



THE EDINBURGH
HISTORY OF

Children's

PERIODICALS

EDITED BY:

Kristine Moruzi,
Beth Rodgers and
Michelle J. Smith

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KRISTINE MORUZI, BETH RODGERS, AND
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EDINBURGH
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION: READING, WRITING, AND CREATING COMMUNITIES IN CHILDREN'S PERIODICALS

*Kristine Moruzi, Beth Rodgers, and
Michelle J. Smith*

IN HIS 1888 BOOK *Juvenile Literature As It Is*, British journalist and editor Edward Salmon wrote that one of the anxieties faced by parents is 'What shall the children read?' (11). Choosing a work 'suitable to the young mind' is difficult, he explains, since parents lack the knowledge of what children are reading and what is being published for them. Salmon's study attempts to identify what is being published for young people by reviewing books and periodicals published for boys, girls, and younger readers and is the culmination of a series of articles published in the *Fortnightly Review*, the *Nineteenth Century*, *Atalanta*, and several newspapers (1888: 10). His opening remarks, late in the nineteenth century, reflect perennial adult concerns about the materials available to child readers that became ever more salient owing to the rapidly expanding children's publishing industry during this period.

Salmon's willingness to consider periodicals in the mix of reading materials available to children speaks to their centrality in late nineteenth-century England. In contrast to the fiction published for children that he characterises as 'bright and healthy', the magazines, 'with certain notable exceptions, are in every sense of the word dreadfuls' with 'no limit to their number or their pernicious influence' (1888: 184). Disappointingly for the modern reader, he writes that

It is not my intention to give the vile productions, sold in their hundreds of thousands every week, the gratuitous advertisement which castigation of them by name would involve, but I speak with only too much knowledge when I say that no element of sweetness and light ever finds its way into their columns, and that they are filled with stories of blood and revenge, of passion and cruelty, as improbable and often impossible in plot as their literary execution is contemptible. (1888: 184–5)

Salmon identifies only a small number of periodicals that he deems appropriate for readers of all classes. Indeed, he praises the evangelical Religious

Tract Society's *Boy's Own Paper* (1879–1967) as 'the only first-class journal . . . which has forced its way into the slums as well as into the best homes' (1888: 186). A magazine's suitability to be read by working-class boys and their more well-to-do neighbours indicates its appropriateness for young readers. Salmon's commentary reflects the importance of periodicals as a facet of children's material culture. Predominantly edited and written by adults, they typically reflect what adults felt was important for young people to read. Salmon's critique of the 'dreadfuls' is responding to the rapid influx of a range of periodicals that were not explicitly intended for child readers.

The earliest publications for children had small readerships and short runs. John Newbery, credited with publishing the first English books for children, launched the *Lilliputian Magazine* (1751–2) to bring together his 'journal and newspaper interests' (Kinnell 1995: 37). Disappointing sales meant that it only lasted for three issues, but it was 'the first real juvenile periodical', published by someone with a genuine interest in 'seriously promoting juvenile reading matter' (Drotner 1998: 17, 18). In the more than 250 years that have followed, children's periodicals have been transformed by technological advances, reader contributions, participation and engagement, and shifts in how we understand children and their childhood.

In this introduction, we begin by discussing the dominant concerns informing the development of the periodical genre that Salmon articulated so clearly in his discussion of British children's magazines in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The tension between didacticism and enjoyment that continues to be reflected in children's print culture even today reflects and responds to changing ideas about children and childhood. We then turn to the methodological and definitional challenges of examining children's periodicals over such a long period and across a wide geographical range. Here we explore how the sheer volume of magazines and their ephemerality pose significant problems for the contemporary researcher while also reflecting on the periodical features of these texts that are significant for young readers. We also discuss how shifts in form and content require us to develop an expansive definition of the children's periodical. Finally, we discuss the scope and structure of the volume and consider how it can contribute to further scholarship in the field.

Education and Entertainment in Children's Periodicals

Children's literature is often understood in didactic terms, foregrounding the educational aspect of what adults were writing and publishing for children. Since Newbery published *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* (1744), often regarded as the first modern children's book, with the phrase 'Delectando mومنus' (instruction with delight) on the frontispiece, books intended

for a child audience have been seen to temper their essential educational component with concessions to the pleasures of reading. As Lissa Paul observes of the contemporary industry, '[i]nstruction and amusement remain the key terms in the publication of children's books' (2010: 60). Indeed, much of the foundational theorisation of children's literature as an academic field is devoted to understanding it as one of several cultural practices which exist 'for the purpose of socializing their target audience' (Stephen 1992: 8). Specifically, as John Stephens established in *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction* (1992), children's fiction has 'a potentially powerful capacity for shaping audience attitudes' through inscribing 'contemporary morality and ethics', including beliefs about gender, race, sexuality, and class (3). In the same way as children's literature is understood as having an inherently instructional function, children's periodicals can be understood as tools of moral, cultural, and religious education. However, other aspects of this ephemeral product, including cost, seriality, and the materialities of the form, offer opportunities to examine how social and cultural shifts in attitudes about children and their needs were reflected in their magazines.

In Britain, mandatory education had a profound impact on the development of the periodical industry with its introduction in 1870, but even before this, adults remained concerned that child readers had appropriate materials available to them. Richard Altick sees the expansion of the periodical industry in the nineteenth century as 'only natural' since 'periodicals . . . are best adapted to the needs of a mass audience' (1957: 318) that might be intimidated by the length of a longer publication. Kirsten Drotner makes a related argument in her history of British children's magazines when she explains that the earliest juvenile magazines can be understood as 'popular literature' in two senses: they were aimed at a 'mass reading public of juveniles' and they were some of the 'first commodities in publishing to make use of the technical advances' to enable mass production and national distribution (1988: 4). Some of the most widespread children's magazines were launched by missionary organisations that were eager to teach children to read so that they would have access to the word of God.

From their earliest days, children's periodicals were expected to include high-quality writing. Certainly, some of the urgency about establishing quality children's magazines came from concerns that children were reading inappropriate literature that was unsuitable for young readers, as Salmon points out in his review of juvenile literature. This included penny dreadfuls containing lurid stories, but also magazines that might challenge religious faith or discuss subjects deemed too adult. Contributions by well-known children's authors thus became another sign of periodical quality, and some periodicals were edited by well-known authors, such

as George MacDonald and L. T. Meade. Magazines were keen to attract readers by claiming they contained an author's latest story. Moreover, popular writers of the nineteenth century typically also published serial fiction in novel form, which was reviewed in adult publications, reassuring concerned adults about the suitability of that author's work and the magazine in which that author was publishing.

Children's periodicals can be defined by their implied young readership, yet the definition of the child has changed substantially between the earliest periodicals of the late eighteenth century and today. Across a range of children's magazines, content and form coalesce to define an ideal child reader. Magazines aimed at younger readers tend to be shorter and to include larger fonts, more illustrations, and shorter stories and informational articles. As the age of the implied reader increased, magazines feature more sophisticated content, longer serialised fiction and informational series, and more complex engagement from readers. Competitions were a vibrant feature of many children's magazines since at least the 1850s, although the types and nature of the contests varied based on age and presumed ability. Both older and younger child readers evidently enjoy humour, with jokes, puzzles, and riddles appearing regularly.

While younger readers were generally undifferentiated, magazines aimed at older readers were often gendered, with girls' and ladies' magazines appearing early in the history of print and never really disappearing from the landscape. Margaret Beetham makes the point that throughout its history, the woman's magazine has always defined its readers based on their gender, yet the femininity in its pages 'is always represented as fractured, not least because it is simultaneously assumed as given and as still to be achieved' (1996: 1). Girls' magazines likewise ask girls to consider their roles as young people while also looking forward to their future roles as wives, mothers, and increasingly as consumers of products designed to reinforce beauty ideals. The periodical press, according to Hilary Fraser, Stephanie Green, and Judith Johnston, is a 'medium that most readily articulates the unevenness and reciprocities of evolving gender ideologies' (2003: 2). The history of children's periodicals undoubtedly reflects the changing nature of gender for young people and in the twentieth century also became more attuned to discussions of race that are largely absent in the earlier periods.

Yet the most salient category under consideration across this history is the 'unevenness and reciprocities' of evolving childhood ideologies. When we reflect on the types of childhoods depicted in magazines aimed at young people, their homogeneity is striking. This speaks to the ubiquity of a childhood ideal based on a Romantic sense of childhood innocence, but also the sense that children are able to be moulded into the ideal future adult. The socialising function of these magazines cannot be underestimated as

they inform readers that their futurity as educated, morally upstanding, dutiful adults is yet to be achieved. Within a largely homogeneous sense of the child that arguably drives the broad context and ideologies at play in children's magazines, there is unquestionably a great deal of heterogeneity as well. The size of the publishing industry and the number of increasingly literate children meant that publishers were always trying to find niches that would attract new readers. The changing social and cultural contexts in the English-speaking world produced new ideas about children and childhood that elicited new magazines in response. As Sally Mitchell argues about girls at the turn of the twentieth century, they 'were consciously aware of their own culture and recognised its discord with adult expectations' (1995: 3). The magazine is one of the manifestations of a culture that existed in multiple forms, whether the magazine was aimed at boys, girls, or a less differentiated readership.

In the midst of a more robust publishing industry and higher literacy levels, the twentieth century sees the emergence of more niche youth publications focused on entertainment such as film and music, fashion and beauty, science and the natural world, and hobbies such as surfing and skateboarding. These popular, commercialised areas of children's periodical history have tended to be overlooked and often deliberately avoided within histories of the twentieth-century press. British pop music magazine *Smash Hits* (1978–2006), for example, sold 800,000 copies per fortnight at its peak, but with its embodiment of the 'culture of the bedroom' has been separated from the study of 'serious journalism' (Kirkham 2017: 140). Indeed, from the interwar years onwards, as Drotner observes, reading commercially produced magazines – as opposed to religious or 'improving' titles – 'became a common experience shared by almost all British school-children regardless of their class and gender' (1988: 183). This almost universalised experience transcended the class-based boundaries that impacted on children's reading in the nineteenth century.

The postwar boom in children's periodicals encompassed a heightened emphasis on fictional content, presumably to appeal to the preferences of the mass youth market. This emphasis coincided with growth in the number and type of comics – a multimodal fictional format – produced for young readers, including teenage romance comics. American examples of this sub-type published in the 1950s, such as *Hi-School Romance* (1949–58), have often been discussed as reinforcing 'traditional gendered hierarchies by indicating the importance of paternal authority and the role of fathers in safeguarding the mental stability and sexual purity of the American teenage girl' (Heifler 2020: 377). While girls' comics frequently policed femininity, popular sub-genres of comics, such as superhero comics like *Wonder Woman*, tended to be viewed as targeted at male readers, and as posing a danger to boys

(Gibson 2016: 290). Indeed, unlike children's periodicals that contained informational articles and text-based fiction alone, at mid-century in the United States, comics were the target of concerted campaigns to remove them from the hands of young people to address a variety of anxieties about their potential corrupting influence. Psychiatrist Frederick Wertham's *The Seduction of the Innocent* (1954) linked the reading of comics with juvenile violence and drug use, providing a spur to public burnings of piles of comic books.

