LEFT OUT

The forgotten tradition of radical publishing for children in Britain 1910–1949

KIMBERLEY REYNOLDS

LEFT OUT

Left Out

The forgotten tradition of radical publishing for children in Britain 1910–1949

KIMBERLEY REYNOLDS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Kimberley Reynolds 2016

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First Edition published in 2016
Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016930900

ISBN 978–0–19–875559–3

Printed in Great Britain by
Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and
for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials
contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

For Peter and Lynne—and
Nick, who should have written it!

Acknowledgements

A great many people have helped me in a variety of ways over the three years that I was researching and writing this book. Peter Reynolds assisted me greatly with the research, and supported me throughout; he and Asheley Griffith, Hazel Sheeky Bird, and Nick Tucker read and gave valuable advice on the text at all stages. Lynne Vallone was my writing companion and constant source of inspiration and advice, and Jane Rosen has been a marvellous guide through the intricacies of left-wing history and collections relating to it, as well as an indefatigable finder of obscure facts. Julia Mickenberg's research has been seminal to this study, and her interest in my own project has been generous and stimulating. Phil Nel similarly nurtured and believed in the project. I am very grateful to Catriona Nicholson for reading the manuscript before submission and offering advice and encouragement. Jenny Kelly of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers loaned me books and introduced me to Kitty Barne. Martin Kettle and Michael Rosen gave up time to talk to me about their experiences as readers of radical children's literature. Joan Venditto searched through the Lawrence and Wishart papers at Yale on my behalf. I am grateful to Julian Reid, Archivist at Merton College Oxford, for his help and hospitality while I was working in the Blackwell Archive, and to Rita Ricketts, who shared her knowledge of the history of Blackwell's. Martin Sanders facilitated my time in the Gollancz Archive at the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick. Brian Rance, recently retired Archivist of King Alfred School, Natalie Wood, former Archivist-Librarian at Abbotsholme School, and Jenny Woodland, Archivist at Bootham School welcomed me into their archives, gave thoughtful advice, and fact-checked. Dawn Sinclair, Archivist at HarperCollins and Emma Yan in Archive Services, University of Glasgow helped with my questions about the William Collins archives. Mark Turner provided the image for Figure 1. Others who aided me in various ways are Pete Biller; Ron Floethe; Josef Keith from the Library at Friends House, London; Dan Jones; Sarah Lawrance and the Collections staff at Seven Stories, National Centre for Children's Books; Kika and Jehane Markham; Jane Powell, Librarian and Archivist at the Marx Memorial Library; staff at the People's History Museum; Special Collections staff at the Robinson Library, Newcastle University; Andy Simons of the British Library; Tara Sutton and her colleagues at the Working Class

Movement Library; and Lou Taylor. Jacqueline Baker, my editor at Oxford University Press, believed in this project when it was no more than an idea. Turning that idea into a manuscript was made possible by a Major Leverhulme Fellowship for which I am extremely grateful. Finally, thank you to my colleagues in the School of English at Newcastle University—and particularly to Linda Anderson, Kate Chedgzoy, and Matthew Grenby—who cheered me on my way.

Part of Chapter 1 first appeared in '"A prostitution alike of matter and spirit": anti-war discourses in children's literature and childhood culture before and during World War I' in *Children's Literature in Education*, November 2012 120–39.

Part of Chapter 3 first appeared in 'The Forgotten History of Avant-garde Publishing for Children in Early Twentieth-Century Britain' in Elina Druker and Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer (eds), *Children's Literature and European Avant-Garde*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2015.

Contents

List of Figures xi
List of Definitions and Abbreviations xv

Introduction: Radical Children's Literature and the Attempt to Rewrite Britain 1

1. War and Peace in Radical Writing for Children 42
2. Moscow has a Plan! Representations of the Soviet Union in Radical Children's Literature 74
3. Aesthetic Radicalism: Avant-Garde and Modernist Books for British Children 102
4. Radical Ruralism: The Transformative Power of the Landscape 130
5. Making Better Britons: Health, Fitness, and Sex Education 148
6. Rebuilding Britain through Radical Children's Books 176

