenth Summer* and *Smarter and Smoother.*” At the local Federation meetings, Daly would provide one of her booklets “with a personal message” as a prize to draw participants and would write a “telegraphed greeting to all Federation activities at which she is not present” [emphasis original]. The advice booklets were split along two lines, “personality” and “career.” The “personality” pamphlets focused on reinforcing their audience’s fears that they were not quite good enough, breaking their lives down into the following topics (original order retained): “Your Date-Ability,” ‘Your Doings,” “Your Looks,” “Your Personality,” “Your Fun,” “For Your Men,” a series aimed at associated male members, and “The Play’s the Thing,” two pamphlet/plays, one of which dramatized Daly’s short story “Sixteen” and the other, “Operation: Johnny,” about a competition between two subdebs, Jane and Judy over some boys. As one pamphlet, “Mirror Magic” promised, these products would help young girls become “bright-as-an-apple, All American type of gal,” new versions of the adolescent Daly had once been.
Daly expressed some resentment over the direction of the “personality” pamphlets, writing in her archival notes: “These booklets on careers, teen-personality problems, etc. were written for and sold through Ladies’ Home Journal and had staggering popularity, selling more than 300,000 a year. I introduced the career booklets at a time when I concluded that the Journal’s vast network of sub-deb clubs were not truly exercises in demorattic [sic] social life.”\textsuperscript{186} Her career booklets suggests jobs ranging from “modeling” to “medicine,” “library science” to “law,” “social work” to “advertising,” which in turn contradicts Scanlon’s argument that the magazine “urged its readership to expand their role as consumers rather than producers, to accept the corporate capitalist model and their home-based role in it.”\textsuperscript{187} A cursory glimpse shows that instead, these booklets emphasized hard work and education; Daly had no qualms destroying any romantic notions fed to her audience by movies or novels. For example, the “Medicine” pamphlet argued that, to become a doctor, Sub-Debs should expect more than wealth, prestige, or a “vision of yourself as the glamorous white-coated woman doctor who spends her days treating Gregory Peck and her nights dating young Doctor Kildare.”\textsuperscript{188} Instead, girls should plan for years of struggle both in and outside the classroom, undergirded by a deep dedication to “ministering to the sick and troubled.” Alternatively, the pamphlets’ tone could be pessimistic, especially if the field was traditionally male-dominated. The law booklet, for example, prepared young girls for opposition they would face and the likelihood they would be forced to do grunt work, noting, perhaps yours is a pioneer type spirit that’s no satisfied with the “accepted”, tried-and-true niches that girls are expected to fit into. The greater the odds, the more of a challenge there is to follow Portia’s example of asserting herself in a man’s world, no matter how much work is involved…there are still those women who have risen to the top, and since this is the field in which you feel you can best express yourself, double-check your ambition against the following information.\textsuperscript{189}
In short, Daly tried to create a new vision of these girls as producers instead of consumers, although considering the first five pamphlets included “Modeling,” “Home Economics,” and “Fashion Designing,” the staff initially struggled with the transition.

If the Sub-Deb Federations sold the adolescent as a commercialized market, abstract of almost any specificity, Daly’s other major product for The Ladies’ Home Journal, a pseudo-ethnography entitled Profile of Youth (1951), tried to force those details back in, to locate the adolescent in their particular locale, class, gender, religion, and race. Although Daly was not the project supervisor, her name would be splashed across the cover as editor and in the introduction as the primary reporter. Moreover, the project, according to another editor, Beatrice Blackmar Gould, took the same ethos as “On the Solid Side,” only on a national scale:

[the reporters] feel that we are tapping wonderful, hitherto untouched material. The reason—we’ve talked about teenagers, talked to them and at them, but this is the first time, on a large scale, nation-wide, that teen-agers are telling us in their own language about themselves. Here we’re getting their true attitudes, their very real problems, with their own slant….The ideas is breaking new ground journalistically, because it’s the kids telling us, instead of us telling them.190

Like Smarter and Smoother, this book began as a series of articles published in The Ladies’ Home Journal from 1949-1951 and included individual interviews from teens and their families from across the nation interspersed with more topical entries. According to her own records, Daly wrote ten of the twenty-three chapters, including the introduction, four of the profiles, and chapters on sex, sexual education, subsidized marriage, and bullying.191

In the introduction, the editors, however, conceived of their project as owing more to scientific models of research than newspaper or magazine reporting. The opening epigraph quotes sexologist Alfred Kinsey and anthropologist Margaret Mead, alongside Dwight D. Eisenhower, and they established some controls on their study, or avoiding “preconceived ideas” by breaking down the American adolescent population according to their demographics (based
on race, class, gender, academic skill, family size and location) and then searching for a teen who fit those demographics who was willing to open up their lives and their minds. Once found, researchers would spend around two weeks with the subject, “tr[y]ing] to become, as quickly as possible, an inconspicuous party of every school he visited.”

Profile of Youth was not the first attempt ethnographic-style reporting produced at The Ladies’ Home Journal. Their first, a series called “How America Lives” that began in 1940, aimed to “represent the diversity of American life—particularly its economic and geographical diversity.” According to Nancy Walker, almost every entry of “How America Lives,” while ostensibly tracking difference, provided a relatively unified model of the American dream. Regardless of wealth, the families were always clean, fiscally conservative—even the richest families were framed as modest. Moreover, Walker notes that, when it came to ethnic backgrounds of their participants, they stuck primarily with those of Western European descent to create a unified vision of the American family and American culture (especially important in World War II and the early years of the Cold War). This paradox (finding the standards within diversity) provided a model that Profile of Youth aimed to emulate:

In this book you will find an Iowa farm-town boy and a girl from the Mississippi cotton country. You will judge opinions on “going steady,” teen-aged driving and sex education. You will meet a trade-school boy from New York and a Cleveland fraternity resident who expects to pick Princeton as his college. There is a Negro teen-ager from Chicago, a working school girl from Maine and a boy from Wyoming who would rather go hunting than bother with school. None is typical—yet all are typical. We reported their stories and their problems exactly as we found them.

In short, the editors of the Ladies’ Home Journal were hoping to find a unified teen culture that they could subsequently peddle to adults to solve any intergenerational conflict.
However, I will show how Daly and the rest of the Profile of Youth reporters were similarly limited in their approach to constructing their vision of the American adolescent public. The editors argued in their conclusion that:

Our soon-to-be-voters have the gift of self-criticism because they have not been molded into one way of thinking, one way of acting, one way of working. They represent the modern miracle of the melting pot, in which individual energies and individual ideas are enabled to mingle harmoniously with other, contrasting energies and ideas. Our teenagers are the products of a society that trusts its own strength to the point of letting its members think for themselves.  

Their reliance on the rhetoric of the melting pot, however, erased major swathes of American adolescence. By reducing the wider diversity down to twelve examples made representative for all, they created a skewed sample. First, as Michael Cart notes, the teens profiled had, like many of their literary counterparts, few concerns outside of dating, school, or sports (he somewhat facetiously notes, “perhaps life really was simpler back in the 1940s!”) The majority were overwhelmingly white—they only featured one Italian boy, the son of immigrants, and one African-American girl, although they frequently mentioned students of color or varying ethnic backgrounds in the schools they visited. Moreover, their subjects were almost exclusively Christian, although there was greater diversity in denomination (for example, the Italian boy was Catholic, another girl hoped to become a nun, a third girl’s father was a Lutheran minister). As we will see, the editors did not ignore the effects of race and religion on their subjects; however, as I will argue, these were seen as secondary to their status as members and beneficiaries of the commercialized American dream.

In fact, almost all of the teens profiled were interested in pulling themselves up by the bootstraps through hard-work and purchasing power. Ostensibly, the goal of the book was to help adults (parents, teachers, etc.) better understand what constituted this new peer culture,
including sex, religion, dating, bullying, but *Profile of Youth* made consumption an essential component of the adolescent experience. The chapter on fads, for example, argued, 

Most teen-agers, especially those not secure in their social positions, need assurance that they "look right" and clothes, not necessarily the number or quality but the conformity, can do much to put them at ease. Therefore, understanding parents should make allowance for the clothes-preferences that become fashions in high schools each year, since these fads can serve the purpose of giving the adolescent important psychological identity with his group. Often a teen-ager who is ill at ease will suddenly feel acceptable and confident because he or she owns the same red corduroy jacket or the beanie that "everyone at school is wearing."