Such extreme responses to comics show the enduring nature of adult paranoia about children's periodicals since Salmon's lamentations about penny dreadfuls as 'vile productions' in the late nineteenth century (1888: 184). Adult editors, authors, and illustrators were, of course, largely in control of the content of children's magazines and comics. Yet this ongoing, transatlantic cultural anxiety about serial reading for young people speaks to the potential for children's periodicals to influence and motivate readers in ways that were not possible via the valorised form of the book. While for Wertham and Salmon depictions of violence in stories and illustrations were to be feared for their capacity to 'corrupt' readers, the history of children's periodicals reveals that the real powers of children's magazines were far more complex than they imagined. As this volume demonstrates, children's periodicals were sites for young people to join virtual communities, ways to bolster national cultures and languages, conduits for young people to enact social and environmental change, and tools for fostering readers' creativity and consciousness, as well as holding the potential to reject the pedagogy and morality found in other children's texts.

Reading the Children's Periodical: Methodological and Definitional Challenges

Children's periodicals pose a number of methodological challenges. Not least, scholars of children's periodicals are faced with a version of what Michael Wolff describes as the problem of the 'golden stream' (1971: 89), in which the 'sheer bulk and range of the . . . press seem to make it so unwieldy as to defy systematic and general study' (Shattock and Wolff 1982: xiii). Wolff makes a claim for the 'special importance' of newspapers and periodicals as 'attention is increasingly focused on social and cultural history' (1971: 24, 26). Although these comments are focused on Victorian periodicals, the field of children's periodicals has a similar complexity and diversity that can be overwhelming at times. Periodicals scholars have long grappled with how 'a flood of atomistic details' can be 'shaped into any patterns of significance' (Hughes 1989: 118). The sheer variety of materials, what Linda K. Hughes describes as 'the jumble of columns and information' (1989: 118), found in a single issue of a magazine, much less

over its entire run, mean that it can be difficult to determine what to select for discussion and can produce rather narrow examinations of particular publications. These studies are essential to the development of the field, but they also suggest some of its limitations. The detailed scrutiny of a periodical requires, first and foremost, access to the publication, yet the field is replete with the titles of magazines that have disappeared without a trace. They are not housed in a library, to be discovered by a lucky researcher, because they have never been collected. Collections of children's periodicals can be haphazard, often characterised by incomplete or missing runs. Long considered an ephemeral print product that was meant to be consumed and then discarded, children's periodicals were often not collected at all.

Moreover, cheap periodicals aimed at working-class children were read and shared among high numbers of readers before being discarded or repurposed as they wore out. In contrast, magazines aimed at middle-class readers were more likely to have been collected and can more often be found in library collections. Given that higher-quality magazines printed on more expensive paper and often compiled into bound annuals are more likely to have survived, the history we are seeking to define is inevitably skewed towards magazines aimed at and read by middle-class and predominantly white child readers. Questions about race and class need to be at the forefront of any history of children's material culture, yet the ephemerality of these publications limits this discussion in significant ways.

The archive also privileges magazines published in Britain and the United States. Not all English-speaking countries had as vibrant a children's periodical culture as those found in the United States and Great Britain. In former white settler colonies, for instance, the economics of the publishing industries meant that it was difficult to establish viable local publications for child readers. These countries offered dedicated children's columns or children's pages in adult publications in place of entire publications aimed at young readers. This fact reminds us that what constitutes children's reading may not always be straightforward and may include material that on the surface appears to be for a general or even adult readership.

Archival collections do important work in bringing together disparate material that has often been 'disparaged both academically and publicly for its popular appeal and which, because of its ephemeral nature, is vulnerable to complete loss' (Moody 2018: 6). The Femorabilia Collection of Women and Girls' Twentieth-Century Periodicals, held by Liverpool John Moores University, is one such collection. As Nickianne Moody acknowledges in her discussion of the founding of the Femorabilia archive, however, 'the sheer volume of titles, weekly, monthly, seasonal, and annual publications, publishing companies, and range of formats make it difficult for most university or public archives and libraries to make any commitment to develop significant and coherent holdings' (2018: 6). Decisions must be made as to

what is and is not included, and these are dependent on what has to date survived and is accessible. Even relatively well-known children's periodicals 'pose access challenges, with complete runs of individual magazines rarely located in a single library or archive' (Smith and Moruzi 2012: 34). As large-scale digitisation projects tend to draw upon university and library archives for their material, there is also a knock-on effect on what is available electronically to readers and what kind of scholarship can be done with this material. The Gale Cengage *Nineteenth-Century UK Periodicals* collection of children's periodicals has been a boon for researchers, but access depends on institutional subscription and the limited number of digitised children's periodicals means that scholarly work becomes concentrated on these available sources. Other digital sources, such as Hathi Trust and Internet Archive, are somewhat haphazard, typically featuring only one or two volumes of a specific title.

Moreover, these latter sources do not offer us the ability to search between and across periodicals to identify trends. Some recent digitisation projects are working towards this, yet children's periodicals are not often their focus. Quantitative content analysis using very large corpora via databases is an increasingly significant branch of periodicals scholarship, as exemplified by Katherine Bode's *A World of Fiction: Digital Collections and the Future of Literary History* (2018). Bode developed the 'To Be Continued' database, based on the National Library of Australia's Trove database, which draws together the fiction appearing in Australian periodicals, including numerous children's pages. This database is invaluable for its ability to enable 'distant reading', a term coined by Franco Moretti and employed by periodicals scholars to examine large-scale changes in the industry. Dallas Liddle shows how distant reading enables us to understand how genre definitions changed over time (2015: 386). If we were to consider the children's periodical as a 'genre', this methodology is useful when considering the entirety of the history of children's periodicals to explore the 'visible traces of a functional and dynamic field of communication' (Liddle 2015: 397) for young readers that embodies contemporary, but also historical, ideas about children and their reading.

As we turn our attention to children as a social group, we hope to better understand children's periodicals and their role in the production and dissemination of ideas about children and childhood. Children's periodicals offer an entry into the experiences and values that are either ascribed to or defined by that group. Given the increasing interest in children's voices, periodicals can offer a rare view into children's ideas and perspectives – although not without some significant complexities, as Nell Musgrove, Carla Pascoe Leahy, and Kristine Moruzi explain, noting that '[c]hildren are, inherently, less likely to be empowered to freely create the kinds of sources that historians might later access in their research. Yet we remain fascinated by the meaning of

children and childhood in the past. The field itself is, therefore, shaped by a quest for marginalised voices from history' (2018: 11). A number of the chapters in this collection are concerned with children's contributions to publications edited by adults, while others are interested in child-authored and edited manuscript magazines. Both types of periodicals reflect the multifaceted nature of children's periodicals, which can be defined based on implied readership or by authorship. Still other contributions focus not on print publications aimed exclusively at children, but rather on pages or columns aimed at young readers and found in adult or family publications. This latter type of publication offered a venue for child readers in which their reading interests were part of, rather than separate from, the reading interests of their parents and other family members. Collectively, these publications reflect a diverse range of implied child readers whose access to print is shaped by social, cultural, educational, and economic factors.

As we consider the depictions of children and childhood appearing in the various periodicals and pages intended for young readers, we are informed by Lyn Pykett's theorising about Victorian periodicals. She writes that they 'have come to be seen as a central component' of the culture in which they are written and published, but they cannot 'be regarded in any simply reflective way as "evidence" (either primary or secondary), as transparent records which give access to, and provide the means of recovering, the culture which they "mirror"' (1989: 102). The children's culture that emerges in children's periodicals is produced by and through those magazines, while also often providing a space in which children could participate in the development and refinement of that culture or, at the least, a space in which children's interests necessarily had to be reflected if the editors wished to retain existing readers and attract new ones.

Children's periodicals are also defined by their seriality, in which young readers anticipate the weekly or monthly arrival of the next issue of their magazine. Their eager appreciation of the latest issue is based on clearly defined elements that typify the magazine. These features could include fiction, in which the next chapters of a serialised story appear, or another informational article in a series. Child readers might be attracted to regular features like the pages dedicated to jokes, riddles, or correspondence, as well as to content written by the editor. Depending on when and where a magazine is published, the key features might differ, and they undoubtedly change over time. Nonetheless, they draw on a 'paradigm of repetitiveness which is an essential feature of serial narrativity' (Kümmerling-Meibauer 2018: 171). Most scholars considering seriality for young readers have tended to focus on series fiction, rather than the periodical press, yet some of their conclusions can be applied to children's periodicals as well. For instance, in Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer's discussion of seriality in children's series fiction, she argues that 'repetition is a rhetorical and stylistic instrument of literary

texts in general' (2018: 171) that applies to more than just serial texts and children's books. Catherine Sheldrick Ross similarly observes in her review of series books for children that 'a key problem of seriality' is the tension between 'continuity and variety' (2011: 200), an idea that resonates strongly with the seriality of children's periodicals.

Repetition is a key concept in children's periodicals that moves beyond the aesthetics of serial fiction focusing on plot, characters, and setting. Instead, in children's periodicals, repetition occurs at the most basic level in the regular, predictable publication of the magazine on a weekly or monthly basis. Repetition also appears through magazine content in which common features appear in each issue, yet which must deliver variation within these features. Child readers are unlikely to be impressed with the same content appearing in multiple issues and would likely assume such repetition to be a mistake. Instead, they expect variation within the repetitive elements of their magazines. James Mussell explains that the

repetition of formal features (typeface, layout, tone) within an issue and between issues (plus the structure of departments and so on) provides each magazine with an identity that surpasses its partial representation in any particular article or issue. . . . Seriality, then, allows readers to differentiate between form and content, regarding form as that which stays the same and allowing content, which varies, to flow. (2015: 348)

Although Mussell's explanation potentially implies an immutability of formal features, children's periodicals offer more fluidity in relation to form as they responded to shifts in readerly interest. Indeed, they are perhaps closer to how Mark W. Turner describes the serial as 'not only a shifting and unstable form, but also an organizing and stabilizing one' (2020: 286).

The perennially ageing readership of children's magazines meant that editors and publishers had to attend carefully to changes in the marketplace and evolving ideas about children and childhood. As Kay Boardman explains more generally about the Victorian periodical market, 'The discovery and energetic cultivation of new markets helped fashion the periodical's temporal nature. As the number of new titles appearing on the market each year grew and the market became more saturated, publishers sought innovative ways to capture and keep audiences' (Boardman 2006: 513). Children's periodicals were a vibrant space in which editors and publishers eagerly attempted to define new readers through their pages. Thus, while some elements of a given periodical might remain relatively stable, others emerged, disappeared, and reappeared based on readerly interests.