Conclusion: Radical Visions, Compromises, and Legacies 198

Appendix: Radical Children's Publications 217
Bibliography 227
Index 249

List of Figures

I.1. Indicative network of radical connections 3

I.2. Title pages from Naomi Mitchison (ed.) *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*. Illustrated by William Kermode and Ista Brouncker. London: Victor Gollancz, 1932 7

I.3. Cover, Frederick Le Gros and Ida Clark's *The Adventures of the Little Pig and Other Stories*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1936. Image courtesy of Lawrence and Wishart and The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Opie AA320 18

I.4. Wyndham Lewis portrait of Naomi Mitchison (1939). Image courtesy of National Galleries Scotland 22

I.5. Title page and verso: *The Red Corner Book for Children*. London: Martin Lawrence, 1931. With permission of Lawrence and Wishart. Image courtesy of National Library of Scotland 27

I.6. Cover, Alex Wedding's *Eddie and the Gipsy. A Story for Boys and Girls* showing one of John Heartfield's photographs. London: Martin Lawrence, 1935. Image supplied courtesy of The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Fic. 27842 e.444, Front Cover 32

I.7. Cover, Geoffrey Trease's *Bows Against the Barons*. London: Martin Lawrence, 1934. Image courtesy of Girls Gone By Publishers 36

1.1. Execution of a spy, from Harry Golding and Albert Friend's *War in Dollyland (A Book and a Game)*. London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1915. Princeton University Library 43

1.2. Cover, *War in Dollyland (A Book and a Game)*. Princeton University Library 43

1.3. Emblem of the Young Socialist Citizen Corps. Image courtesy of the Working Class Movement Library 51

1.4. From *Twenty Years After!*. London: Youth Council, British Anti-War Movement, 1934 4–5. Image courtesy of the Working Class Movement Library 62

1.5. 'Basque and English school boys', North Stoneham Camp, Hampshire (1937) by Edith Tudor Hart. Image courtesy of National Galleries Scotland 72

2.1. 'The Children's Train'. Illustration by Richard Floethe for *Palaces on Monday*, 1937. Permission to reproduce the image courtesy of the art estate of Richard Floethe 81

2.2. Untitled image by Pearl Binder for *Russian Families*, 1942. Permission to reproduce the image courtesy of Pearl Binder Design Archives, Brighton University. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford 25614 d.2 87

2.3. Untitled image of Timur and his comrades by Donia Nachsen, 1943 96

3.1. 'She sees only one side of men, birds, and things' from Jean de Bosschère's *The City Curious*, 1920. Permission to reproduce the image courtesy of Alain Bilot. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford FIC. 27526 d. 21 106

3.2. 'Mummy having a baby' by Laurian Jones from Enid Bagnold's *Alice and Thomas and Jane*, 1930. Image reproduced with the kind permission of Laurian d'Harcourt 113

3.3. From 'Klara's' *Paul and Mary*, 1941. Image courtesy of the National Library of Scotland 116

3.4. From 'Klara's' *7 Jolly Days*, 1942. Image courtesy of the National Library of Scotland 118

3.5. Lynton Lamb's cover for *Fanny Penquite*, 1932. By permission of Oxford University Press 120

3.6. Edith Saunders's illustration of the Day of Judgement in *Fanny Penquite*. By permission of Oxford University Press 121

3.7. One of Keith Vaughan's illustrations for P.H. Newby's *The Spirit of Jem*, 1947. © The Estate of Keith Vaughan. All rights reserved, DACS 124

3.8. Lewitt-Him illustration from *The Football's Revolt*, 1939. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, 252 d.2246, p.11. With permission of the Jan Le Witt and George Him estates 125

4.1. Joan Kiddell-Monroe illustration of Diana and the sunrise from David Severn's *Hermit in the Hills*, 1945 141

4.2. Great Depression 1929–36. Jarrow March of unemployed miners and shipbuilders from North East England set out on 5 October. © World History Archive / Alamy Stock Photo 144

5.1. 1929 cover for a *Warne's Pleasure Book for Boys* 149

5.2. 'His brothers and sisters crowded round' from Eve Garnett's *The Family from One End Street*, 1937. Image courtesy of Penguin Books 156