For example, in a sprawling profile on Frank Polsinelli, the son of Italian immigrants, the narrative touches on his religious interests (Catholic, but “his church attendance is irregular now”), his struggles in school, his sexual exploits, but the article begins with a description of the trends he wears and ends with Hank meditating on what he would do with a million dollars (buy a series of new cars that he would toss aside whenever they ran out of gas). If psychologist Erik Erikson argued in *Childhood and Society* (1950) that teens “are primarily concerned with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are, and with the question of how to connect the rolls and skills cultivated earlier with the occupational prototypes of the day,” *Profile of Youth* thread that process through capitalist paradigms, a drastic change from WWII-era *Smarter and Smoother*, which advised teens to make do with old clothes rather than purchasing the latest trends. With this in mind, if the adult audience reading the book hoped to safely guide their child through the storm and stress of adolescence, the editors of the *Ladies’ Home Journal* kept to the motto “give them the right clothes and they’ll conquer the world.”

The first profile, Cynthia Barnes from Dallas, set the model against which the rest of their profiles were (intentionally or unintentionally) compared. Written up by Daly herself, Barnes’ profile emulated the Sub-Deb ideal perpetuated throughout the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. She came
from an idealized nuclear family, with enough money to be well-stocked in the latest fashions. The profile described her happy home life, with loving parents who brought her up to be clean, well-behaved, Christian, sexually conservative, and pals with all the boys and girls in schools. To a certain extent, the article recognized that Barnes benefitted from her family structure, noting that her personality developed properly “because she has been given, accidentally or deliberately, all the possible props that make any girl attractive and confident;” and yet, the article seemed equally comfortable that Barnes provided zero challenge to the status quo. Barnes had no career goals but dreamt instead of marriage and “a ranch-type house of her own, with favorite blue on the walls and azaleas in the yard, school friends stopping in for lunch, Sunday drives to Fort Worth for Mexican suppers, and neat, pretty children setting out each morning for the red-brick schools of Dallas. And for Cynthia Barnes, that is quite enough.”

In short, Barnes was the girl on the Sub-Deb marketing material, an idealized model of whiteness wrapped up in the right kinds of commercial interests that would support the ideologies promoted by the *Ladies’ Home Journal.*

Admittedly, Barnes did deviate from the Sub-Deb mold in one way. If Sub-Debs were white and typically benefited from racist institutions, Barnes herself explicitly addressed racial tensions in the United States, albeit through the lens of Christian service: “I really believe God meant us to be equal—that’s why it seems to me so serious the way we make Negroes live.” While Barnes immediately shifted to the dangers of communism, Daly felt the statement important enough to place the quote in the chapter abstract, suggesting that real sub-debs fought racism, or at least considered racism antithetical to the sub-deb movement. And yet, Barnes’s inability to speak at length on the subject reads less like real engagement with racial inequity and more of a talking point, particularly since several other student profiles also shallowly engaged
with racism. For example, the profile on Beverly Simonton from York, Pennsylvania argued that Beverly “has never felt any prejudice toward other races—‘It just doesn’t make sense—and, boy, would our basketball team have been lost without our four star Negro Players!’”—but knows little about President Truman’s Civil Liberties Bill.”

Chuck Swanman, of Swedish descent, described his diverse San Francisco school as one devoid of racial tension (again, the unnamed reporter would use a black star athlete’s success to prove their relative acceptance of all students). Only one white student from North Carolina spoke at length about racism, noting that while her town always had great “Negro schools and Negro relations,” she had noticed, with some shock, that neighbors had expressed some anti-black sentiments, leading her to “consider going ahead now with plans to see if the minister of her church won't invite members of a local Negro Youth Fellowship over to their own Sunday-night Fellowship meetings. ‘We've got to start somewhere,’ she says, ‘and I haven't done much of anything at all. I think that if you really believe something, you should get out and work for it.’”

If and when racism was broached, all of the white students were unified in their desire for social change, a stance I do not want to dismiss considering how positively Profile of Youth framed all attempts at school desegregation (and Brown v. Board of Education was still three years away). This unified stance may have been the magazine’s attempt to support desegregation, and yet, it simultaneously reads as remarkably naïve given that none of the white students had more than a surface-level idea of what contemporary racism looked like or how to address it. If Profile of Youth tried to find a “typical” teen, that “type” was at least anti-racist in speech but perhaps not so much in action.

In contrast, “City Girl,” the chapter on Myrdice Thornton, an African-American girl from Chicago, provides a much more complex depiction of racism. Also written by Daly, Thornton’s profile described Thornton as comparatively privileged considering her racial background:
Thornton lived with her mother in a relatively well-off neighborhood, although her father, the first African-American Chicago Park police officer, had been killed on the job several years previous. Like many of the others included in Profile, her family had hoped to “get somewhere in life,” and they lived a fairly middle-class existence, including summer trips to Michigan and Chicago, parochial school, a bedroom with “flouncy chintz drapes behind the bed, pictures of movies stars pasted around the mirror and copies of Little Women, Black Beauty, and the Pollyanna books on the shelf.” Daly depicted Thornton’s life as relatively sheltered, almost Eden-like in her innocence the nearby Catholic high school refused to accept her. Daly framed the moment as a national failure, leading Thornton to “realiz[e] personally that, for the Negro in America, life does not always offer opportunity and democracy” and used it as an entry point to discuss racial discrimination in both in housing and in Chicago schools—particularly at Hyde Park High School, where Thornton eventually attended. Daly described in some detail the racism targeting Chicago’s African American population, addressing the shift in housing laws that lead to school integration while noting Chicago race riots in 1949 that targeted both Jewish and African-American inhabitants of an Irish-Catholic neighborhood; students at Thornton’s local high school shared horrific stories with her, from teachers using racial slurs to one senior whose grandfather was tied to a car and dragged down a lane on the day of his son’s funeral.

In contrast, Thornton was comparatively optimistic about American race relations, and while the article frames her optimism as naïve, it also allowed her to be more “readable” to The Ladies’ Home Journal’s primarily white, middle-class audience. Daly herself argued that Thornton’s optimism stems from the diversity present in her high school, which Daly characterized “as an experiment in functional democracy” in which “the mixing of races at Hyde Park has begun to work well.” Hyde Park faculty and staff worked to integrate all students into
the classroom and outside activities (except for the school sororities and fraternities), and the article approvingly noted that “Hyde Park High School’s most important contribution to its students and to education as a whole is the fact that prejudice, intolerance and inequality between races and religions are talked about candidly and objectively in the classroom with mixed groups joining the discussions with ease and enthusiasm.”

Thornton herself had little patience with racial prejudice, arguing that “all people should be treated alike; we are all here and we should just live together.” In fact, her desire to “live together” seemed particularly stringent—she refused to go to Howard University, a historical black institution, for college. When a friend was accused of “passing,” she “became violently loyal, refused to listen to gossip, and insisted her friend ‘could be whatever she wanted to be, because we shouldn’t think in terms of white or dark” (a move that alienated many of her fellow African-American peers). While one could argue that this desire betrayed a “melting pot” mentality, Thornton equally rejected movies about passing, asking “why doesn’t someone just make a movie about ordinary Negro life and show them as human beings? Not everyone wants to be a white person!”

In other words, if we consider that, as Allyson Hobbs writes, “[a]t times, passing was an act of rebellion against the racial regime; on other occasions, it was a challenge to African Americans’ struggle to shape and to nurture group identities and communities,” we can see that Thornton rejected both models, perhaps because she, too, was mixed race (her great-grandmother was German-American) and she did not want to disavow either community (between which she seemed to have moved fairly effortlessly). More practically, both Lost Boundaries and Pinky, Hobbs notes, hired mostly white or all-white casts because they assumed that “white actors would evoke more sympathy and draw larger audiences;” as an aspiring actress, these choices further limited the roles she could play. Regardless, her favorite movies, media, singers, actors came from a variety of
racial backgrounds, implies an idealized future, one that, combined with her firmly middle-class lifestyle, I argue allowed the more explicitly violent acts of racism mentioned in the piece to become palpable, consumable, readable, non-threatening to a white audience.