When a child picks up the latest issue of a magazine, and especially one that they have not encountered before, it must be individually appealing while also gesturing both backwards and forwards in terms of its seriality

and longevity. In each issue, there might be serialised content that spreads across weeks or months, and which the new reader might have difficulty accessing. Encountering a serial midway through its storyline might be alienating for a young reader, for instance, so it must be positioned alongside stand-alone fiction and other content that does not require past experience with the publication. Ideally, the content in any given issue is also sufficiently attractive to encourage a child reader to seek out the upcoming issue. Yet we must be careful not to assume that all child readers are experiencing the magazine in the same way. Beetham explains that the form of the periodical, with its ‘heterogeneity of authorial voice’ and the variety of its content, ‘invites a selective form of reading’ since the periodical ‘does not demand to be read from front to back in order’ (1989: 97, 98). Indeed, the periodical explicitly offers readers ‘the chance to construct their own texts’ (Beetham 1989: 98). This has important implications for the children’s periodical as a form, in which child readers can construct their own meaning through multiple (re)readings that might differ not only in the content that is consumed, but also in terms of the reader’s understanding of and interest in that content at a particular moment in time.

Nonetheless, because of the diversity of children’s periodicals, they do not all function in precisely the same way. Michelle J. Smith explores the role of compulsory monthly school magazines in Australia at the turn of the twentieth century. She shows how the periodical format ‘enabled repetition of important themes and topics’ (2014: 129) both during the school year and across each child’s educational journey. These school magazines differ in important ways from the children’s periodicals discussed above. They are neither driven by the need to contain appealing contents, nor do they require children’s voluntary engagement. Instead, they provide ‘a unique example of the pedagogic potential of serial reading’ in which ‘communal identifications’ with nation and empire are instilled within young readers (Smith 2014: 129). Moreover, with magazines aimed at specific year levels, publishers could repeat content more quickly knowing that readers would have progressed to a new level within a couple of years.

The annual also formed an important part of the children’s periodical landscape, but here again seriality and repetition function somewhat differently from weekly or monthly publications. Of the two types of annuals, the more traditional annual consisted of the year’s issues of a particular title appearing in a bound, hardcover volume. Readers could either buy a ready-made copy or could send away for the hard covers and have their own issues bound. Given their higher prices, these annuals were intended to be collected and placed on bookshelves. These annual volumes would have had distinct consumption patterns enabled by readers’ access to the entire year’s contents rather than having to wait to receive each new issue (Moruzi 2014: 151). These bound annuals are

often the copies found in libraries and special collections, their material features enabling their longevity.

Purpose-built annual publications differed from these bound volumes, offering new material on a yearly basis. By the turn of the twentieth century, publishers were seeking new opportunities to leverage existing readerships by producing new volumes for children's consumption while also hoping to take advantage of international distribution networks. This meant that multiple different publishers used their children's magazines as a launching point for annuals that were built around existing readerships but were also aimed at a wider audience. With higher costs than a weekly or monthly issue, publishers were keen to get the annual into as many hands as possible. One strategy, like that followed by the Religious Tract Society (publisher of the well-known *Boy's Own Paper* and *Girl's Own Paper*) and other late nineteenth-century publishers, was to explicitly target new readerships through direct offerings. For instance, the RTS's *Empire Annual for Boys* and the *Empire Annual for Girls* consisted of new content (unrelated to its weekly/monthly publications) 'customised' for Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand children by adding a new title page and cover. This strategy suggests publishers were unconcerned about potential differences among readers and instead were attempting to attract a 'seemingly homogenous readership' (Moruzi 2014: 166) of children from Britain and its settler colonies.

These purpose-built annuals sat alongside increasingly popular children's comics, with Associated Press and DC Thomson competing through their comic annuals with *Dandy* and *Beano* in direct competition with *Gem* and *Magnet* (Hunt 1995: 207). These annuals offered different reading experiences than publications with more frequent serialisation since the period between publication was so long. They depended on regular characters and/or features, but could not necessarily rely on seriality to prompt child readers to purchase the next annual volume. Indeed, the price may have been prohibitive for young purchasers, who may have depended on adults to purchase the annuals as gifts. The close connection between gift-giving and annuals originated in the nineteenth century, when children's annuals such as *Juvenile Forget Me Not* (1829–34) were compiled by the editors of their adult namesakes and designed so as to '[emulate] the adult versions in their elegant bindings and lavish illustrations' and appeal to the Christmas gift market (Onslow and Beetham 2009: 18). By the end of the nineteenth century, Barbara Onslow and Margaret Beetham suggest that 'annuals and special Christmas numbers were virtually the same genre' and that 'their legacy was the popularity of Christmas annuals well into the twentieth century' (2009: 18). In her history of girls' comics, Susan Brewer notes the ubiquity of annuals such as *Girl*, *Bunty*, and *Judy* as Christmas presents in the postwar years (2010: 179–80), alongside titles such as *Dandy* and *Beano* discussed above.

Comics dominated annuals in the mid-twentieth century. However, as the century progressed, this form of annual increasingly reflected wider aspects of children's popular culture, such as television programmes, films, sport, pop music, and toys. In the 1980s, for example, titles such as *My Little Pony*, *Strawberry Shortcake*, and *Care Bears* related to popular toys of the day (Brewer 2010: 180). Today, annuals dedicated to pre-school television programmes such as *Peppa Pig*, *Bluey*, and *Bing* also reflect the development of that age group as a market for periodicals more broadly. In their analysis of what they term 'edutainment magazines', for example, David Buckingham and Margaret Scanlan note the 'expansion of this market in the context of the broader commercialization of children's media culture and the growth in cross-media merchandising' (2001: 281). Often linked to licensed characters from popular television programmes, such magazines place a strong emphasis on education and the learning opportunities of play, meaning that they 'capitalize on children's enthusiasm for the characters and programmes, while simultaneously addressing parental anxieties about education' (Buckingham and Scanlan 2001: 285). Yet Buckingham and Scanlan note the possibility of 'significant tensions' between commercial imperatives and 'educational claims' (2001: 285–6, 287). Such tensions indicate that long-standing debates about the relationship between instruction and entertainment continue to lie at the heart of discussions about the purpose, production, circulation, and reading of children's periodicals.

Although children's periodicals are important to the histories of children's literature, these publications have often been ignored in favour of more canonical children's books. However, this is not to suggest that there has been little scholarship on children's periodicals. Important histories have been written to identify and describe the periodicals aimed at young readers, and they are essential in defining the field. Sheila Egoff's *Children's Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century: A Survey and Bibliography* (1951) is one of the earliest attempts, and R. Gordon Kelly's *Children's Periodicals of the United States* (1984) was the first extensive survey of American children's periodicals published over a 200-year period. These surveys – and the scholarly work that has followed – provide a springboard for further research within national and transnational frameworks, especially given the circulation of English-language periodicals within British settler colonies. The surveys sit alongside detailed research on individual titles, and together they demonstrate the urgency of producing material that children found interesting and attractive. Just how these criteria were defined changed over time and across geographic boundaries. From the earliest, text-heavy magazines of the eighteenth century, the visual became increasingly important as the nineteenth century progressed. This started with more elaborate mastheads

and expanded to include covers that drew attention to the magazine's contents. Accompanied by technological innovations that enabled more illustrations and eventually photographs to appear in their pages, magazines became focused on their visual appeal, with the number of colour and black-and-white illustrations often highlighted as an attractive selling point. The emergence of full-colour magazines in the twentieth century confirmed the importance of visually compelling covers and content that responded to children's interests.

Children's periodicals tell us what adults want young people to know and learn, yet the short runs that characterise many children's magazines throughout history reflect not only the challenges of print publication, regardless of audience, but also the difficulty of finding and sustaining a readership comprised of young people, who often lacked the funds to be able to purchase such magazines themselves. Then, as now, publishers had to attract both prospective child readers as well as their parents to obtain a sale. Such purchases were also dependent on literacy levels, which had a profound impact on the publication and distribution of magazines aimed at young people. In Britain, for example, mandatory education from the late nineteenth century onwards meant a rapid increase in literate children who might be interested in exciting new magazines to read. Moreover, as children aged, they tended to move on from their childish reading interests. This meant periodicals were continually seeking to renew their readership numbers by attracting new young people to their pages. Some readers, however, continued reading their favourite magazines even after they were technically no longer in the implied target demographic.

Magazines aimed at child readers necessarily had to be appealing enough to be pleasurable. As Drotner writes, 'juvenile magazines existed in a tenuous balance between profits for the publishers and pleasure to the purchasers, whether these were the parents or, later, juveniles themselves' (1988: 4). This profit motive did not apply to every publication – religious periodicals in particular used their children's magazines for proselytisation and conversion, giving them away for free at Sunday Schools – but circulation was a perennial concern as editors and publishers sought to ensure steady and increasing numbers of child readers. Although the earliest children's periodicals were objects of one-way communication from author/editor to child reader, shifts in the printing industry, reduced paper costs, and improvements in technology enabled children from the second half of the nineteenth century to engage with their magazines as contributors, competitors, and correspondents. Diana Dixon explains how '[c]orrespondence columns and editorials demonstrate clearly the changing authority of the editor of the readership' (1986: 63) between 1824 and 1914. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, 'editors had no need to court the reader's approval since for a child to receive a periodical

at all was a privilege' (Dixon 1986: 63). By the turn of the twentieth century, however, editors attempted to build relationships with readers by establishing robust editorial and correspondence sections that encouraged explicit engagement with child readers. These interactions between the magazine and its readers are 'encounters in the press' that function as 'mediations of the topic under discussion' (Brake and Codell 2005: 1) and offer opportunities to young readers to engage with their magazine in specific, albeit often narrowly defined, ways. Across a range of publications, children actively participated in exchanges with the editor and with other contributors.

At the same time, pocket money was increasingly available among more affluent middle-class readers and growing literacy rates meant working-class children could pool their money to purchase and share a copy of the latest magazine. This meant that publishers and editors needed to be even more aware of content that would be attractive to child consumers. The children's periodical was and is highly attuned to the tension between the child as innocent and the child as participating in the capitalist economy. The magazine is expected to be entertaining and useful and to guide children towards appropriate values and knowledge. At the same time, the child is required, either directly or indirectly, to purchase the magazine in order to access their entertainment. Christopher Parkes argues that capitalist society 'required the child to be a figure that could participate in commercial activity and yet remain innocent and uncorrupted' (2012: 3). The children's periodical embodies these tensions insofar as they often include advertising designed to induct children into patterns of purchase and consumption even as they establish an ideal of the child who is typically divorced from the realities of capitalist consumption. In the nineteenth century, magazine wrappers contained the advertising materials, and those wrappers were often stripped away as the magazine was bound. In the twentieth century, advertising was more often included within the pages of the magazine, simultaneously imbricating the child as reader and potential purchaser.