5.3. Natural nakedness; boys bathing at Abbotsholme School circa 1920. Image courtesy of Abbotsholme School 165

6.1. 'New homes for the workers' from *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*, 1932 180

6.2. Continuity through change: back and front covers for *Village and Town*, 1942. Image courtesy of Penguin Books 183

6.3. Cover, Wyndham Goodden's *This or That?*, 1947. Image courtesy of the Design Council/University of Brighton Design Archives and The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford Opie BB 55 186

6.4. Endpapers for Olive Dehn's *Come In*, 1947. Permission to reproduce the images from *Come In* courtesy of Jehane Markham 190

6.5. The ideal home? Cut-away images of the interior of 23 Pine Tree Lane 191

6.6. Living the dream; life for the suburban housewife as depicted in *Come In* 192

C.1. Cover, *The Magic of Coal*, 1945. Image courtesy of Penguin Books 204

C.2. Making economics amusing: cover, E.F. Stucley's *Pollycon*, 1933. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford 23211 e.487 206

C.3. 'The next war' as pictured in *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*, 1932 211

C.4. 'Boys and Girls Bring in the New World!' from *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*, 1932 215

Every effort has been made to contact those involved in creating the images reproduced in this volume. In a number of cases it has been impossible to locate any individual(s) with a possible copyright interest. Anyone who has information about images reproduced here should contact the publishers. OUP will be happy to rectify any errors or omissions at the earliest opportunity.

List of Definitions and Abbreviations

In this study a distinction is made between *picture books*, in which illustrations repeat information contained in the text, and *picturebooks*, in which the images augment the text.

ACY	Alliance of Communist Youth
FSS	Federation of Student Societies
ILP	Independent Labour Party
LBC	Left Book Club
PEP	Political and Economic Planning
YCI	Young Communist International
YCL	Young Communist League
SSS	Socialist Sunday School

Introduction

Radical Children's Literature and the Attempt to Rewrite Britain

> So to your books, comrades! Read, study, learn . . . . Thus only will you be able to hew down successfully the deeply-rooted ancient trees of ignorance and superstition, and in the clearing make the wheat and rose of a saner system to ripen and to blossom.
>
> (*The Revolution*, 1.10, April 1918 162)

Between 1910 and 1949 a number of British publishers, writers, and illustrators included children's literature in their efforts to make Britain a progressive, egalitarian, and modern society. Some came from privileged backgrounds, others from the poorest parts of the poorest cities in the land; some belonged to the metropolitan intelligentsia or bohemia, others were working-class autodidacts, but all sought to use writing for children and young people to create activists, visionaries, and leaders among the rising generation. As the following pages show, together they produced a significant number of both politically and aesthetically radical publications for children and young people. This 'radical children's literature' was designed to ignite and underpin the work of making a new Britain for a new kind of Briton.

Social transformation is not simply a matter of desire and legislation; it requires new visions which themselves depend on new forms of knowledge and new ways of seeing the world. Radical children's literature drew on the latest ideas from the spheres of science, politics, economics, pedagogy, social policy, literature, and the fine and applied arts to encourage readers to look with fresh eyes at how people were living, interacting, and organizing themselves. It offered readers a vision of the children and young people who would inhabit a new world and who were at the centre of efforts to reform and regenerate society; indeed, the twentieth century was to be 'the century of the child' (Key, 1909) and shaped in the image of its hero, the adolescent (Aries, 1996 29). Radical texts assumed an audience of intelligent, capable, socially aware young readers and set about

providing them with the skills, information, and inspiring social visions they would need to find solutions to the many problems confronting the world; problems that would result in two world wars, a global financial crisis, and mass social unrest and protest over this period.