This article was not the first time Daly discussed racial prejudice—a 1944 “On the Side” column entitled, “It’s Individual and Not Race That Matters,” discussed dealing with prejudice (alongside “necking,” proper dance technique, and boys’ taste in hair color). Daly’s solution, however, strikes a similar note as the white students in Profile of Youth: “any guy or gal who breaks off a friendship because of nationality prejudice hasn’t the makings of a real friend anyway—so you haven’t lost much…It may be difficult for you, you may get your feelings hurt—but until these sad specimens get back on the ball, you will be doing them a favor by returning intolerance with tolerance.”

Her work on Thornton, however, was by far her most complex and influential. In 1952, Maureen Daly won an “American Freedom Foundation Medal” for her article on Myrdice Thornton, and the National Phillis Wheatley Foundation asked her to be a judge in a “high school competition” drama contest with the particular goal to “give some serious thought to accomplishment and contributions of Negro women to American culture.”

And yet, by the end of Profile of Youth, Thornton and the other African-American adolescents’ experiences are erased by the “melting pot” model of harmony that the editors argued was especially important in a post WWII world:

Now the world crisis and headline of mobilization are blatant warnings of the part they will be called on the play in the international fight to keep peace. Personal plans for college, marriage, or a career will be partly governed by the plans of the world. Youth is always important because it determines what the future will be; this time the future of the world is being decided. We are part of an ideological battle that can be won or lost, without a shot being fired or a bomb being dropped; and all nations are fighting for the loyalties and minds of their youth.
And exactly what are they fighting for? “[T]he things [adolescents] find important—the good schools, the basketball rivalries, the college scholarships and Friday night dates—endless events, big and small, that make their pattern of living. These little things are the big things. They are manifestations, in terms of the teen-agers’ own experiences, of the American way of life, worth defending at any cost.”214 In fact, with soldiers abroad once again, ostensibly fighting Communist influence in the Korean War, this passage implies dual erasures: first, an erasure of the actual battles and the actual bombs dropped in Korea in favor of a homebound pedagogical practice framed as ideological imperialism, i.e., once our adolescents have been conquered or educated into the right consumerist modes, then we can spread our version of capitalism throughout the world.215 Second, the conclusion ignores the stories shared by many of the African-American students, stories of riots and violence, of expletives thrown and futures derailed, in favor of a unified vision of “the American way of life,” a Seventeenth Summer-style image of American adolescence. This latter erasure becomes all the more heartbreaking bearing in mind that the introduction contains a self-congratulatory snippet of an interview with a black boy who states, “I’m proud to be interviewed. It’s the first time I ever knew anyone cared what a colored boy thought.”216 He, unsurprisingly, never appears again.

Despite the overtly imperialist tone of the conclusion, when Profile of Youth was completed, Daly hoped to pursue international variations on the ethnographic-style studies, as she would propose expanding the scope of her profile to Britain, Eastern Germany, even Yugoslavia. By 1951, however, the Ladies’ Home Journal “[was] not interested in anything abroad,” forcing Daly to shop her articles around.217 In other words, she was interested in helping teens around the world speak to an American audience, but the American audience—at least according to the Ladies’ Home Journal—did not really want to listen (perhaps too
concerned with protecting “an American way of life” from their own audience to be bothered). Daly continued to write for *The Ladies’ Home Journal* in addition to two more etiquette books, *The Perfect Hostess* (1950) and *What’s Your PQ (Personality Quotient)?* (1952), and several children’s series, and several collections of books for teens. In the sixties, she would eventually return to the ethnographic style of writing; along with her husband, William McGivern (known best for his noir *The Big Heat*), she would write two more ethnographic-style travel books for mixed audiences, *Moroccan Roundabout* (1961) and *Spanish Roundabout* (1965). She would return to writing adolescent romance with *Acts of Love* (1986) and *First a Dream* (1990). None of these would even touch the acclaim and reach of Daly’s work in the forties and fifties. Instead, Daly’s earliest brand of adolescence (one that she would push from *Seventeenth Summer* through the Sub-Debs), the brand that made American adolescence knowable, containable, and consumable, would become her mostly widely known work.

For decades, Irish-Catholic Daly, a woman fascinated by the shifting demands of youth culture, would be associated with a singular, limited vision of Protestant American pre-war nostalgia and consumption. This vision not only erased her immigrant past and cosmopolitan future, but as the NYPL lists indicate, that her works could also be used as an imperialist textbook advocating how Americans act, an answer to Anne Carroll Moore’s question about the global book market twenty years earlier. In the early 1990s, however, Daly would finally try to write the great Catholic novel her early fans had asked for, as she began researching and drafting a novel entitled *Mariette Loves J.C.* Daly characterized the book, which would focus on a young girl joining—and then leaving—a convent, as concerned with the question “is it possible today to obey the rules of the convent and still recognize the problems of today’s world?” While she hoped to “make [the topic] highly readable for those who don’t care one bit about the
subject,” her desire to write a novel she called “so strange you’ll wonder why I’m doing it” brings up a host of questions: would this text have been another mirror for Catholic youth to see themselves in? Would it show a picture of a religious lifestyle that was slowly dying? Would it compliment Catholic American missionary work, particular since she was first inspired to write the novel while watching young Masai boys in Western Africa learning from nuns, or would it critique it?

By writing *Mariette Loves J.C.*, however, she had the opportunity to complicate the limited image of American adolescents that she helped perpetuate in the *Ladies’ Home Journal*—instead of young WASPS searching for love, fun, and the capitalist American dream, she could investigate those demands by providing an alternative model of living that was devoted to religious service and poverty. In short, she was finally writing a novel that was more “Catholic in fact” than in spirit. Unfortunately, *Mariette Loves J.C.* would never be published, and there is no surviving manuscript, so these questions will remain unanswered. Like Myrdice, and Angie, and countless fans, it stands as one more trace of marginality in her archives.

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1 Hunt seems to have gotten the date wrong in his letter—the review he was referring to was published on May 30, 1942, not 1939. William Hunt to Maureen Daly,” June 1, 1939. Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Rebecca Lowrie, “Daly... Seventeenth Summer, by Maureen Daly.” *The Saturday Review*, May 30, 1942, 10.


3 *The Long Way Home*, while not autobiographical, was intended to convey Benary-Isbert’s thoughts about American culture and its citizens to a European audience after she had immigrated to the United States post-World War II; originally written in German, she “dedicate[d] this book to the cause of better understanding: to [her] friends in Europe, so that they may learn a little more about America; and to my friends in this country whose kindness and inspiration has been a never failing help on my own ‘long way home.’” To a certain extent, her novel is an extension of Anne Carroll Moore’s dreams of an international market that would build mutual understanding, as discussed in chapter two. Margot Benary-Isbert, *The Long Way Home*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), 5.


Wong’s memoirs end by celebrating her success as a potter, albeit one somewhat marred by casual racism, including one instance where “two high-ranking Caucasian Army officers” entered the store and assumed that her wheel ran by mechanical means (as opposed to the motor which Wong notes is obviously in view), to which one of them proclaimed “you can’t teach the Chinese anything new!” And yet, in spite of these incidents, Wong’s achievements help her gain the acceptance of her family, one that she claims her father argued would have been impossible outside of the United States. Jade Snow Wong, Fifth Chinese Daughter (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1945), 245-246.

Office of Children’s Services and Office of Young Adult Services, “Interpreting People Through Children’s Books.”


Maureen Daly, “Maureen Daly: One on One.”