The role of children in the creation of 'their' magazines continues to deserve more scrutiny. In the introduction to her special issue of *American Periodicals* on children's periodicals, Courtney Weikle-Mills describes how 'young people have been a part of the history and culture of American periodicals from the nation's beginnings' (2012: 117) as apprentice typesetters for many early newspapers. Until the gradual implementation of employment legislation in the nineteenth century, children would have been involved in the production, distribution, and sales of newspapers and magazines. Their presence is largely invisible in children's periodicals, although the manuscript magazines created by children offer a different view of children's contributions to their print culture. That

children wrote, illustrated, and edited magazines for themselves suggests the importance of print in their lives. As Kathryn Gleadle explains, these publications, which included family productions and school magazines, demonstrate ‘the desire of young people to seize new opportunities to create their own youth-centred networks of cultural exchange’ (2019: 1169). Lois Burke makes a related argument about the ‘collaborative culture’ found in manuscript magazines ‘created and circulated within networks of girls’ (2019: 719).

Children continue to influence the production of the magazines they read. Many of the children’s periodicals still published in print form today are aimed at younger children and are often accompanied by enticements to purchase them, such as toys and other gifts attached to the covers to attract children’s attention when placed on supermarket shelves. The prevalence of these disposable plastic items to boost the appeal of magazines did not go unnoticed by environmentally conscious child readers. A ten-year-old reader named Skye from Wales drew media attention in 2021 for successfully campaigning to remove plastic toys and plastic wrappers from magazines (‘Girl, 10, Campaigns’ 2021: n.p.). Her petition reached the UK parliament, attracting the signatures of ten members of parliament, and resulting in supermarket chain Waitrose’s decision to stop stocking magazines that included plastic toys. Historically, children’s periodicals have been complicit in environmental harms caused by logging timber for paper production, the printing process, and transportation. While the advent of digital magazines has been perceived as a positive step for the environment, the technology required for digital media brings about its own environmental consequences, including the use of electricity from non-sustainable sources, mining of materials such as rare metals to produce machinery, and the production of electronic waste (Kopnina 2015: 510–11).

Scope and Structure

This volume contributes to ongoing research into the history of children’s periodicals, which is both complex and multifaceted. Given the factors outlined above, it does not aim to offer a comprehensive, definitive history of children’s periodicals, nor could any single collection hope to do so. Rather, it draws together thirty-three case studies that reflect the current state of research across a range of disciplines including literary studies, cultural studies, periodical studies, media studies, and history. By bringing together scholars who are united in their focus on periodicals for young people, this collection shows how ideas about childhood and the serial materials printed for them have changed over time while also highlighting some of the key themes, preoccupations, and approaches that animate current work in this cross-disciplinary field. Thus, this volume offers us

an opportunity to bring together scholarship on periodicals that are often considered in isolation. Its different chapters demonstrate the potential rewards of studying children's periodicals in ways that open up future avenues of research and provide methodological models. By focusing specifically on periodicals, the volume highlights the materiality of children's print culture and the importance of seriality in the development and refinement of ideas about children and childhood.

The process of putting this volume together began with a series of decisions about inclusions and exclusions that inevitably highlight the sheer impossibility of any kind of definitive history, particularly given the challenges of doing research in this area. One of our first decisions was about digital children's magazines, but the digital environment was so different that we decided to limit contributions to print magazines. The volume focuses on children's periodicals published in Britain, Ireland, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and India, and ranges from the earliest children's periodical to contemporary children's print magazines in the digital age. We decided to depart from a fully chronological or nation-based trajectory, with a structure designed to explore five central thematic concerns across time and place. Chapters are arranged broadly chronologically within each section in order to offer an overview under each topic.

The largest producers and consumers of English-language children's magazines throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were located in Britain, followed by the United States, and then the British settler colonies of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The titles discussed in this collection reflect the preponderance of periodicals appearing in these areas. Some chapters adopt a transnational approach to the material and others reveal lesser-known aspects of children's periodicals. For example, while many chapters focus on the British periodical press, which has often been the focus of critical studies, the attention paid to such topics as regional newspapers in the north of England, Scottish manuscript magazines, and Welsh-language children's magazines challenge the focus on publications emanating from the London marketplace and reorient our understanding of children's wider print culture. While the collection reflects the greater wealth of scholarship on the heyday of children's periodicals in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it also includes analyses of a number of titles published within that time frame that have until now received scant critical attention.

More detailed overviews of individual chapters are found at the beginning of each section, but it is worth outlining the thematic sections now in brief to draw out some key themes, issues, and motifs that recur across the volume. One such dominant theme is the tension between instruction and amusement that is present in the children's periodical as a form. In Part I, 'Telling Tales', we begin our analysis by first homing in on the pleasures and entertainment provided by the children's periodical, often through

fictional stories. This section explores the prevalence of fantasy in escapist leisure reading, including the fairy tale, romance, and supernatural narratives in comics. Part II, 'Making Readers and Writers', devotes substantial attention to the ways in which child readers shaped the magazines they read through the contribution of letters and stories, and even produced their own school magazines. The production of the child reader is also developed in this part, both in terms of the work of each periodical in shaping their own readership and in the way that some periodicals work to create readers of children's literature within their pages.

Part III, 'Place and Self', examines how children's periodicals positioned child readers to understand themselves, their culture, and their relationship to young people in other countries. While depictions of places such as Japan and Scotland in British magazines tended to reinforce cultural stereotypes, other periodicals encouraged child readers to forge real and imagined international connections. In addition, beyond the English middle-class children's periodical, magazines aimed at Black American, Bengali, and Welsh children enabled these readers to see themselves, and their local language or culture, represented. Part IV, 'Politics and Activism', extends the consideration of child readers as active participants in the creation of the periodicals they read by examining how they were encouraged to act as agents of social change in areas including charity towards the poor, communism, and the environment. The ideological nature of pedagogy is examined in periodicals published for specific readerships. This section demonstrates the diverse ways in which magazines encouraged children to view themselves as political and world subjects with a vital role to play in fostering peace and harmony. As many periodicals for older children were ostensibly separated along gendered lines, Part V, 'Girlhoods and Boyhoods', concludes the volume by concentrating on the specificities of masculinity and femininity in children's periodicals. It also considers the complex interplay of gender, race, and class across the period and in different contexts, in both more well-known titles and more niche interest publications such as film periodicals.

Taken together, the five thematic sections put the case studies into conversation with each other in often unexpected ways, enabling significant new insights into the history of the children's periodical across time periods and geographical contexts. Each section demonstrates and explores in different ways transformations in the concept of childhood and the imagined child reader, as well as the constitution of the child as a political, national, and gendered subject. By foregrounding titles, topics, and readerships that are often marginalised or unjustly overlooked in periodical studies, literary studies, and histories of childhood, the volume provides original arguments that help to define and expand these fields and open new avenues for future interdisciplinary research. From

the history of teen magazines to the development of environmental activism, the volume's various methodologies, critical insights, and archival findings help contextualise and assert the importance of periodical reading (and sometimes writing) in the lives and imaginations of children and adolescents from the very beginnings of print culture to the present. The dramatic advances in print technology and child literacy that gave rise to the popularity of the children's periodical are once again in a state of flux in the first decades of the twenty-first century. Today's young people are raised to use new media technologies, such as computers, tablets, and smartphones, and are commonly referred to as 'digital natives'. Scholars have argued that these technologies have effectively killed the print periodical, while also observing the rise of digital magazines (Mbombo and Muthambi 2022: n.p). Nevertheless, as this volume demonstrates, expectations of, and generalisations about, young people as readers have been routinely disrupted since the publication of the first children's periodicals. Recent findings that at least 30 per cent of young people prefer print fashion magazines (and another 20 per cent prefer both print and digital media) suggest that young readers continue to confound expectations of what and how they will, or should, read (Mbombo and Muthambi 2022): n.p.). The periodical, whether print or digital, continues to provide young readers with opportunities to see themselves represented within, and to interact with, an increasingly internationalised community of young people who share common interests.

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Part I
Telling Tales

INTRODUCTION

PIONEERING EDITOR OF *St Nicholas Magazine* Mary Mapes Dodge described the children's magazine as a 'pleasure-ground', in which readers can freely pick and choose where to direct their attention (2004: 14). When she notes the expectation that child readers will 'now and then "drop in" familiarly at an air castle, or step over to fairy-land', Dodge speaks to the central role of fiction in not only entertaining young people but also in shaping the identity of children's periodicals (2004: 14). While most scholarship on children's literature focuses on books, many important novels were first serialised in children's periodicals, including George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1870), Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885–6), and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* (1886). Beyond these notable examples, poems, short stories, serial fiction, and graphic narratives have been mainstays of children's periodicals. While the fiction published in children's periodicals could be more or less didactic than the informational articles and editorial content they accompanied, it nevertheless comprised an important part of the educational and socialising aims of many magazines for young people. Conversely, for publications that were more concerned with attracting as many readers as possible, lurid tales of horror or crime, or bracing stories of romance, provoked adult anxieties about the corrupting influence of periodical fiction – which was comparatively accessible given the affordability of periodicals – in ways that were not commonly associated with the hallowed realm of fictional books.

The story of fiction in children's periodicals begins with the first known magazine for young people, the *Lilliputian Magazine* (1751–2), published by the well-known British pioneer in children's literature publishing, John Newbery. In 'The *Lilliputian Magazine*: Entertaining Education in the Service of Profit and Reform', Anne Markey outlines the publication history and contents of this short-lived magazine, which only ran to three instalments. In her consideration of the fiction it published, Markey shows how the *Lilliputian Magazine* predictably mirrored troubling aspects of contemporary attitudes towards gender and race, yet at the same time offered examples of radical thought for young readers, as exemplified in its discussion of the abuse of power and promotion of egalitarian social structures. Moreover, the magazine defies assumptions about the absence of sexuality

in writing for children until the twentieth century, with this chapter also considering how fictional histories were used to warn young readers about the negative consequences of sex outside of marriage, the dangers of male sexual desire for women, as well as the potential for young men to be exploited by older, wealthy women.

Though folk tales and fantasy stories were often seen as lacking an appropriately pedagogical orientation in the early nineteenth century, they were featured in various early children's periodicals in ways that centred nationalism and national literatures. In 'For the Youth, By the Youth: Child-Centrism and the Rise of the Fantastic in Juvenile Print Cultures in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', Anindita Bhattacharya explores how Irish children's periodicals embraced the country's pagan and supernatural past in the quest to produce publications that provided an alternative to the predominant British titles. Periodicals including the *Juvenile Magazine*, the *Dublin Juvenile Magazine or The Dublin Family Magazine*, *Duffy's Hibernian Magazine*, and *Young Ireland* foregrounded articles with Irish themes and supernatural tales that had a strong association with Irish national identity to cater to an implied Irish child reader. Bhattacharya demonstrates that an increased nationalist emphasis in Irish children's periodicals in the 1850s stemmed from a 'child-centric' approach that sought to counter the religious emphasis of the Victorian period and to critique imperialism.