Producers of radical children's literature did not come together to form a coherent group—there was no orchestrated movement to generate radical texts and no manifesto of the kind so popular among avant-garde groups at the time, where aims were set out and targets identified. Nevertheless, the individuals whose publications for children make up this study had similar aspirations, and their spheres of activity and networks of influence overlapped and intersected (Figure I.1). Though their authors, illustrators, and publishers represent a spectrum of opinion, from unaffiliated liberal to hard-line communist, radical texts share a socially progressive outlook and promote the attractions of a more just, equal, and modern society for all. Radical writing for children works to break down stereotypical attitudes to gender, race, class, poverty, ethnicity, nationality, and childhood. Mainstream children's literature, by which I mean both popular works and those that feature in histories of the subject, tended to construct an idealized version of childhood separate from and superior to adulthood, making the process of growing up something diminishing, to be regretted, and staved off for as long as possible. The books featured in this study, by contrast, focused on helping their readers mature into rational, fulfilled, capable adults by arming them with the skills and information they would need to interrogate their surroundings and decide what they wanted to think and believe.[1] As will be seen, the majority of those who produced radical works for children and young people also supported experimental work in the fine and applied arts and in literature. They saw children's books as vehicles through which taste could be changed in ways that would lead to the radically different kinds of buildings, furnishings, infrastructure, production practices, and social spaces that would underpin a new kind of society. These works stand apart from the majority of children's books of this period in that they are future orientated; concerned with where society is heading rather than nostalgic for Britain's imperial past.

Almost none of the writers, illustrators, publishers, or any of the more than 249 radical books, periodicals, pamphlets, and newspapers they

[1] For a discussion of the relationship between childhood innocence, maturity, and mainstream children's literature see Jacqueline Rose (1984), Trites (2000), and Reynolds (2007). Beauvais (2015) offers an interesting alternative in her discussion of European children's books that celebrate children as 'potential adults' (20).

Figure I.1. Indicative network of radical connections

produced feature in standard histories of children's literature (the Appendix provides a list of radical titles). The following chapters consider the effects of the hole in the cultural memory that has been created by the longstanding tendency to overlook the radical strand of children's publishing in the first half of the twentieth century. This study is an attempt to mend that hole and to look with fresh eyes at the history of publishing for children, from the end of the Edwardian period to the start of what is often referred to as the 'second golden age' of British children's publishing in the 1950s. The aim is not simply to recover forgotten material but also to begin the work of assessing how engaging with this material affects understanding of both the history of children's literature and of these years in British arts and letters more generally. It offers explanations for why these texts and many of the figures who produced them were so rapidly and insistently dismissed after the Second World War, and the years in question singled out as a peculiarly fallow time in children's publishing.

CRITICAL CONSENSUS AND SOCIAL FORGETTING

A survey of the small amount of criticism devoted to this period reveals the consistent and yet paradoxical nature of how the history of British children's publishing in the first half of the last century has effaced this area of publishing for children and young people. In children's literature criticism the years leading up to and often including the First World War are normally treated as part of the long nineteenth century. For the purposes of this study, however, it is useful to begin at the start of the new Georgian period because some key examples of both political and aesthetic radicalism are found in juvenile publications produced as Britain moved closer to joining in the war with Germany. Referring to the literary and artistic merits of writing produced for children, Robert Leeson describes the years between 1914 and 1949 as an 'age of brass between two of gold' (Leeson, 1985 Chapter 12); John Rowe Townsend deems this a dreary and backward-looking time (Townsend, 1965 163), while for Marcus Crouch, these were years when the effects of war and its aftermath meant that much of what was published for children was 'derivative and stale', though he made an exception of the 1930s (Crouch, 1972 17). The low production values of the many annuals and reward books produced between the wars and the rise of series and genre fiction are regularly offered by children's literature critics and historians as evidence of systemic mediocrity. Taking her cue from the characterization of children's publishing during these years as risk-averse and conservative, Jacqueline Rose (1984) claims that modernism, the foremost literary and artistic movement of

the first half of the twentieth century, was consciously rejected by makers and publishers of children's literature. Her verdict was readily accepted. Modernism, it was agreed, had been eschewed by the children's literary establishment on the grounds that it was too closely associated with bohemia and both too stylistically complex and too eager to overturn literacy and literary rules that its readers were still acquiring to be suitable for the young. Recently Rose's conclusion has been shown to be exaggerated, particularly with regard both to individual high modernist writers and to publishing for children in Europe and North America across the last century (see Higonnet, 2009; Hodgkins, 2007; Natov, 2003; Reynolds, 2007, 2011; Westman, 2007; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2013; Olson, 2013). One facet of this study involves identifying and considering modernist and/or avant-garde publications for children in early twentieth-century Britain.