Maureen Daly, “Synopsis of Seventeenth Summer,” N/A, Box 1, Folder 21, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


The NYPL published a series entitled “A ‘First’ Reading List for Young Adult Librarians,” which they noted was “a suggested guide for new young adult librarians and a measuring rod for experienced ones. It is not a definitive or basic list but it offers a sampling of books, old and new, which represent many of the reading interests...young adult librarians should try to read all these by the end of the first year on the job.” First published in 1955, the list would be updated every few years to account for changes in taste, and Daly’s Seventeenth Summer stayed on the list until at least 1967, as the novel disappeared from the 1972 list. “A ‘First’ Reading List for Young Adult Librarians” (New York Public Library, 1955, 1957, 1959, 1962, 1967, 1972), Box 3, Assistant Coordinator general files, Folder “First” Reading List for 1955-1978, Office of Young Adult Services records. New York Public Library Archives, New York. “Books for Young People” (The New York Public Library, 1946), Box 3, Assistant Coordinator general files, Folder “Author Index, 1946,” Office of Young Adult Services records. New York Public Library Archives, New York.


Dunning chose the novels according to popularity, which he determined through an informal survey of “Expert Librarians,” including Scoggin, and rated them according to “style,” “structure,” “Characterization,” “theme,” and “adult role and adult-adolescent relationships in the novel.” Arthur Stephenson Dunning, “A Definition of the Role of the Junior Novel Based on Analyses of Thirty Selected Novels.” (Diss, Florida State University, 1959), 55-61, 103, 126-128, 174.

Ibid., 61.

Pattee, Reading the Adolescent Romance, 11.


In Vernon Ives’ article, “Teen-Age Reading,” he names Boylston’s work as the worst of the junior novel, whereas Seventeenth Summer stands as one of the best. Vernon Ives, “Teenage Reading,” ALA Bulletin 47, no. 9 (1953): 400-404, http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/stable/25694062. Dunning argued that the Boylston’s Sue
“Barton” “has glaring structural weaknesses, grotesque stereotyping, and inept diction; the characters in Boylston’s book cannot be identified with human counterparts.” He does, however, recognize the novel as the first in the junior novel genre. Dunning, “A Definition of the Role of the Junior Novel Based on Analyses of Thirty Selected Novels,” 139.


30 Please see chapters two and three in Ilana Nash, American Sweethearts.


32 Maureen Daly, “Maureen Daly: One on One.”

33 Maureen Daly to Julien D. McKee, March 3, 1967, Box 1, Folder 2. Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


35 Day, Narrative Intimacy, 14.

36 Ibid., 18.


38 Day, Narrative Intimacy, 14.

39 Maureen Daly, Seventeenth Summer, Kindle (New York: Simon Pulse, 2009).

40 Ibid., 28.

41 Ibid., 21.

42 Ibid., 22.

43 Ibid., 127.

44 Ibid., 128.

45 Ibid., 245.

46 Ibid., 190.

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48 Allen, “‘Dear Miss Daly,’” 25.
49 Ibid., 34.
50 Daly, Seventeenth Summer, 98-99.
52 Ibid., 76.
53 Daly, Seventeenth Summer, 100.
54 Ibid., 133.
55 Ibid., 111.
56 Ibid., 112.
57 Ibid., 66-67.
59 Daly, Seventeenth Summer, 245.
60 In 1993, Daly recalled that “an editor wanted me to include some scenes in which one of the sisters has an abortion and Angie knows about it,” but Daly refused because she wanted Angie’s narrative to stay central. While Daly doesn’t say which sister would have gotten the abortion, considering Margaret was already engaged (and a pregnancy would have likely led to a shotgun wedding), Lorraine seems the much more likely choice. For more, see Lisa Ann Richardson, “Books for Adolescents,” 424.
62 Richard Fitzgerald to Maureen Daly, May 3, 1942, Box 1, Folder 13; Patricia ‘Pat’ Flanagan to Maureen Daly, December 4, 1942, Box 1, Folder 13; Dolores C. Kearney to Maureen Daly, July 24, 1942, Box 1 Folder 13; Ignatius J. Shyne, S.J. to Maureen Daly, August 18, 1942, Box 1, Folder 14; Sally M. Lyons from Hartford Conn, August 30, 1942, Box 1, Folder 14; Marilyn Jayne West to Maureen Daly, July 5, 1942, Box 1, Folder 12; Bette Enkmeier, Dorothy Warner, Thelma Munkers, Beatrice Path, Rose Maria Schaeffer, Bette Jo Drisen, Maurie Bunn, Bernice Lake to Maureen Daly, January 12, 1943, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
63 Helen Ruth Pappa to Maureen Daly, October 23, 1943; Hrinir to Maureen Daly, May 10, 1942, Box 1, Folder 17, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
64 Robert L. Tallison to Maureen Daly, October 18, 1942, Box 1, Folder 13, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Other letters questioning her autobiography include Henry Sask to Maureen Daly, June 1, 1943, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
66 Rita Marie Oldham to Maureen Daly, February 10, 1943, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
67 Jean Avery to Maureen Daly, March 14, 1943, Box 1, Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
68 Jeanne F. O’Brien to Maureen Daly, December 28, 1942, Box 1, Folder 12; Helen Rogowska to Maureen Daly, January 18, 1943, Box 1, Folder 13, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Sophie Polack also apologized for using Daly’s Christian name, noting “…since I have been such an ardent fan of yours it seems as if I’ve known you personally for a long time.” Sophie Polack to Maureen Daly, May 9, 1944, Box 1, Folder 15, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
69 Bert to Maureen Daly, August 6, 1942, Box 1, Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Maureen Daly, “Maureen Daly....tells You How to Be a Smoothie,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 8, 1942, sec. Graphic Section, http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/hnpchicagotribune/docview/176745755/abstract?accountid=14667. Nancy Stromer to Maureen Daly, July 20, 1943; Justin P. Smith to Maureen Daly, November 6, 1943; Majorie Honey to Maureen Daly, October 28, 1943; Pvt. Tom Allen to Maureen Daly, October 24, 1943, Box 1, Folder 17; Mary Nieherding to Maureen Daly, October 17, 1944, Box 1; Shirley Ann Dettle to Maureen Daly, February 10, 1943, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Mary Anderson to Maureen Daly, November 26, 1942, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Anita Greunke to Maureen Daly, July 28, 1942, Box 1, Folder 13, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


Ginie Owen may have been a real person, as one of the earliest articles, “Boys Prefer Poise,” included a picture of Daly and a “Virginia Owen,” as they, the caption noted, “join[ed] the drugstore crowd.” She seems to have disappeared from all subsequent columns, except when they referenced her fictional counterpart. “Boys Prefer Poise,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 15, 1942, sec. Graphic Section, http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/176630039?accountid=14667.

Maureen Daly, “‘On the Solid Side’ Clippings-Marginalia,” February 1, 1973, Box 2, Folder 15, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox*, 1.


Cross, *An All-Consuming Century*.


Gudelunas, *Confidential to America*, 10-11.

Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox*, 2, 15, 47.


Daly, “Maureen Daly....tells You How to Be a Smoothie.”

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92 Maureen Daly, Smarter and Smoother, 33.
93 Ibid., 34.
94 Ibid., 139.
96 Daly, Smarter and Smoother, 18.
97 One soldier, for example, criticized her advice that young women be honest with their romantic intentions, reminding her that “A fella can’t play with the tools of war when in his pocket is a letter telling him Rose has a new Beau. Those tools of war are sharp and double edged and they bite back.” Notably, her later articles avoided mentioning “Dear John letters,” focusing instead on sharing the joys and follies of home life. Fritz Woyna to Maureen Daly, January 24, 1943, Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Maureen Daly, “A Service Man Asks Truth in Those Letters,” Chicago Daily Tribune, October 6, 1944, http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/177002768?accountid=14667.
98 Daly, Smarter and Smoother, 101.
101 Fenton, Religious Liberties, 4.
103 Marina Coslovi, “Why Blondes Need Manners?,” 112.

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These letters were re-typed and forwarded to Daly from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* editorial staff, so it must be noted that they likely did not forward negative feedback. Jane Buckley to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, February 25, 1942; Mary Morrell to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, March 8, 1942; Mrs. F. J. Rhode to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, March 8, 1942; Mrs. Charles Rausch & Family to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, n.d.; Anne R. Betty to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, March 11, 1942; Mary Jane Rowe to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, March 23, 1942; Patricia Burke to Chicago Tribune Sunday Editor, March 23, 1942, Box 1 Folder 15, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


Ibid., 34.

Daly, *Seventeenth Summer*, 77.

Maureen Daly, *Smarter and Smoother*, 143.