In 'Old and New World Fairy Tales in *St Nicholas Magazine*', Michelle J. Smith considers the role of *St Nicholas Magazine* (1873–1905) in fostering the development of original American literary fairy tales. With an increasing number of children's periodicals published after the American Civil War, from the 1860s and 1870s fairy tales began to appear in American children's magazines to increase their appeal to child readers. As Smith shows, *St Nicholas* published lesser-known international tales and traditions, rather than adaptations or translations of popular European fairy tales, such as those of the Brothers Grimm. Instead, the magazine played a role in cultivating uniquely American literary fairy tales by authors such as F. R. Stockton and Howard Pyle. As she explains, these stories departed from the European tale tradition by rejecting an emphasis on the marvellous as the solution to problems, instead promoting moral behaviour and industriousness as the correct way for male protagonists to solve dilemmas.

Long-running children's periodicals could provide a consistent presence during major world events such as war. Prolific children's author Enid Blyton wrote for her children's magazines *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* (1926–59, originally *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*) throughout the Second World War. As Siobhán Morrissey examines in 'Enid Blyton's Wartime *Sunny Stories*: Facilitating Fantasies of Child Heroism', the author's reputation as a writer of escapist fiction is disrupted by her periodical

fiction that attempts to justify the necessity of Britain's wartime involvement and the importance of safeguarding Britain against German invasion. With the frequency of weekly and then fortnightly issues of *Sunny Stories* requiring a continuous stream of content, Blyton turned to a range of genres to address child readers' anxieties about war, including realistic fiction discussing topics such as evacuation and air raids, and fantasy stories addressing mature themes such as the nature of evil and corruption. Morrissey argues that Blyton's wartime periodical fiction elevated patriotic and courageous child protagonists into heroic roles to provide reassurance about Britain as both superior and destined for victory. Rather than serving as an entertaining distraction from conflict and real risks of harm, she demonstrates that Blyton's wartime fiction served to reassure the magazine's readers through narratives of British triumph over the sub-human enemy.

While much of the fiction discussed in this section has an overtly pedagogical or ideological motivation, some forms of serialised fiction published in children's periodicals were infamous for their perceived lack of educational or moral value. In the nineteenth century, the sensational stories contained in penny dreadfuls, novelettes, and penny papers invoked adult anxieties about working-class boys' and girls' reading. In 'Girls Growing Up: Reading "Erotic Bloods" in Interwar Britain', Lise Shapiro Sanders considers how similar concerns were directed towards working-class girls and young women in Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. Sanders examines these cheap weekly magazines marketed to older women, but which were also sought out by girls in their teens and early twenties who could explore new models of femininity and sexuality through stories that linked romance with danger. These magazines, including *Lucky Star* (1935–50), *Miracle* (1935–58), *Oracle* (1933–58), and *Red Star Weekly* (1929–83), as Sanders discusses, held the potential to shape working-class girls' and young women's perceptions of gender, marriage, and womanhood at an important transitional stage of life. While the periodicals read by girls were sometimes figured as constituting a dangerous influence on future wives and mothers, this chapter reveals how 'erotic bloods' provided girls and young women with a diverse array of narrative possibilities that encompassed independence, love, and adventure.

The erotic bloods were also heavily illustrated, a feature that is integral to another maligned form of serial fiction for young people: the comic. In "There's no room for demons when you're self-possessed": Supernatural Possession in British Girls' Comics', Julia Round examines girls' comics published from the 1950s to the 1970s. Building on the foundation of sensational fiction in children's periodicals, the possession motif became well established in girls' comics by the 1970s. Round performs a quantitative and qualitative analysis of *Spellbound* (DC Thomson 1976–8) and

Misty (IPC 1978–80) to evaluate how possession is depicted and to identify changing views of girlhood. While the possession motif is used as a vehicle to warn girls about the need for self-control and decency – and thereby serves to limit girlhood – she also shows that, as the motif was popularised, it could also provide fictional victims with autonomy and a means to exhibit strength as heroines.

Children's lives, particularly those of middle-class children, are often more constrained than those of adults. Young people tend to be financially dependent on parents or guardians, and have limitations placed upon their movement, leisure time, and consumption of print and visual culture. As Sally Mitchell has observed in relation to Victorian girls' magazines, periodical fiction could provide the experience of greater freedom for young people than they experienced in reality (1995: 3). While fiction in children's periodicals was often written in the service of contemporary ideologies relating to race, gender, and even war, the texts discussed in this section demonstrate the complexity of the stories they told, from the publication of the first children's periodical in the mid-eighteenth century through to girls' comics in the late twentieth century. Periodical fiction also provided an opportunity to shape national literatures, and to reject pedagogical and moral trends found in children's literature more widely.

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THE *LILLIPUTIAN MAGAZINE*:
ENTERTAINING EDUCATION IN THE
SERVICE OF PROFIT AND REFORM

Anne Markey

JOHN NEWBERY (1713–1767), often called the father of children’s literature and after whom the American Library Association’s annual award for a distinguished contribution to literature for children is named, is the first person known to have established a periodical for young readers. Although the *Lilliputian Magazine* (1751–2) ran to just three instalments, it continued to circulate as a compilation volume for decades after initial publication and so reached different cohorts of young readers in Britain and elsewhere. Its relatively short life as a periodical highlights the precariousness of the nascent trade in leisure reading for children in the mid-eighteenth century. Its successful afterlife as a single-volume collection suggests that the values it endorsed appealed to parents and other gatekeepers who controlled children’s access to reading material throughout the second half of that century. This chapter will provide a detailed discussion of the publication history and the contents of the *Lilliputian Magazine*, exploring John Newbery’s involvement in the project and examining the significance of the lessons it delivered to children.

Newbery, an ambitious and largely successful entrepreneur involved in the rapidly expanding print trade, began his career, aged seventeen, as an apprentice to Thomas Carnan, a newspaper printer in Reading. When Carnan died in 1737, Newbery inherited his business and later married his widow. Keen to seek out and make the most of business opportunities, he engaged forty-three agents to increase the circulation of newspapers published by the firm and established a circulating library in the area. In 1743 he relocated to London, establishing himself as a bookseller in the Bible and Crown locality before moving the shop to St Paul’s Churchyard in 1745. With a keen eye for profitable opportunities, he not only published a wide range of books likely to appeal to different readers but also became involved in trade in patent medicines (Maxted 2004). Over the course of his career in London, he published around five hundred books, most of

which were for adults and many of which were reprints. However, Newbery was one of a number of enterprising publishers, including Thomas Boreman and Mary Cooper, who realised that there was an emerging market for books likely to appeal to middle-class children – and their parents – and he published over one hundred titles for them, including the *Lilliputian Magazine*, the world's first periodical for children.

The first of Newbery's publications for young readers was *A Little Pretty Pocketbook, Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy, and Pretty Miss Polly* (1744), consisting of a collection of rhymes, many describing children's games and amusements, arranged around each letter of the alphabet. This innovative publication was initially sold along with a ball for boys or a pincushion for girls and was reissued numerous times during and after Newbery's lifetime, both in Britain and colonial America. *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes* (1765), perhaps Newbery's best known publication, enjoyed similar commercial success and even greater longevity. This entertaining yet undoubtedly educative story recounts the adventures of Margery Meanwell, whose father dies 'in a place where Dr. *James's* Powder was not to be had' (2013: 93). That Newbery was the exclusive agent for the quasi-medicinal product puffed here testifies to his keen desire to maximise profits. This same desire seems likely to have played a part in the publication of the *Lilliputian Magazine*, which was both of its time, because it reflected many of the ideological biases of the mid-eighteenth century, and ahead of its time, because it also challenged some of those biases and established a blueprint for many later popular and frequently profitable children's periodicals which appeared in the decades and centuries that followed.

Parodying Newbery as Jack Whirler in the *Idler*, Samuel Johnson said of the bookseller: 'Every new proposal takes possession of his thoughts, he soon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almost to completion, and then forsakes it for another' (12 Aug 1758). This disparaging description of Newbery's approach to business may seem to fit well with the short-lived publication history of the *Lilliputian Magazine*, the first instalment of which appeared priced at three pennies in March 1751, followed quickly by a second, with the third and final issue appearing the following year. However, the decision to cease publication of the first periodical for children may testify to Newbery's keen business sense and prioritisation of profitability rather than to a propensity to flit from one project to another. Although clearly concerned with the cultivation and development of a new, young, reading public, Newbery was astutely aware that parents not only controlled children's access to reading material but were also more likely to buy books than their offspring were. Adults, then, had to be persuaded to buy reading material primarily intended for children. Before the first instalment appeared in print, the

Lilliputian Magazine was named in a list of forthcoming books in the February 1751 instalment of the *Student, or, The Oxford and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany*, published by Newbery, and was also advertised in the *General Evening Post* on 1 March 1751 as being a new monthly publication, printed for T. Carnan at Mr Newbery's, at the Bible and Sun in St Paul's Churchyard (Welsh 1855: 255). This pre-publication promotion of the *Lilliputian Magazine* reveals that Newbery was testing the waters with the publication of this pioneering periodical by initially bringing it to the attention of adult readers who might buy it for their children. Faced with disappointing sales after its first publication, Newbery was canny enough to recognise that the winds of fortune were against him and so changed tack, as shall be discussed below. Books for children, which could sell well or badly, were at least a recognisable product in 1751, but periodicals for young readers were an untried and untested commodity.

Despite the success of titles such as the *Spectator* and *Rambler*, even periodicals for adults were risky ventures in the mid-eighteenth century; the *Midwife, or, The Old Woman's Magazine*, edited by the poet Christopher Smart and published by Newbery, ran consecutively for thirteen numbers between October 1750 and October 1751 with the final three instalments appearing sporadically thereafter before it too ceased publication in 1753. Newbery began publishing the *Student, or, The Oxford and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany*, again edited by Smart who also wrote most of the content, in 1751 but it ran to only ten issues before being withdrawn the following year. Newbery, then, was prepared, eager even, to launch new products but equally quick to retire them if they did not do as well as he hoped they might. A children's periodical, which invited a commitment to ongoing purchase rather than a one-off sale, was a particularly risky venture at a time when literacy and book ownership, although increasing, were far from universal. It has been estimated that in the 1750s approximately two-thirds of men and one-third of women could sign their names, and that literacy rates rose with income level because most middle-class men could both read and write at that time (Olsen 1999: 228). No figures are available for child literacy in the period, and even if such data were available, it would cast little light on the number of children whose parents could afford to buy them the kind of entertaining yet instructive volumes, including the *Lilliputian Magazine*, published by John Newbery. Research into children's book usage between 1700 and 1840 by M. O. Grenby reveals that most owners of children's books were 'from the middle and upper-middle class' and that even by the end of the period many poorer children would never have encountered 'this still quite new and unfamiliar product' (2011: 91, 92). Realising that the emergent 1750s market in children's books was not sufficiently developed to accommodate the sustained, ongoing outlay required to allow for

the success of a periodical, Newbery astutely ceased publication of the *Lilliputian Magazine* in its original, serial format.