It is not only in the areas of modernism and avant-garde experimentation that historians and critics have traditionally found the children's literature of these years wanting; for more than half a century it has also been accused of inhabiting a culturally disengaged backwater at a time of profound and wide-ranging upheaval in politics and culture. According to Geoffrey Trease, before the Second World War children's books failed to reflect 'the changing [social and ideological] values of the age' (Trease, 1964 21). For Peter Hunt, the children's books published between the two world wars offer a comfortable, middle-class, and apolitical version of childhood which gave rise to a time of 'pervading quietism, a retreat from the realities of the world surrounding the child and the book'. 'Children's literature', he continues, 'did not register the attitudes of Auden or Caudwell, or notice the founding of *Left Review* (1934) or John Lehmann's *New Writing* (1936), and it largely ignored class and political struggles until they were too overwhelming to be ignored' (Hunt, 1995 193). Although he goes on to discuss a few 'dissenters', Dennis Butts concurs, concluding that,

> The children's literature of this period tends to reflect the values of the prosperous and untroubled part of the population, not really noticing the often violent struggles of the General Strike and the rise of communism and fascism . . . it is as if children's writers deliberately chose to ignore them and retreat into comedy or pastoral fantasy. (Butts, 2010 120)

Leaving aside for the moment the radical texts featured in this study, the problematic nature of this dismissive consensus is immediately apparent when it is set against the equally widespread acknowledgement (including by many of the same critics) that many important writers and illustrators for children were active during this period, among them Edward Ardizzone (1900–79), Enid Blyton (1897–1968), Walter de la Mare (1873–1956), Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965), Eve Garnett (1900–1), Kathleen Hale

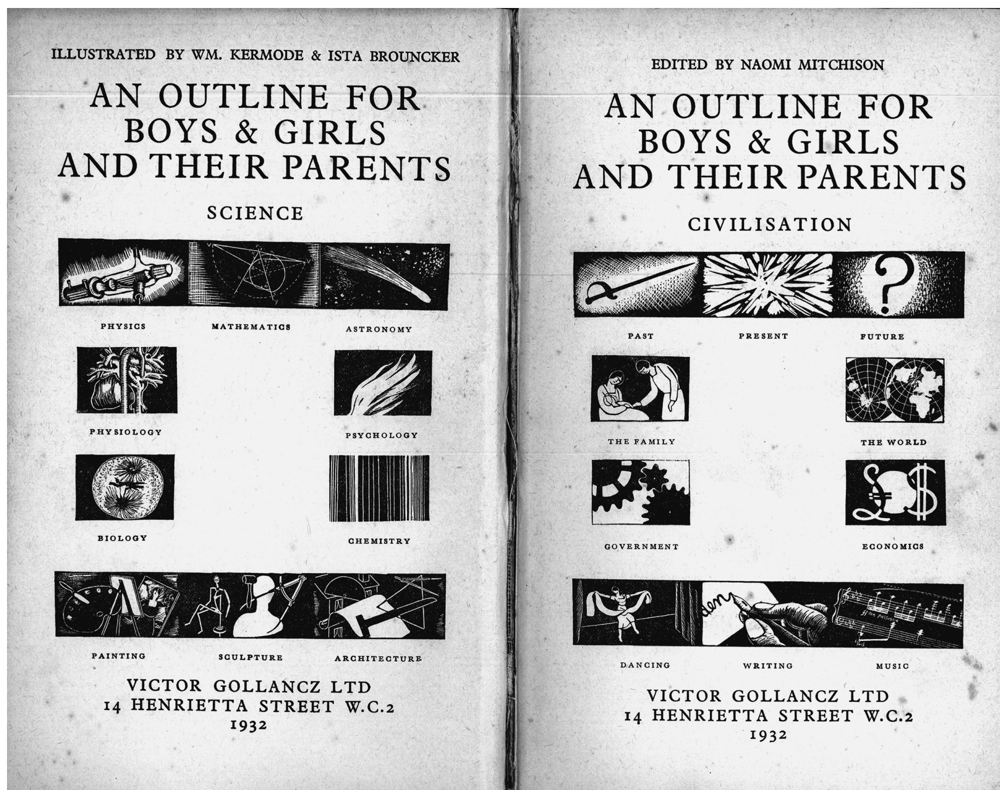
(1898–2000), W.E. Johns (1893–1968), Hugh Lofting (1886–1947), John Masefield (1878–1967), A.A. Milne (1882–1956), Mary Norton (1903–92), Arthur Ransome (1884–1967), Noel Streatfeild (1895–1986), J.R.R. Tolkien (1892–1973), P.L. Travers (1897–1996), Geoffrey Trease (1909–98), Alison Uttley (1884–1976), T.H. White (1906–64), and Ursula Moray Williams (1911–2006). Such a list confounds labels such as 'dull', 'derivative', and 'stale'. By any measure this is a substantial and significant group whose members have left an indelible mark on British children's literature. It would be hard to find a larger, more versatile or enduring cluster of talent in either of the highly vaunted golden ages of children's publishing.[2] Although for the most part these are not the writers and illustrators whose work features in this study, the fact that they are so numerous is significant since it belies the characterization of these years as exceptionally dull and disengaged.