Ibid., 146.

"Boy Driver in Crash Gets Book to Read,” May 1944, Box 2, Folder 22, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


Maureen Daly, “Maureen Daly Says... Heads You Win!,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 1, 1942, sec. Graphic Section.

Maureen Daly, “New Column for Problems of Young Set,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 18, 1943.


J. E. Wheaton to Maureen Daly, February 3, 1944, Box 1, Folder 5, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Daly, “Jive Talk.”

121 “Subdebs: They Live in a Jolly World of Gangs, Games, Gadding, Movies, Malteeds, & Music,” 78. For more on the *Maudie* series, please see the fourth section of this chapter.


123 Miller, *Accented America*, 73.


127 Maureen Daly, “Sub-Deb Cross Country Quiz” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, n.d.), Box 1, Folder 15, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

128 The Flushing and Bayside Sub-Debs to Maureen Daly, August 28, 1948; Bruce Mooidell to Maureen Daly, August 30, 1948, Box 1, Folder 15, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

129 In constructing this number, I counted all letters that came from students at Catholic schools or universities, or those who identified more concretely as Catholic. I didn’t, however, count a collection of letters she received from the students at Our Lady of Loretto High School, in part because of their late date, April 14, 1972, and also because they were clearly written and gathered at the behest of a teacher to thank Daly for a class visit. Maureen Daly, “Archival Notation,” February 3, 1973, Box 1 Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

130 Joseph Timmins to Maureen Daly, n.d., Box 1, Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. An elderly couple asked her to visit so they could chat about Ireland as well. Mrs. Matt Haters to Maureen Daly, May 18, 1942, Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. For example, another letter writer noted he felt proud of her work but noted, with some frustration, that his own “brogue” kept him from radio work. Edward O’Reilly Cassidy to Maureen Daly, April 24, 1942; Robert Cain, C.Ss.R to Maureen Daly, September 13, 1942, Box 1 Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. I want to note that there are many letters by writers who, based on the last name alone, one might assume a shared Irish heritage; however, I only counted those that explicitly noted the connection like Rosemary McMahan, Edward O’Reilly Cassidy, or Joseph Timmons.

131 In constructing this number, I counted all letters that came from students at Catholic schools or universities, or those who identified more concretely as Catholic. I didn’t, however, count a collection of letters she received from the students at Our Lady of Loretto High School, in part because of their late date, April 14, 1972, and also because they were clearly written and gathered at the behest of a teacher to thank Daly for a class visit. Maureen Daly, “Archival Notation,” February 3, 1973, Box 1 Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

132 “Cross Section of the Reviews of the Novel Seventeenth Summer,” n.d., Box 2 Folder 22, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. The reviewer for the Catholic *Sign* magazine even wrote in to congratulate her on a novel that “wins with me on the score of wholesomeness and verismilitude.” Rev. Boniface Buckley C.P. to Maureen Daly, May 6, 1942, Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

133 In a letter from Gerry Hasmer, a school paper editor hoping for a guest editorial, he wrote, “Knowing as we do how much you would like to see more young Catholic authors and authoresses, we approach you with much confidence and only a little fear of disappointment;” however, there’s no sense whether she actually stated as much—only that he believed that she did. Gerry Hasmer to Maureen Daly, Thursday, A.M., Box 1, Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

134 Virginia M. Beck to Maureen Daly, August 26, 1942, Box 1, Folder 3, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
The story makes no reference to Catholic culture, although the editors, oddly enough, chose to juxtapose the final letters from the father, away at war. By the end of the narrative, he dies, destroying his daughter’s innocence along the way.

For example, one group of Catholic teens, after a nun recommended Daly’s novel, used the novel as “a password among the students. In cards when a player is to play ‘hearts her partner says ‘Seventeenth Summer.’” Rosemary Flanagan to Maureen Daly, June 9, 1942, Box 1, Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Other letters mentioning her life and work in an educational context include: Roderic Coffey to Maureen Daly, October 2, 1942; Sister Mary de Paul O.P. to Maureen Daly, August 19, 1942; Elaine Meyers to Maureen Daly, May 20, 1942; Jane Mary Dailey to Maureen Daly, October 9, 1942, Box 1, Folder 14; Patsy Doyle to Maureen Daly, November 3, 1942; Mary Asztalos to Maureen Daly, November 4, 11942, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Andrea Palladino to Maureen Daly, October 13, 1942, Box 1, Folder 12, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Robert Cain, C.Ss.R to Maureen Daly. Marah Gubar, “The Hermeneutics of Recuperation: What a Kinship-Model Approach to Children’s Agency Could Do for Children’s Literature and Childhood Studies,” *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures* 8, no. 1 (Summer 2016): 296.

Sister Mary Jerome to Maureen Daly, June 2, 1942; Charles Frederecks to Maureen Daly, May 13, 1942; Fr. Paul Hoban, O’Carm to Maureen Daly,” July 9, 1942, Box 1, Folder 14, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Roy Deardorff to Maureen Daly, September 8, 1941, Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Walter W. Winrich to Maureen Daly, June 3, 1942, Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. “Father Walter W. Winrich, MM,” Maryknoll Mission Archives, accessed August 13, 2016, http://maryknollmissionarchives.org/?deceased-fathers-bro=father-walter-w-winrich-mm.

William Van Etten Casey to Maureen Daly, June 24, 1943, Box 1, Folder 13, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Rev. John. Byrne to Maureen Daly, November 24, 1943, Box 1, Folder 16, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Mrs. Erich O. Schwengel to Maureen Daly, April 27, 1942; Mary Dale Broderick to Maureen Daly, n.d., Box 1 Folder 15, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Mrs. Erich O. Schwengel to Maureen Daly.


J. G. E. Hopkins, “Book of the Week: Young Love,” *The Commonweal*, May 15, 1942, The Opinion Archives. George Burman to Maureen Daly, September 14, 1942, Box 1, Folder 3; Maureen Daly, “Postlude to Summer,” *The Sign*, September 1944. Box 1, Folder 33. Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. “Postlude to Summer” takes a very different approach than *Seventeenth Summer*. Instead of focusing on an adolescent perspective set in a nostalgic Midwest setting, “Postlude to Summer” is told from the (third person) perspective of the daughter, as her and her mother wait for letters from the father, away at war. By the end of the narrative, he dies, destroying his daughter’s innocence along the way. The story makes no reference to Catholic culture, although the editors, oddly enough, chose to juxtapose the final lines (in which the daughter kills a butterfly in her grief) with a joke about atheists going to hell. “You’ll See Him
There,” *The Sign*, September 1944. Box 1, Folder 33, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


160 Ibid., 140.


169 Ibid., 6.

170 Ibid., 24.

171 Ibid., 31.


http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/105284711/abstract/E9C03A1634A642C3PQ/4


177 Ibid., 91.


181 “Sub-Deb Clubs,” 89, 90.

182 “Sub-Deb Club Handbook” (The Sub-Deb Department, Ladies’ Home Journal, n.d.), Box 2 Folder 24, Maureen Daly Papers. 6, 7.

Margot L. Smith to All Journal Representatives, Memorandum Re: The Ladies' Home Journal: Sub-Deb Federations, n.d., Box 3, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Sub-Deb Club Handbook,” Addendum “Sub-Deb Booklet Library.” The narrative of the latter play is remarkably conservative, telling girls that “acting like a lady—or just like a smooth gal—is important,” with smoothness including careful self-control and perfect manners (as opposed to flirting or “tactics.” “Operation: Johnny” (The Sub-Deb Department, Ladies’ Home Journal, 1946), Box 2 Folder 24, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Maureen Daly, “Archival Notation Re: Sub-Deb Federation Materials,” February 1, 1973, Box 2, Folder 24, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


“Medicine” (The Sub-Deb Department, Ladies’ Home Journal, 1948), Box 2, Folder 24, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

“Law” (The Sub-Deb Department, Ladies’ Home Journal, 1946), Box 2, Folder 24, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Members of the Staff of the Ladies’ Home Journal, Profile of Youth, 10.

For a list, please see the table of contents in Members of the Staff of the Ladies’ Home Journal, Profile of Youth, ed. Maureen Daly (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippencott Company, 1949), Box 2, Folder 21, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

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Cart, Young Adult Literature, loc. 396. For his full discussion of Profile of Youth, please see loc. 380-428.