Jill E. Gray speculates that the third instalment of 1752, which was substantially shorter than its predecessors, was never issued as a periodical, instead first appearing in the compilation volume of all three instalments published, probably that same year, by Newbery's firm, again under the name of his stepson, Thomas Carnan (1737–88) (1970: 112). Noting that Carnan was only fourteen when the *Lilliputian Magazine* first appeared in 1751, Grenby suggests that Newbery used his name 'as a means of disguising his own involvement' in the project (2013b: 223). However, as both the advertisement for the periodical and the title page of the compilation volume specify that Carnan operated 'at Mr Newbery's' (Welsh 1885: 255; *Lilliputian Magazine* 1752?: n. p.), the publisher's involvement was clearly signalled to potential purchasers and actual readers. It seems more likely that Newbery named his young stepson as printer as an in-joke to underline the involvement of the rising generation in the production of this publication for them. Be that as it may, *A Pleasant and Useful Companion to the Church of England*, published by Newbery under his own name in 1764, contains an advertisement for the compilation edition of the *Lilliputian Magazine*. While this suggests that surplus stock remained over a decade later, repackaging the periodical in this way ultimately proved a successful manoeuvre as editions of the compilation volume appeared in London in 1765 (perhaps at least partly as a result of demand arising from the advertisement of the previous year), 1768, 1778, and 1782, in Belfast in 1775, and in Dublin in 1792. Consequently, the three instalments of this first children's periodical went on to enjoy a successful afterlife. Publication as a periodical appears to have been at least partly funded by subscription, with young subscribers being listed or named at the end of the third instalment in various editions of the compilation volume (1752?: 134–44). Indeed, the list of subscribers included not only names of 198 English children (118 girls and eighty boys living mostly in or near London) but also includes the names of forty-nine young residents of Maryland (thirteen girls and thirty-six boys), showing that the influence of the *Lilliputian Magazine* extended to colonial America (1752?: 134–44). Nevertheless, this list of subscribers also highlights the precariousness of the venture; publication by subscription, which required subscribers to pay half the price of the work in advance and the other half when it appeared in print, was an established practice by the 1750s that reduced the risk of financial loss for printers and publishers. The repackaging of the three instalments of the periodical as a single volume testifies to both the failure of the initial project and to Newbery's conviction of the appeal and marketability of its contents.

Although the British market was not ready to accommodate a successful children's periodical in the early 1750s, the *Lilliputian Magazine* – its

title invoking the diminutive citizens of the first country visited by Lemuel Gulliver in Jonathan Swift's *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World* (1726) – represents a significant milestone in the history of children's literature. Indeed, its full title – the *Lilliputian Magazine, or the young gentleman & lady's golden library, being an attempt to mend the world, to render the society of man more amiable, & to establish the plainness, simplicity, virtue and wisdom of the Golden Age, so much celebrated by the poets and historians* – reveals the scope of its ambition to change the world by improving society through the medium of the rising generation. Significantly, that social transformation was to be achieved through the pleasure of leisure-time reading that encouraged children to think for themselves, despite the didactic intent of some of the content. Andrea Immel claims that 'children's books critics consider the *Magazine* important because it was the first of its kind, not because its contents were especially good' (2000: 152). That is certainly true of Diana Dixon, who notes that neither the *Lilliputian Magazine* nor the scattering of juvenile periodicals that followed in the second half of the long eighteenth century 'lasted long', arguing that the 'dramatic increase in the number of periodicals published for children' from the 1820s onwards occurred because of a dramatic shift away from dull didacticism to 'a conscious effort to entertain [young] readers while at the same time instructing them' (2008). This argument does scant justice to the *Lilliputian Magazine*, which was credited by the historian and antiquarian James Pettit Andrews with inculcating 'the best of principles' and raising the quality of publications for children by amusing them while leading them along 'the paths of good nature and virtue' (1790: 18).

As no copies of any of the three issues of the periodical are known to be extant, all references in this chapter are to the first compilation edition, generally presumed, as already noted, to have been published in 1752. This is undoubtedly not an ideal situation, as the compilation edition contains no indication of where one issue ends and the next begins and is effectively a book-length miscellany rather than a periodical. Nevertheless, the contents of this pioneering publication, including the attractive illustrations that accompany texts of various types, provide clear markers of what was included in the periodical. They indicate that each issue followed a pattern whereby similar items were presented each time so that readers would know what to expect in future instalments and thus be encouraged to buy them (or to encourage their parents to buy them). These items include jests, musical notations of country dances, epigrams, riddles and enigmas (which expressly encouraged children to think for themselves and to which the solutions were provided in the next issue), stand-alone stories, poems, hymns, and a serial account of 'An History of the Rise and Progress of Learning in Lilliput'. The contents of all three issues very effectively combine entertainment with instruction for the

primary intended audience of children and also are designed to impress the adult gatekeepers likely to buy either the periodical or the compilation volume.

All editions of that compendium volume (and presumably the first issue of the periodical) open with a Preface written ‘to explain the work’, which stresses the novelty of the ‘method of education’ it contains (1752?: i). That method consists of the presentation of material ‘more agreeable, and better adapted to the tender capacities of children than anything’ that had gone before (1752?: i). The Preface also makes clear that the contents were not the work of a single writer but were created by a group of unidentified authors whose individual identities generally remain a mystery to this day. Indeed, controversy surrounds the authorship of several of Newbery’s publications for children, including *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes*, which has variously been attributed to Newbery himself, the journalist Griffith Jones, and the Irish writer Oliver Goldsmith (Grenby 2013a: xix). It should be noted, however, that it was not unusual for contributors to eighteenth-century periodicals to be unidentified but while this practice changed in relation to adult publications over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, anonymity still remains a feature of many children’s periodicals, particularly comics. Even in cases where the writer of a story in a children’s periodical is known and acknowledged, doubts can nonetheless be expressed about its authorship; indeed, writing of serials in boys’ magazines, George Orwell claimed: ‘The stories [about St Jim’s school] in the *Magnet* are signed “Frank Richards” and those in the *Gem* [about Greyfriars school], “Martin Clifford”, but a series lasting thirty years could hardly be the work of the same person every week’ (1940). In fact, both series were written by Charles Harold St John Hamilton, using two different pseudonyms. Christopher Smart, who married Newbery’s stepdaughter, Anna Maria Carnan (older sister of young Thomas) in 1752, has been identified as the author of at least one poem in the *Lilliputian Magazine*,¹ and he may well have contributed other items or been involved in the editing process. Whether that be the case or not, the Preface, addressed to adults, explains that the unidentified authors intentionally introduce ‘persons of distinction in the dialogues’ in order ‘to remove that rusticity and awkwardness, which appears in the common people when talking to their superiors’ (1752?: ii). This indication that the promotion of meaningful communication between social classes was one of the publication’s primary objectives was likely to appeal to middle-class parents who perceived themselves and their children as superior to the common people but who were also cognisant of their social responsibility to those less fortunate than themselves.

The next item, entitled 'A Dialogue between a Gentleman and the Author', is addressed to both adults and children and casts further light on the aims of the publication. The dialogue opens with the eponymous gentleman commenting on advertisements for the *Lilliputian Magazine* 'to be published at Three pence a month' and asking about the purpose of this novel literary product (1752?: 3). The unnamed author (perhaps Newbery himself in this case?) replies that 'it is intended for the use of children' and explains that 'by use of history and fable' it aims 'to sow in their minds the seeds of polite literature, and to teach them the *great grammar of the universe*' – that is to say, 'the *knowledge of men and things*' (1752?: 3). The gentleman then queries the price, observing that three pence is very little 'after you have paid the necessary expences [*sic*] of paper, print, and advertisements', to which the author replies that as his aim is to promote learning he is not averse to taking some financial risk for six months, at which stage he hopes the success of the periodical will be assured: 'there are gentlemen and ladies enough, who will encourage the undertaking, by purchasing the numbers as they come out, either for their own children, or their poor neighbours' (1752?: 4). As discussed above, poor sales seem to have led to the discontinuation of the periodical after only a few months, but this elucidation of the thinking behind its launch reveals that Newbery intended the initial issues as experiments to test an untried market or to create a new one. It also confirms his awareness that adults were likely to be the main purchasers of the *Lilliputian Magazine* and clarifies why the prefatory material was addressed to them. The author goes on to explain 'that books of this sort are to be made as cheap as possible; for there are a great many poor people in his majesty's dominions, who would not be able to purchase it at a larger price, and yet these are the king's subjects, and in their station, as much to be regarded as the rest' (1752?: 5). Of course, these references to the benevolent purchase of the periodical by British middle-class parents for poor children at home and the desire to cater for poor people elsewhere may simply be promotional ruses that reflect existing class divisions and imperial prejudice, but they can also be viewed as attempts to promote social cohesion throughout Britain and its empire by means of education. That interpretation is supported by the concluding section of the 'Dialogue', which recounts the story of how eggs taken from a crow's nest and from an eagle's nest are replaced in the wrong nests; the eagles, hatched by crows, 'insensible of their superior faculties, sat grovelling on the ground', while the crows nurtured, soared aloft, 'and out-braved all the birds' (1752?: 6). By highlighting 'the surprising force and benefit of education' (1752?: 6), this fable explicitly privileges nurture over nature and implicitly promotes an equitable social system wherein achievement is not limited by genetics but rather encouraged through access to example and instruction.

‘Some Account of this Society’, the first item addressed primarily to children and designed to foster in them a sense of their own individual worth and that of belonging to a valuable community, provides an imaginative description of how the *Lilliputian Magazine* came to be: in an unnamed location, presumably London, the well-read little Master Meanwell brings together a group, including a young Prince, several young nobles, and ‘a great many little ladies and gentlemen and ladies’, who are all convinced of ‘the *usefulness of learning, and the benefit of being good*’ (1752?: 8). The Prince is elected perpetual president of the new society, Master Prime becomes the principal secretary ‘because he could write better than any of the rest’, and R. Goodwill is elected his assistant, while Master Meanwell is chosen as speaker [presiding officer] (1752?: 9). At first Meanwell demurs, ‘as there were so many gentlemen of superior birth, fortune and merit’ present who might be better suited to the role (1752?: 9). The Prince, however, replies: ‘we are not met here to distinguish ourselves by birth and title, but for our mutual improvement, and to publish what we apprehend may be of use to the world in all the valuable branches of learning’ (1752?: 9). Once the committee has been formed, the group listens to ‘all the pieces sent to the members of the society’ and decides on which should be published in the *Lilliputian Magazine* (1752?: 9). Effectively, the Lilliputian society is presented as a type of democracy, nominally headed by the young Prince who effectively takes on the role of constitutional monarch, in which power is shared among members from differing backgrounds who decide on who should govern it. Admittedly, no poor children from the lower orders are mentioned in this ‘Account’, but nonetheless its promotion of a fundamentally egalitarian meritocracy among the rising generation is striking, radical even, for a publication of the 1750s.

The diverse contents of the *Lilliputian Magazine* are presented as selections made by the society from submissions made by its imagined young members, strengthening a sense of community among actual young readers unlikely to know each other personally. In fact, the contents of the volume were presumably chosen, perhaps even commissioned, by Newbery as publisher and possibly editor, and written by a team of adult authors that may have included the publisher himself. The very diversity of the contents reveals an awareness that the tastes of young readers differ and that a broad array of different types of material is more likely to appeal to a wide readership than would be the case if only one type of item featured. These varied pieces tend to be relatively short, ranging from two to seventeen pages. Although brevity is a feature associated with the contents of most periodicals, it is particularly well-suited to young readers, who may lack the concentration and memory required for longer pieces that are intended to be read at more than one sitting. Effectively, the *Lilliputian Magazine* was a miscellany that could

be dipped into and then left to one side until the young reader felt like picking it up again and reading something new.