A CASE IN POINT: *AN OUTLINE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AND THEIR PARENTS* (1932)

The extent of the misrepresentation can be established in a single example, which also provides a useful prelude to this project as a whole since it gives a sense of who was producing radical children's literature for what audiences and to what ends. *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*, edited by Naomi Mitchison, must rank as one of the most ambitious books for children of all time. It was the brainchild of the left-wing publisher Victor Gollancz. Gollancz's 1932 spring catalogue announced its imminent publication with great fanfare. The catalogue, like the elaborate pre-publication pamphlets he circulated to potential stockists, purchasers, and reviewers, explained that this book was meant 'to help forward the new world' by introducing the 'citizens of the future' to the many branches of knowledge they would need to solve the problems then confronting Britain and the world (MSS. 318/4/7a); (Figure I.2).

Gollancz's excitement about the *Outline* was both politically and economically motivated. His allegiance to the Left was the foundation of his publishing business and it underpinned his determination to make high-quality publications of all kinds available to the masses by producing them at affordable prices. Like most on the Left, he believed passionately in the role of education in bringing about social change, and felt that people of

[2] The years 1870–1914 are usually identified as the first 'golden age' of children's literature; those between 1950 and 1970 as the second. The 1990s, which saw the publication of Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy and J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books, have been mooted as a possible third 'golden age' (see Pearson, 2013).



ILLUSTRATED BY WM. KERMODE & ISTA BROUNCKER

AN OUTLINE FOR
BOYS & GIRLS
AND THEIR PARENTS

SCIENCE

PHYSICS MATHEMATICS ASTRONOMY

PHYSIOLOGY PSYCHOLOGY

BIOLOGY CHEMISTRY

PAINTING SCULPTURE ARCHITECTURE

VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD
14 HENRIETTA STREET W.C.2
1932

EDITED BY NAOMI MITCHISON

AN OUTLINE FOR
BOYS & GIRLS
AND THEIR PARENTS

CIVILISATION

PAST PRESENT FUTURE

THE FAMILY THE WORLD

GOVERNMENT ECONOMICS

DANCING WRITING MUSIC

VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD
14 HENRIETTA STREET W.C.2
1932

Figure I.2. Title pages from Naomi Mitchison (ed.) *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*. Illustrated by William Kermode and Ista Brouncker. London: Victor Gollancz, 1932

every background, sex, and age should have equal access to the best thinkers, teachers, and writers. But Victor Gollancz was also a supreme businessman, and he was convinced that the *Outline* would be a bestseller. The previous year he had published the first book in what was to become a series of Gollancz 'Outlines': *An Outline of Modern Knowledge*. In the same catalogue that announced *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents* he claimed the first *Outline* had 'probably enjoyed . . . a more immediate success than that achieved by any serious work published at a similar price [8 shillings and 6 pence], selling a steady 2,000 copies a week, or nearly 50,000 in three months' (MSS. 318/7/4 6). Those sales boded well for the new book, as did those of the other children's books Gollancz had published.