Members of the Staff of the Ladies’ Home Journal, Profile of Youth, 172.

Ibid., 85.


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Ibid., 24

Ibid., 62-63. According to Daly’s records, this article was not written by Maureen Daly.

Ibid., 179, 180.

According to contemporaneous reports, the riots began when a Jewish man, Aaron Bindman, invited several African-Americans into his home, which was located in an Irish Catholic neighborhood—a point Daly did not mention in her version of the article. William Peters, “Race War in Chicago,” New Republic 122, no. 2 (January 9, 1950): 10–12. Members of the Staff of the Ladies’ Home Journal, Profile of Youth, 182.

Ibid., 184.

Ibid., 185.

Ibid., 186.

Ibid., 188-189.


Hobbs notes that black critics were also frustrated by such whitewashing, as we might call it today. Ibid., 224. For Daly, racism was not about institutional problems but about individual action. Maureen Daly, “It’s Individual and Not Race That Matters,” Chicago Daily Tribune, April 5, 1944, http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/176857398?accountid=14667.

Maureen Daly, “Archival Notes on Profile of Youth,” February 3, 1973, Box 2, Folder 20; Jane E. Hunter to Maureen Daly,” October 29, 1951, Box 1, Folder 5, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. She continued to remain involved with the African-American community, sending books to Black schools in the South (which she felt prompted to do after reading Richard Wright’s Black Boy.) Maureen Daly, “Archival Notation Re: Letter from A. L. Coney to Maureen Daly,” January 31, 1973, Box 1, Folder 5; A. L. Coney to Maureen Daly, March 22, 1950, Box 1, Folder 5, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.
Joseph Darda notes that even before the Korean War ended, reports noted that Americans were already beginning to forget its existence—seeing it as “experimental” or a form of “permanent war” in which “the specter of continuous warfare necessitated a new narrative framework for military violence, in which war was never exactly war and the enemy never entirely sovereign.” Joseph Darda, “The Literary Afterlife of the Korean War,” *American Literature* 87, no. 1 (March 1, 2015): 85, doi:10.1215/00029831-2865199.

For more on Maureen Daly’s attempts to expand the *Profile of Youth* overseas, please see “Profile of Youth Memos,” Box 2, Folder 21. Maureen Daly Mc. to Diarmuid, November 27, 1951, Box 1, Folder 2, Maureen Daly Papers, Ax 753, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.


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Ibid., 425.
CODA

Imagining Adolescents at War: María Cristina Mena’s *The Two Eagles*, Janet Lambert’s *Glory Be!* and the White Imperialist Gaze

“The only way I’ve ever learned anything” [Penny] said, staring into the flames, “about how to meet difficult things in life, I mean, is from watching you and Dad. If you say it’s the thing to do, you can bet it’s the thing to do. I don’t mind saying that I’m plain scared and if I had my way I’d run off and stick my head down a hole like an ostrich.” “And I’m scared, too.” Carrol’s voice was very small as she sided with Penny. “You see, Aunt Marjorie, it’s all so different now that war is actually here. You and Dad and Uncle Dave have been through one war, but we…Well, we don’t know exactly how to behave.”

---Janet Lambert, *Glory Be!*, 1943

Doña Elvira was speaking to the entire world, as she crossed the gallery back to her room to fetch the all-important little “book of annotations” in which Marcos [her son] had written of the necessary changes which would have to be made in their home life; in other words the New Order of the house for the next few weeks—or months—while the Americanas were visiting them…On one page was an endless list entitled: *Things to do in the manner of the U.S.A.* And on another page a much smaller list which read: *Things in the house already proper and correct.*

--María Cristina Chambers, *The Two Eagles*, 1943

In 1943, two junior novels were published that juxtaposed teenage romance against the drama of World War II: Janet Lambert’s *Glory Be!*, the third novel in her *Penny Parrish* series, and María Cristina Mena Chambers’ *The Two Eagles*.¹ The *Penny Parrish* series follows the adolescent daughter of an army colonel and her wealthy friend, Carrol Houghton, from their adventures on an Army base during peacetime through World War II; the bombing of Pearl Harbor furnishes the primary conflict at the beginning of *Glory Be!*, forcing the military family into new roles and duties that neither Penny nor Carrol fully understand. Afraid, they turn to Penny’s parents for advice on how to reconfigure their lives. In contrast, the war remains hidden in the background of *The Two Eagles*, as Governor Don Fernando, Doña Eliza, and their son Marcos prepare for the arrival of two Americanas, Mrs. Cherry and her daughter Florence, who
are visiting at the behest of Mr. Montague Cherry, the “Copper King.” Don Fernando waits until the end of the narrative to tell his wife and son that this visit has diplomatic overtures, thanks to an “appalling catastrophe of a war” and “certain important concessions” Mr. Cherry hopes to get from the Mexican government.\(^2\)

Both novels share a fondness for wealthy American blondes (Carrol and Florence respectively) and romantic shenanigans à la Tarkington, but overall, neither novel had nearly the impact of Maureen Daly’s *Seventeenth Summer*. While Lambert would publish over fifty novels for teenage girls (including six total Penny Parrish novels and eight more novels about Penny’s younger sister, Tippy), her work was poorly received.\(^3\) As for *The Two Eagles*, the *New York Times* would call “a social comedy based on contrasting national attitudes” that “falls a little flat,” and Mena, who was one of the first Mexican writers in English, would only write three more juvenile novels.\(^4\) I bring these two novels together because their respective images of American adolescence, more generally, pull together many of the questions driving my dissertation: what are the political implications of adolescence as a form of “reproductive futurism,” particularly in the midst of a war? How do early junior novels promote, or in the case of *The Two Eagles*, deconstruct the dangers of a white, adolescent imperialist gaze? How do white women (and their sexuality) play into that construction?

Lambert’s *Glory Be!* celebrates American action in World War II, framing their entry as a result of Japan’s “starkest, foulest betrayal” (the narrative leaves the kind of betrayal undefined), and portraying the military’s preparation as a necessary duty in a world at war.\(^5\) Amongst the familial chaos, Penny and Carrol must figure out their place, or “how to behave,” but both girls, eighteen and just out of high school, are marked by their liminality, a status that
gives both of them a significant amount of anxiety. In particular, Penny is neither soldier nor civilian—while she has grown up on various Army bases, the narrative notes,

Up to now, war had failed to touch her life. West Point, for all its training of young cadets, was perhaps the most peaceful spot in the United States. It had its dances, its athletics, its gay crowd in the Boodlers, and its officers who led the daily life of professors in college. If this year had brought more talk of bomb sights, the Armored Force or the Air Corps, Penny had thought of it as only a first class-man’s interest in his career.

Unlike her brothers or her father, all of whom are in the military or in military school, Penny had not been given any practical training for wartime, and cannot immediately step into a clear role or duty demanded by the government. Moreover, since she has just graduated high school, she cannot, as Daly advised in her advice book *Smarter and Smoother*, duck her dead down and study in hopes of contributing in the war effort. Nor could she just step into a job or a marriage—she has no major beau, and she had yet to leave the home to pursue her chosen profession, the theater (and that, as the narratives assures us, would require extensive work). In other words, when Penny and Carrol turn to Penny’s mother for advice on how to act, they rely on the comfort of reproductive futurism because, as Gabrielle Owen writes, “[t]he future is too important, too urgent, too critical to risk figuring it out [themselves].”