Religious devotion, which is endorsed and encouraged in the periodical not only in hymns but also in other poems and an assortment of stories, is presented as the primary virtue to be attained by children of both sexes. That virtue is also underscored in the preamble to the list of subscribers with which the compendium volume (and presumably the third issue of the periodical) concludes. The first point of an agreement presented as a requisite for membership of the Lilliputian Society stipulates that each boy and girl must promise to ‘say our prayers every morning and evening, to frequent the public service of the church to which we belong, and to keep holy the *Sabbath-day*’ (1752?: 133). Similarly, the desire for power and wealth for its own sake is recurrently presented as a vice to be avoided by all; for example, in ‘The History of Master Peter Primrose’, the titular young hero discovers that: ‘True greatness consists in being good, in promoting the happiness of mankind and not in wealth and power, as is vainly imagined’ (1752?: 128). In the same vein, in ‘A Narrative of a Voyage to the Island of Angelica’, young Jemmy Gadabout learns that the inhabitants of this Utopia believe ‘*that no man should secure to himself more of anything than he has occasion for. And especially if he knows it will be of service to others*’; consequently, ‘the *Angelicans* have all necessaries in common, and there is no such thing as a beggar to be found in their streets’ (1752?: 71). The third article of the agreement to which members of the Lilliputian Society must subscribe requires an undertaking ‘to promote each others [*sic*] interest and happiness, and the interest and happiness of all mankind, but especially of those who are poor and distressed’ (1752?: 133) and not ‘to covet other men’s goods’ (1752?: 134). While the advocacy of religious devotion is unremarkable for its time, the recurrent insistence on the desirability of sharing wealth equitably can be seen as an implicitly subversive call to arms for young readers who are invited to contemplate alternative types of society. ‘The History of the Mercolians’, in which Master Brolio explains that on this island ‘worth and honour are confined to no particular class of people’ and that neither ‘honour or infamy descend from the father to the son’, suggests that individual merit, rather than inherited privilege, should be the basis of the organisation of society (1752?: 78, 79). It is surely telling that Thomas Spence (1750–1814), a radical advocate of social equality and education for all, reprinted this story in *A Supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe* (1782), an avant la lettre Marxist work that called for the redistribution of all wealth and common ownership of land.²

In general, shorter items in the *Lilliputian Magazine*, such as jests, riddles, poems, and dances, are equally suited to both boys and girls; by contrast, stories tend to be more gender-specific in the lessons they aim to

teach, reflecting the gender norms of their time of composition and publication. Stories featuring male protagonists emphasise the importance of initiative, courage, and leadership. For example, 'The History of Leo the Great Lion; and of his gratitude', said to be 'communicated by Mr. Malo of Trebon in Africa' and directed primarily at boys, is an original variation of both the international folk tale of Androcles and the lion (ATU Type 156) and Aesop's fable of 'The Shepherd and the Lion' (numbered 563 in the Perry Index of fables credited to the ancient Greek storyteller). In this version, Master Billora is on his way to school one morning, accompanied by three other little boys who intend to play truant and so slow the progress of the group by looking for birds' nests. At the edge of a wood a lion approaches, but the boys manage to escape him by following Billora's suggestion that they climb a tree. The lion eats their lunches, abandoned at the base of the tree, and stays where it is overnight. A page-length illustration depicts three white boys clinging for dear life to the branches of a tree while the lion lies at its foot. The boys are all famished and the miscreants, convinced they will soon die, wish that they had gone to school. Billora calmly reminds them that God delivered Daniel from a whole den of lions and prevails upon them to 'repent and determine to be good for the future' (1752?: 12). The following morning, the lion is still under the tree, whining as if in pain. Master Billora climbs down and removes a festering thorn from the paw of the distressed animal, who expresses his gratitude by licking his reliever's feet. The other boys descend the tree, and all four make their way from the wood to school, accompanied by the grateful lion, 'leaping and playing like a spaniel' (1752?: 14). Some years later in the same wood, Billora goes to help a young lady who is badly injured when she falls off her horse, 'when out sprung from one thicket of bushes a large tyger, and from another a lion' (1752?: 14). The outcome underscores the practical value of being kind to both animals and humans; Leo the lion, recognising Billora, attacks and demolishes the tiger and again licks his old friend's feet before leading him and the damsel in distress to safety, much to her agreeably relieved surprise. The item concludes with an account of how Master Malo, who submitted the story, has a fine young lion that 'carries his satchel to school every day, and waits for him at the school-door to bring him home safe every night' (1752?: 15). Predictable as the story may be in some respects, it nonetheless is innovative in its depiction of children coping with a complicated emergency without the guiding hand or assistance of nearby adults. Billora is undeniably characterised as a paragon of unbelievable virtue to be emulated by boys reading the story, but his young companions are more realistically drawn and those young readers may well have seen themselves in the chastened miscreants. With its African setting, 'The History of Leo the Great Lion' is designed to appeal to a British boy's sense of adventure while indicating

that such virtues as bravery, leadership, and kindness are associated with regular school attendance, regardless of whether that school be in England or Africa. Other stories featuring male protagonists, such as 'Joseph and his Brethren: A Scripture History'; 'A Narrative of a Voyage to the Island of Angelica, by Master Jemmy Gadabout'; and 'The History of Master Tommy Thoroughgood and Master Francis Froward, Two Apprentices to the same Master', advocate courage, generosity, leadership, and industry, virtues that are portrayed as particularly desirable in men.

Stories featuring both young male and female characters depict different values as appropriate for each sex, with girls being portrayed as weaker, more vulnerable, and usually more in need of supervision than boys, as suggested by the title of 'An Adventure of Master Tommy Trusty and his delivering of Miss Biddy Johnson from the Thieves who were going to murder her'. In this story, Biddy, a pretty little girl, likes nice clothes, is 'too fond of herself', and is 'often disobedient to her parents', who tell her never to go outside the house on her own (1752?: 16). One day, when a new outfit is delivered for her, she gets her maid to dress her up in her finery and sashays out to show herself off. On London Bridge, she is accosted by thieves, who carry her off to the woods, strip her of her clothes and are about to kill her. Luckily, Tommy Trusty, 'a little boy of very good sense, and great bravery' (1752?: 18) happens to be collecting nuts nearby and hears her crying. He then sees a 'man with a large knife in his hand about to murder her', shouts aloud and cracks a whip he has in his hand, 'which made the thieves conclude that they were pursued by men on horseback, and they ran away as fast as possible' (1752?: 19). Tommy then unties the little girl and helps her put her clothes back on before accompanying her home. Her parents present him with 'a fine library of books and a pretty little horse, as a reward for his courage'; the chastened Biddy obeys her parents from that day forward, and now despises fine clothes, saying '*that virtue and good nature are the best ornaments a young lady can wear*' (1752?: 20). Given that cases of child abduction increased dramatically over the course of the eighteenth century (Foyster 2013: 674), the story can be viewed as a valuable cautionary tale. It is telling, however, that although 'boys and girls were abducted in almost equal numbers' (Foyster 2013: 672), the story suggests that young females are at greater risk and advocates different patterns of behaviour for the two sexes. Biddy puts herself in danger by walking in the city while Tommy is quite at liberty to ramble through the woods all alone, carrying a whip and on the lookout for adventure. At the story's end, Tommy is materially rewarded for his initiative and bravery; Biddy, by contrast, learns that virtue, which in her case involves being modest and obedient, is its own reward.

'The History of the Mercolians', meanwhile, links attributes associated with women with moral corruption and contrasts them with masculine

ideals. In this story, prosperous men have become so addicted to wealth and luxury that ‘they sunk in down-beds, and grew effeminate’, leading to the downfall of an island state (1752?: 76); recognising that ‘the ill use of money had corrupted the morals of the people, rendering them effeminate’, young Master Turvolo persuades the men to change their ways and so ‘makes a miserable people happy’, reviving the ‘ruined state’ in the process (1752?: 79). Interestingly, both ‘The Peacock’, a fable in the form of a short poem addressed primarily to boys, and ‘The History of Miss Sally Silence’, a story specifically addressed to girls, endorse the virtue of holding one’s tongue instead of indulging in idle prattle, arguing, or vainglorious boasting, but do so in gender-specific ways. The six-line poem describes the peacock, whose ‘gaudy train’ and ‘tread majestic’ please onlookers, as ‘a feather’d toy’ whose ‘hideous cry’ plagues those onlookers’ ears; the concluding two-line moral reads: ‘By this allusion justly stung,/Each tinsel’d fop should hold his tongue’ (1752?: 104). The inference here is that vain men who pride themselves on their appearance are effeminate fools who will inevitably betray their lack of real worth and so be shunned by everyone. Little Sally Silence, meanwhile, is a child who ‘did every thing her papa and mamma bid her’ and whose ‘vast dislike to noise and nonsense’ made ‘every body admire her’: ‘when other girls were hollowing, quarrelling, and disturbing the whole neighbourhood, she was demure and silent’ (1752?: 99). When she grows up, a neighbouring duke is ‘so charmed with her chearfulness [*sic*] and sweet disposition, that he married her, though she had not a farthing to her name’ (1752?: 100). These two items indicate that men who do not know how or when to be quiet will be seen as foolish and so their public reputations will suffer; by contrast, women who cultivate the virtue of holding their tongues will earn good reputations that will be rewarded through advantageous marriages.