Where the average print-run for a new Victor Gollancz book was between 1,000 and 3,000 copies, for children's books print-runs began at 4,000 and could extend to 10,000 if there were a US co-edition. At the beginning of the 1930s Gollancz was actively developing this side of the business. Works such as *The Moon on My Left* (1930) by Caryl Brahms; Sylvia Lynd's edited collections, *The Children's Omnibus. A Storybook for Boys and Girls* (1932) and *The Christmas Omnibus* (1932); Eleanor and Herbert Farjeon's *Kings and Queens* (1933) and *Heroes and Heroines* (1933); *The Modern World—A Junior Survey* (1933) by Hubert Clinton Knapp Fisher, and Helen Mary Sidebotham's *The Whipsnade Animal Book for Children and Others* (1933) were all either published or in production when Gollancz was launching *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*. He had every reason to believe that sales of the *Outline* would surpass anything he had yet produced. In anticipation of a bestseller Gollancz splashed out on big-name contributors, ordered an initial print-run of 50,000, and prepared for translations and large overseas sales.[3] This was, he trumpeted, 'the Book which all Parents and Teachers, since the War, have wanted for their Children' and, at nearly 1,000 pages with 166 illustrations, he hailed it as 'the cheapest book of our generation' (MSS. 318/4/7a 2, 3). Reviewing the book for *The Bookman*, Geoffrey West endorsed Gollancz's claims. *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents* was, he said, one of those books 'which every home with children should possess as a matter of course . . . a forward-looking book to attract to itself the intelligence, and to its clear ideal of a planned world society the loyalty, of the younger generation' (West 60). The *British Medical Journal* too welcomed the volume (how often have children's books been reviewed

[3] Although Naomi Mitchison was disappointed by the amount her contributors earned, Gollancz was generous with his advances, another sign of his confidence in the volume. The 1932 production book shows this as a major investment from him not least in the amount paid out to contributors.

in that august journal?). Gollancz, it concluded, had published 'an amazing and abundant and provocative store of knowledge . . . and all for 8s. 6d' (1932 61).

The fate of Gollancz's ambitious project is set out below; for now, what is significant about *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents* is that it was bold, politically radical, actively promoted—and has been entirely forgotten. All of the works featured in this study similarly defy the received view of children's literature from this period. They too are variously adventurous, experimental, and/or politically engaged, sometimes all at once, and like the *Outline*, they have disappeared from history so thoroughly that it has now become a commonplace that such writing never existed. In the context of what was a time of upheaval, change, and conflict, however, this view is perplexing. These were years when, in Britain and across Europe, political parties on both the Right and Left vied to capture the minds and sympathies of the young, for the young were associated with 'energy, vitality, faith, strength, vigour' and credited with the capacity to overturn or revitalize decadent domestic politics (Pomfret, 2005 27). Children were equally important to modernism and to a range of avant-garde experiments that placed spotlights on youthful creativity on the one hand and art and design activities aimed at children on the other. As recent studies have shown, between 1910 and 1949 radical writers across Europe and North America were producing new kinds of children's books that acknowledged the dynamic political, cultural, and social changes that were taking place (see Mishler, 2003; Mickenberg, 2006; Kinchin and O'Connor, eds, 2010; Mickenberg and Nel, eds, 2010; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2013; Druker and Kümmerling-Meibauer, eds, 2015). How could British children's literature have gone unmarked by the clashes, challenges, and revolutions of these decades?

The books and publications discussed in the following chapters demonstrate that it did not. As the only medium specifically targeted at the young, children's literature was inevitably caught up in competing attempts to capture young hearts and minds by writers from all backgrounds and of all political persuasions. Radical children's literature urged young readers to be excited by the prospect of social change and to engage with rather than retreat from modernity. It encouraged readers to learn about, question, experiment with, disassemble, and refashion ideas, systems, and institutions. In a complicated interaction between liberation and control, at the same time that they stirred readers up to challenge the status quo, radical texts generally tried to recruit and direct them, not just as readers but as individuals who embodied and performed the radical message. This is a variation on the process of 'enscripting' readers that Robin Bernstein writes about in relation to children's literature and racism