Mrs. Parrish provides two models for these girls to follow when she responds that “[y]ou’ll find that life will go on very much as it always has, with all of us eating and sleeping and going about our business.” Carrol, in love with Penny’s brother David, takes a very literal interpretation of reproductive futurism; when David tells her “it’s no use, getting married during war time,” she turns (albeit inaccurately) to the Parrishes for inspiration, reminding David that “your mother and father did…and they seem to have weathered it.” With a dead mother and a dying father, Carrol’s narrative reinforces the family imperative—her father approves of the marriage just before he passes, and Carrol marries David at the end of *Glory Be!*, giving up both
a career and her New York penthouse to follow her husband and keep house in a “wooden shack” near an Army base.\textsuperscript{10} For Penny, “life will go on” means pursuing her acting career, with significant financial help from her friend, and going on dates with eligible soldiers. Other than the absence of her father, Penny’s life undergoes few changes. While the sequel, \textit{Up Goes the Curtain}, gives Penny a greater purpose by using her flair for the dramatic to help her brother and beau trap a spy through a series of comedic misunderstandings, the novel was published after the war was over and this sudden shift in tone plays less like actual advice and more like a sigh of relief, a moment of hilarity only appropriate once the war was won. Regardless, both girls still get to pursue their vision of the American dream, marriage and career. Penny, thanks to Carrol’s funding, can continue to “grow up” on her own time, suggesting that, while men fight the war, women attempt to normalize it—to ensure that rationing is not felt, that fears are left unexpressed, that, as Penny says in \textit{Up Goes the Curtain}, “keeping the soldiers happy is just about as important as fighting.”\textsuperscript{11} In other words, Janet Lambert’s \textit{Penny Parrish} series has a hidden curriculum, an implicit message about wartime expectations, one that recalls the 1914 NYPL pamphlet: “so the health and happiness of my country depend on each citizen doing his work in his place.”\textsuperscript{12}

Marco, in \textit{The Two Eagles}, knows the role he must play; as the only English-speaker in the family, he must become the linguistic and cultural bridge between the two families. As this might suggest, his role as translator gives him an equally liminal position in the household, one exacerbated by his young age, although the narrative frames him as old for his time:

He was fifteen years old, but looked already like a junior governor of some state, tall for his age, very serious minded and a great reader. He read all sorts of books—but most particularly books which only older persons read, as a rule—books on astronomy, because he wanted to know all about the heavens; books on psychology, because he wanted to find out how the human soul really worked, and books on philosophy, because
Marcos had an ancestor back there somewhere on his father’s side who was a poet and a philosopher.\textsuperscript{13} Marcos hopes to signal this maturity through a physical shift in clothing; instead of wearing the short pants that marked a Mexican youth, he begins the story hoping to ask his mother whether he could transition to long pants because he thinks they will give him more authority with the Mrs. and Miss Cherry. Unlike Penny, he does not need any advice from his mother—she trusts him implicitly to guide the family and household, letting him share his lists enumerating the American’s New Order because “Marcos \textit{did} know English very well, and had read many books on the American ways of life, and both had seen some American moving pictures.”\textsuperscript{14} In other words, Marcos plays the adult, even the parental role (while his father is primarily absent from the narrative), providing (occasionally incorrect) guidance that he sees as new, modern, preferable (to a certain extent) to his family’s traditions.

His fondness for American lifestyles is only heightened when he meets Florence Cherry, a beautiful blonde who embodies everything American, i.e. wealth, glamour, and more implicitly, American white imperialism. Marcos quickly falls in love with “the enchanting blonde American girl” and tries to romance her with poetry and trips to his abuelita’s home, but the narrative has no qualms satirizing Florence as an embodiment of ignorance, vanity, and American capitalist exploitation. Most of Florence’s actions are directed by her sense of freedom, entitlement, even self-interest. For instance, while watching dancers on the street after her first meal, she wants to join them, thinking “how foolish it was for the girls to be walking one way and the boys another; and without a chance to talk. She would show them how those things were managed in the United States.”\textsuperscript{15} Marcos, enchanted, follows her despite his parents’ disapproval. Moreover, Florence constantly questions Marcos about the finer points of Mexican culture; however, while her interest inspires his romantic ardor, Florence herself is
more interested in winning an American writing competition about Mexican life that could net her a thousand dollars. None of these actions bother Marcos until she flirts with an Americanized cousin of his—a step which offends Marcos’ romantic sensibilities and requires Florence to apologize so as to not endanger their fathers’ relationship. Many scholars have argued that Mena’s short fiction often hid critiques of “US tourism, imperialism, and assimilation,” in her short fiction, and *The Two Eagles*, as a revision of her short story “The Education of Popo,” kept up the trend; however, her implicit critique of American girls did not go unnoticed, as the *New York Times* reviewer noted “…Marcos, romantic, a little absurd and wholly convincing, needs a better foil than Florence, who is a spoiled brat, lacking either charm or character.” In other words, if *Glory Be!* provides an idealized model of how young white Americans should behave in wartime, *The Two Eagles* provides a mirror image, one that is less than flattering.

And yet, Florence is equally prone to falling for American capitalist rhetoric. As Toth argues, “…the subtlety of [Mena’s short] stories rests on Mena’s doubled voice, or “trickster discourse,” which, moving with purpose between Anglo-American and Mexican perspectives, upsets both intradiegetic power hierarchies and extradiegetic reading practices.” *The Two Eagles* frequently shifts perspectives between Marcos and Florence, and a trip to the local American dermatologist deconstructs Florence’s self-presentation as a form of commodity. As Kyla Schuller writes, Mena had, in her short story “The Gold Vanity Set” previously “enliste[ed] the U.S. beauty industry’s influence in Mexico as a rich synecdoche of the cultural impact of the U.S. neocolonialism and identifies how the beauty industry was producing and distributing whiteness as a commodity for sale…[which] illustrate[s] the active roles consumer goods play in constructing ideas of race.” While Petra, a beautiful Indian girl who is the protagonist of “The Gold Vanity Set,” gains “a new gendered and racial status” when she finds and uses a lost
makeup compact left behind by white American tourists, in *The Two Eagles*, Florence is made somewhat foolish when she tries to bleach her skin of its freckles. The text implies that her doctor, a “Teuton-American disliked by the locals because “he never for a day had forgotten he was German by blood,” peddles racial purity to “many American and some Mexican ladies,” including Florence’s friend Barbara Holden. When Florence arrives, he recognizes her more as a source of cash flow than an individual, “the best piece of luck to come his way for a long time...[a]nother American daughter of the rich!” Moreover, while the product he provides does bleach her skin, his claims that his face creams are based upon “Indian herbs” are immediately counteracted by his assistant Guadalupe, an old Indian woman who disapproves of “all those things of the devil that the doctor did to the señoritas.” In other words, he trades on American ignorance and desire for “exotic” products, but the products themselves have little to do with historical medicinal practice. If Petra benefits from her mimicry of whiteness in “The Gold Vanity Set,” Florence’s maintenance of that whiteness reduces her agency to a price point for (likely imperialist) German-American forces.

In part, Florence struggles to communicate clearly with Marcos because she begins the narrative by romanticizing Mexican culture—she constantly compares her surroundings to those of *Romeo and Juliet*. Mena herself noted in her unpublished article “My Protocol for Our Sister Americas” (1943), such a sentimental approach was a huge barrier to cross-cultural communication and understanding:

I don’t think we can approach the mind of our friends and neighbors south of the Border if we persist in thinking of them as “old-fashioned, or as belonging to the 18th or some other old century; because they chose to cling to the proprieties and social ways they have found best for them. Some of these “old ways” are not only charming but they are not old at all. They will be forever young and “modern.”
Her language critiques social and evolutionary frameworks, like recapitulation, that presume a linear model of cultural development, and *The Two Eagles* tries to model what a mutually constitutive gaze might look like, beginning with Mrs. Cherry and Doña Elvira, who “enjoyed delightful days together” because “they talked of everything, and much and long—of their children and of the tremendous difference in their bringing them up.”

Their mutual admiration and open curiosity leads them to discover that neither culture has the ideal educational model, as “Doña Elvira, in her Mexican way, had turned out a handsome old man at fourteen” whereas “Mrs. Cherry, in good American fashion, had a lovely girl of sixteen whom she still called “her baby.” If the mothers provide the idealized model, their children fail repeatedly, for, upon returning to the dancing scene, we see Florence’s faux pas stems in part from Marcos (completely understandable desire) to keep some aspects of Mexican culture private, even inaccessible—as he thinks “[t]his concerted coil of languid movement, with constant interplay of salutations and compliments, as the people walked around and around, was only for the Mexicans to understand.”

And yet, had Marcos talked to Florence about Mexican dancing habits, she might have not embarrassed herself in front of his family, and if she had later explained American dancing habits, he might have understood why she danced with his embarrassing cousin (instead of simply thinking her a shameless flirt).

This mutual gaze is reinforced by the piñatas Marcos has made—two eagles to represent, as he notes, “that both [nations], the United States and Mexico, have the eagle for their National Emblem.” When Florence first sees them, she excitedly hugs Marcos (to his great pleasure), and proclaims “You know, your idea of the American and the Mexican eagles is wonderful, you don’t know how wonderful. And we’re going to win the prize, Marcos.”

This shift from “I will win” to “we’re going to win” is reinforced when she continues, “The prize depends more on the
title. They want something to united the two countries—our two countries—and don’t you see, don’t you see!” Of course, when Florence imagines the headline, her name is the only one that appears before her new title (another instance of Mena’s trickster voice?), but Marcos is happy to know he has contributed to the text proper and graciously assumes the money is hers alone. Undergirding this scene is their mutual affection, for as they continue to spend time with each other, they both develop romantic feelings for each other, so much so that when Florence leaves after her father settles their affairs, she tells him “Remember, Marcos, we are the Two Eagles, as you said we were. And we’ll be flying back and forth uniting our two countries. Okay?” As the final lines of the text, they reinforce Mena’s Pan-Americanism expressed in her article “My Protocols for Our Sister Americas.”

In contrast, if we return to Glory Be! and Up Goes the Curtain with this model of a mutual gaze in mind, we can see that the narrative rarely explores the perspectives of those characters who do not share Carrol and Penny’s white, middle- to upper-class background. Instead, their desires all too often match Carrol’s and Penny’s, and their duties in war are those of emotional and manual support. For instance, when Penny and Carrol move to Carrol’s three-story NYC apartment after David leaves for service in Up Goes the Curtain, they take in Letty, a married waitress whose desperate poverty forces her to live in squalor and wear, as Penny observes, “inexpensive clothes, almost cheap.” Although they all bond over having loved ones in the army, Letty never steps beyond awe of the glamorous lives Penny and Carrol lead—their house, their furs, their ability to remain self-sufficient during the war—and her gratitude for their help. This gratitude, however, swiftly turns to servitude: Letty herself tries her hardest to save money and buy a home after the war; however, once Carrol gives birth to her son Davey, Letty decides to give up her job so she can function as a nanny for her wealthy friend, arguing that “do
you think we want some nincompoop to neglect him? He’s something special, and we want him in good condition for David to see.” Carrol, pleased by the situation, tells Penny that she hopes to install Letty and Joe in her country home to run the attached farm (which she offers on loan). Penny congratulates her wealthy friend for her generosity, proclaiming that “[s]he and her Joe will have a different life because of you. I suppose you know that, don’t you?” but this celebration elides the exploitation of Letty’s labor (there’s no mention of giving her a paycheck, only a free housing) or creating a situation that verges on share-cropping.

Moreover, like most junior novels of the time, all of the primary protagonists are white; however, the Parrishes have a black housekeeper, Trudy, who functions as mammy figure throughout the text—comforting Penny and her brothers and sisters, making dinner, doing the hard labor that allows Mrs. Parrish to, as the narrative proudly notes, to be often mistaken for Penny’s older sister. *Glory Be!* opens with one such exchange between Mrs. Parrish and Trudy:

> Trudy squeezed a pink rosebud onto the white icing of a cake and remarked glumly: “Seems like it ain’t no use wastin’ time fixin’ the cake up so facing when Miss Penny is dead set against havin’ a birthday.” Her brown face lifted and she stared unseeing through a window at the bare trees. “Miss Penny jes’ nachelly don’t want to grow up,” she sighed. “I know.” Mrs. Parrish, busy at the table behind her, searched out candles and holders from a large box. She looked at Trudy’s straight old back and asked with a smile, “what shall I do? There are plenty of yellow holders, or blue, but I can’t find eighteen pink ones. Penny will have a fit if they aren’t pink.”

Trudy and Mrs. Parrish provide a series of interconnected binaries in this scene: white and brown, young and old, Standard English and a minstrel approximation of African-American Vernacular English, mistress and maid, helpless and helper, suggesting that, to rewrite my previous conclusion, if white men fight the war and white women normalize it, black women support the white women in their purpose. Penny herself plays on this construction in a later scene when jokingly responding to the idea of Trudy driving her to a nearby dance: “Oh law, sugah,” Penny drawled, “I sho’ would love to go on dancin’ with yo’ all han’ some gen’men fo’
the rest of the night—but little Scarlett has to go back to huh colo’ed mammy now.” She flipped an imaginary ruffle and hid her face coyly behind her hand. “Mammy’s awaitin’ out in the big black dark fo’ huh sugah-pie.”

Her performance of *Gone with the Wind*, however, reveals her own imperialist gaze: Trudy is nothing more than a modern day Mammy, a family slave. Maria St. John argues that *Gone with the Wind’s* Mammy’s lasting cultural popularity stems from the cultural insistence upon and psychic refuse of absolute interracial disidentification. Mammy both is not and is the black mother of the white child she tends. That is, she is taken for the mother at the level of fantasy (where racial barriers to not hold sway at the same time she assumes a role distinct from that of mother at the level of cultural representation (where race is regulated and reproduced).

Penny’s joke momentarily exposes (and then forecloses) the household structure that allows a young white girl to benefit from the round-the-clock care Trudy provides, a fantasy that allows Penny to indulge in both pleasure and pleasurable work afforded only to the upper-class white characters in the series.

Ultimately, placing these two books together suggests two historical trajectories for young adult literature. In one, adolescence is continually exposed as a cultural product that constantly shifts over time and location. Minority authors would be given a voice to represent their concerns, critique racism, oppression and imperialism, while white authors who hoped to depict minority teens with some cultural competency would prioritize research over stereotype. In the other, we see an adolescence that, in the United States at least, was only accessible to WASP teens; minority teens were pushed to the margins (if they appeared at all) or induced to enter into exploitative positions that benefited a racist and imperialist marketplace. Considering that Mena’s *The Two Eagles* has been out of print for decades, whereas Janet Lambert’s *Penny Parrish* series has been brought back to life by Image Cascade Publishing, who purport to sell

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“timeless books in the image of girls,” we know which trajectory won, particularly since a perusal of books offered by Image Cascade have only white girls on the covers.36

With this in mind, I argue that we, as young adult literary scholars, must stop assuming that early young adult literature was simply “all-white,” and work harder to complicate that narrative. More research must be done to recover signs of the hidden trajectory proposed by Mena’s *The Two Eagles*—what other authors were looking back at white American adolescence and finding it faulty? What other novels aimed at adolescents reoriented minority teens from margin to center? Moreover, we need to comb the archives to find more teens who read recklessly, to trace which scripts they use and which scripts they tossed aside. Were there teens writing proto-fan fiction like Mary MacLane, or reading bad books like the teenage girls visiting the NYPL Harlem branch? Or others like Myrdice Thornton, who hoped to act her way into a better future than the one represented in *Pinky, Lost Causes, or Gone with the Wind*? Or those Catholic teens, who read their future in the pages of Maureen Daly’s *Seventeenth Summer*? In other words, we must find a more comprehensive set of historical mirrors that we can use to challenge our contemporary publishing climate and create a genre of literature for teens that not only promotes cultural competency but also shows minority teens that they, too, have a future in the United States. This call becomes all the more important when we consider how American young adult literature moves through a global market. As one scholar of Egyptian publishing practices noted, Egyptian publishing houses are translating most of their children’s literature from English sources.37 Considering the imperialist implications of the United States’ wars on nearby nations, Afghanistan and Iraq, in addition to the on-going nebulous “War on Terror,” I cannot help but wonder: how are we replicating and translating our imperialist history through young adult literature?
Maria Cristina Chambers published under several different names, but she is best known in scholarly and literary circles by her maiden name María Cristina Mena, which I will use to refer to her in the text from now on; however, I will use the name associated with the publication while writing. María Cristina Chambers, *The Two Eagles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943), 17. Janet Lambert, *Glory Be!* (Boston: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1943; New York: Image Cascade Publishing, 2001), 53. Citations refer to the Image Cascade Publishing edition.


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