in *Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood from Slavery to Civil Rights* (2011). Bernstein is interested in the way children's books from the past function both as texts that convey meaning through literary modes and as 'scriptive things' or objects that prompt certain kinds of behaviours. Scriptive things, which include the merchandise, images, artworks, and performances that often evolve around popular texts, are at the centre of her efforts to locate aspects of history for which there are no formal records or substantial amounts of other kinds of corroborating evidence. For Bernstein, books and other kinds of writing are of particular interest for the way they 'enscript' readers, meaning that they combine the literary device of interpellation (calling the reader into a text) with the scripts/directions for physical responses associated with them as objects: open the book/magazine, turn the pages, study and colour the pictures, enact the scenes (2011 77).

Examples of the way radical children's literature enscripted young readers are given below and throughout this book, but there are important differences between the enscripting activities in the examples Bernstein discusses and those at work in radical children's literature. The most important of these is that Bernstein looks at strategies associated with those who were enslaved and so had to deflect and misdirect the attention and understanding of oppressors while the groups and individuals who produced radical children's literature did so openly and were often socially influential. Nor did their readers have to conceal their responses. They donned uniforms, mounted performances, and created texts and artworks all in the cause of promoting the ideas they encountered in their reading. Where they are similar is in the extent to which both bodies of material have been subject to what Bernstein calls 'social forgetting' (8), resulting in holes in the cultural memory. Despite differences in who produced radical children's literature, for whom, why, and how they were used, Bernstein's 'tool for analysing incomplete evidence . . . to make responsible, limited inferences about the past' (2011 79) has been as relevant for this study as for her own since little information about some key aspects of the production, distribution, and reception of radical children's literature has been preserved.

CREATING A POPULAR FRONT OF READERS

Radical children's literature was the product of three areas of life in early twentieth-century Britain: left-wing politics, modernist and avant-garde art and design, and progressive education (these were the decades when most progressive or 'modern' schools—Beacon Hill, Bedales, Dartington,

and Summerhill among them—came into being). As Figure I.1 shows, often the three areas overlap as individuals move between them and interests converge; for example, many of the first progressive schools had their roots in the early socialist philosophies and practices of William Morris and Edward Carpenter, and Morris's influence was equally strong on avant-garde developments in the arts, including illustration for children (Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2013 16; Olson, 2013 83). Similarly, pupils who attended progressive schools tended to be the offspring of the liberal intelligentsia and so grew up in milieux where it was customary to oppose war, to champion political and intellectual freedom, to favour modern design and ways of living, and to be sympathetic to left-wing causes. So, for example, members of the Unwin and Curwen families who attended or worked at Abbotsholme School became involved in aesthetically and intellectually significant publishing houses, groups dedicated to placing traditional crafts in the service of modern design principles, and creating such new living environments as garden cities (see Chapter 6).

The interconnected nature of these three broadly progressive areas is nowhere more apparent than in the area of left-wing publishing for children, which was also the earliest and largest of these three spheres of publishing activity. The following overview of left-wing children's publishing sets the scene for the remaining chapters, which look in more detail at the way modernist art and design, progressive education, and literary responses to the Left played out in radical children's literature. In the process of introducing left-wing children's publishing from this time, the story of Victor Gollancz's monumental *Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents* is also brought to its conclusion.

For those on the Left, print, whether in the form of books, magazines, or pamphlets, was central to creating the social will and conditions necessary for remodelling society within people of all ages. Reading armed activists with information, analytical skills, and arguments that could be used to convince others of the necessity for change and the benefits it would bring, while books and other printed materials could be used to reach out to the population at large, helping to spread new ideas and build a broad progressive consensus. From the end of the nineteenth century there had been a steady trickle of socialist publications aimed at readers both young and old; typical examples for children include Keir Hardie's letters to children in the *Labour Leader* (from 1896), Walter Crane's *The Child's Socialist Reader* (1907), and Edward Carpenter's *St. George and the Dragon: A Play in Three Acts for Children and Young Folk* (1905). After the First World War, momentum began to build. Publishers, writers, and artists sympathetic to progressive and/or left-wing politics determined to build a Popular Front of readers; this was to be a book-based coalition of individuals who, whether or