It is perhaps unsurprising that this mid-eighteenth-century publication for children reflects and endorses the gender ideology of the time, which held that men and women were fundamentally different and ‘that these differences not only shaped their characters but suited each sex to specific activities and roles in society’ (Barker and Challus 2014: 1). What is more surprising is that some stories deal explicitly with sexuality, showing how power in the form of social position can result in attempted sexual exploitation of the weak and highlighting the importance of chastity for both sexes. The topic is central to a story in the first issue – ‘The History of Florella. Sent by an unknown hand, And may for ought we know, have been published before’. Effectively, this is a very condensed version of Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740), the controversial, salacious story of a servant girl who resists the sexual overtures of her powerful employer, and whose virtue is eventually rewarded by his decision to marry her. Several contemporaries deplored the licentious content of the novel and

disapproved of Richardson's approving portrayal of social mobility within it, leading to what became known as the *Pamela* controversy (Keymer and Sabor 2006: 7–9). That Newbery presented a version of this controversial adult novel to young readers just eleven years after its initial publication is remarkable. In the *Lilliputian* version, Florella, who has gone to live in 'the house of an honest farmer' so that her impoverished parents can be spared the expense of supporting her, attracts the amorous, dishonourable attentions of the local lord of the manor. He writes to Florella's mother, explaining that he has no intention of marrying her daughter but will 'settle on her four hundred pounds a year' if she will live with him (1752?: 24). The horrified mother then writes to Florella, imploring her 'to avoid the snare which is laid for thy virtue' (1752?: 25). The 'barbarous man' intercepts and reads this letter, which so moves him that he resolves to 'make reparation' for his sins by marrying Florella (1752?: 24, 27). While sexuality is not the focus of 'Joseph and his Brethren', it receives a significant mention; the young Israelite is sold by his brothers before being enslaved in Egypt, where he attracts the attention of his owner's wife: 'Now Joseph being a very comely youth, his mistress was so charmed with his person, that she used all the arts of fond persuasion to lure him to her bed; but he turned a deaf ear to her amorous intreaties [*sic*]' (1752?: 56). The spurned woman accuses him of 'insolently attempting to rob her of her honour' (a coded but obvious way of describing attempted rape), and Joseph is thrown into prison (1752?: 56). However, 'undeniable evidences of his virtue and wisdom' soon bring about his release (1752?: 56). The final story advocating chastity is 'The History of Little Polly Meanwell. Who was afterwards the Queen of Petula'. Here, the eponymous heroine is a poor but beautiful orphan who accompanies her female employer on a voyage to the West Indies. En route, their ship is captured by Angria, the pirate, who makes 'several attempts on her virtue' (another veiled but clear reference to attempted rape), all of which she successfully resists so he locks her up in a dark prison (1752?: 119). Eventually, Angria releases her, but only to hand her over to Kolan-mi Dolan, an Indian king who plans 'to make her one of his concubines' (1752?: 120). Falling on her knees, Polly implores him to reconsider:

Oh King! [do not] lose the blessing of the Almighty, and sully your own honour, by depriving me of my virtue, which I hold more dear than life itself. Ah! Why should you, for a sensual gratification, a momentary pleasure, make me miserable for ever? . . . Kill me you may, but you shall never deprive me of my virtue and honour. (1752?: 120)

Heady stuff for a child reader, particularly one who may have had to ask the meaning of the word 'concubine'. Overcome by the vehemence of this

passionate defence of virtue, Kolan-mi Dolan contemplates the 'persuasive force of kneeling artless innocence', raises Polly from the ground, and marries her 'in the most solemn manner, according to the ceremonies of her religion' (1752?: 122).

The histories of both Florella and Polly unambiguously present male sexual desire as dangerous to women, which seems likely to have been the case in the mid-eighteenth century, and marriage as a reward for virtuous women who resist the advances of richer, more powerful male admirers, which was less likely to be grounded in fact. The story of Joseph, meanwhile, shows that poor but comely young men can be ruthlessly targeted by unscrupulous wealthier women, so that gender is not necessarily synonymous with sexual vice or virtue. Interestingly, no contemporary critics seem to have objected to any of these stories; given that the age of consent for females in the 1750s was twelve, sexuality was a topic of obvious relevance (and possibly concern) to at least some young readers. Newbery was both reflecting that fact and ahead of his time in discussing it in the first children's periodical. All three stories belie the claim that sexuality was a topic not covered directly in writing for children until the mid-twentieth century, 'with cautionary tales about premarital intercourse' first appearing in Young Adult novels in the USA (Vallone 2009: 186). The *Lilliputian Magazine* provided a form of abstinence-only sex education that may now seem hopelessly outdated but that nonetheless effectively critiqued still ongoing abuses of power and psychological manipulation within heterosexual relationships in a forthright, avant-garde manner.

Although the *Lilliputian Magazine* was ahead of its time both in alerting young readers to the pitfalls of extramarital sex and promoting a more egalitarian society, it was very much of its time in endorsing not just the gender ideology but also the racial prejudice of the mid-eighteenth century. That is evident in 'The History of Little Polly Meanwell', in which an English girl marries an Indian king and reforms a corrupt and wicked nation: 'The morality and good principles cultivated at court, by miss *Polly*, the queen, were soon spread throughout all the kingdom, and it became fashionable for people to be virtuous'; in consequence, 'the murders, adulteries, robberies, thefts &c. with which the nation was continually plagued before' quickly become distant memories (1752?: 123). The treatment of race is even more disturbing in 'The History of Master Tommy Thoroughgood, and Master Francis Froward, Two Apprentices to the same Master', which recounts the adventures of the first and the misadventures of the second titular character. As his surname suggests, young Tommy is a hard-working paragon of virtue who is diligent, honest, and devoted to God; when he grows up, he marries his boss's only daughter, inherits the business, and becomes Lord Mayor of London. By contrast, young Francis is a ne'er-do-well who associates 'with naughty boys in the streets', neglects his work,

and ‘absents himself from church on the Lord’s day’ (1752?: 82, 83); when he grows up, he becomes a highwayman, is captured, tried, and transported for life to Jamaica. On arrival, he is sold ‘to a noted planter, and doom’d to perpetual slavery’ (1752?: 88–9). Repenting of his evil ways, he thanks God for sparing his life and resolves to work as hard as he can for his new master. His diligence is noted and appreciated by his owner, who, through the intervention of Mayor Thoroughgood, grants him his freedom, agrees to help him find a sugar plantation of his own, and procures ‘him a wife with a handsome fortune, who had a sugar-work of her own, and some negroes; he purchased more and by his industry thrived amain’ (1752?: 92). In his will, he bequeaths his soul to God, leaves £50 per annum to buy books of religious devotion for convicts in English prisons, and bestows £500 a year to aid Englishmen, be they convicts or indentured servants of the owners of merchant ships, who are transported and sold as slaves ‘in the publick markets of the colonies, and generally ill-treated’ (1752?: 97). Slavery, it seems, is offensive when English men are deprived of their freedom; by contrast, the enslavement of people of colour is presented as a given and so not questioned at any level.

In its treatment of issues such as gender and race, then, the *Lilliputian Magazine* reflected and endorsed some rather problematic aspects of eighteenth-century thought. Its insistence on the necessity of religious devotion now seems both forced and outdated. Nevertheless, its discussion of other issues, including the use and abuse of power and the basis on which society is best organised, reveals evidence of radical, even seditious, thought. Perhaps its most groundbreaking feat was including the rising generation in these discussions, encouraging them to think about such issues, and thus acknowledging their significance to society, now and in the future.

Notes

1. Grenby shows that Smart wrote ‘A Morning Hymn for all good Little Boys and Girls’ and claims that he may also have written ‘A Pastoral Hymn’ and ‘The Peacock’ (2013b: 225, 227).
2. See Grenby (2000) for an informed discussion of the influence of Spence’s use of *The Lilliputian Magazine* in *A Supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe*.

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FOR THE YOUTH, BY THE YOUTH:
CHILD-CENTRISM AND THE RISE OF THE
FANTASTIC IN JUVENILE PRINT CULTURES
IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY IRELAND

Anindita Bhattacharya

THE LONG HISTORY of colonisation in Ireland and the ensuing religious divide between Catholics and Protestants not only altered the sociopolitical landscape of the country, but also impacted upon the conceptualisation and construction of the ‘child’ and ‘childhood’ in the Irish imagination, as well as in society, polity, and literature.¹ Mary Hatfield’s exploration of Irish middle-class childhoods in the nineteenth century points to a substantial increase in the child population during the 1821 census, resulting in ‘an enormous expansion in educational provision, a growing commercial market for children’s goods, and a professional and intellectual interest in child development from 1800 to 1860’ (2019: 11). Her research also reveals how the conceptualisation of childhood in Ireland differed from its British counterpart owing to Irish children’s rather late entry into labour markets and the idea of childhood becoming synonymous ‘with having an education, material goods, and parental care’ (2019: 13). Hatfield notes that from the last two decades of the eighteenth century into the early nineteenth century there was an unprecedented population expansion, resulting in a shift in Irish demographics, with youths comprising almost 41 per cent of the Irish population. The pervasiveness of youth in Irish society also affected the formation of the Irish middle classes,² who saw their children as ‘social capital’ and a means to upward social mobility.³ The predominance and influence of youth in Irish society therefore resulted in the construction of childhood as a ‘category of personhood’ (Hatfield 2019: 11) This approach to childhood, literacy, and the education of Irish children is reflected in Irish periodical culture, which I argue differed from British periodical culture of the period in its more youth-centric approach to content and contributions. This engagement with the juvenile readers of Irish periodicals had

a profound effect on wider Irish print culture. Furthermore, Irish publications were also affected by the question of religious divide. The banning of Catholic education from 1709 to 1782 created a sociopolitical divide.⁴ Protestant elites enjoyed exclusive access to state education and Catholic children were relegated to attending illegal fee-paying hedge schools. This eventually led to the establishment of the National School System in 1831, which was but a more orchestrated attempt by the British Empire to control its 'closest colony' (Walsh 2016: 8).

The emergence of different kinds of schools promoting conflicting religious ideologies resulted in differential and denominational education imparted to Irish children in the nineteenth century, problematising standardised conceptualisations of childhood. But across schools, there was not any stark curricular difference. While the three R's (reading, writing, and arithmetic) were central to the school syllabi in all these institutions (Parkes 2016: 46), hedge schools were known for their use of chapbook literature (Ó Ciosáin 1997: 96–7) and charter schools for their proselytising literature. Again, the use of chapbooks for education was unique to the Irish schooling experience. Since chapbooks were cheap to print and locally procured, they were more accessible to the poor Irish population. These books were not always religious but also included tales of wonder, magic, highwaymen, and rogues, which were at odds with the Victorian curriculum.⁵ The national school system was established to homogenise these disparate educational practices, facilitate basic literacy, and organise non-denominational teaching among the poor. But their neglect of the Irish language and literature indicated a denial of impartial education.

This chapter argues that juvenile periodicals published by Irish presses responded to the need for alternative reading material for Irish young people that was age-appropriate and democratic. Granted that periodical literature for young people in Ireland primarily reflected Victorian sensibilities in the first half of the nineteenth century, especially publications that were originally printed in England and distributed in the colonies, those that were a product of the local presses in Ireland marked a departure from their British versions. The titles under discussion – the *Juvenile Magazine* (1814–15), *Dublin Family Magazine or The Dublin Juvenile Magazine or Literary and Religious Miscellany* (launched in 1829), *Duffy's Hibernian Magazine* (launched in 1860), and *Young Ireland: An Irish Magazine of Entertainment and Instruction* (launched in 1875) – have been selected for their strong focus on juveniles, although they were sometimes intended for both children and adults. Magazines with religious or missionary objectives were often addressed to the parents who would then instruct their children. In keeping with this, the publications examined here are intended for a wide readership that includes adults but, as I demonstrate, the juvenile experience is of fundamental importance to them. I argue that

the child-centric approach adopted by the editors of these periodicals and magazines led to the emergence of a more robust and distinct Irish voice in print, especially around the 1850s. Moreover, I explore how the nationalist Young Ireland Movement of the 1840s,⁶ together with a renewed interest in antiquities, resulted in an explosion of supernatural tales and fantastic stories in juvenile periodicals bearing nationalist undertones. Several short stories that appeared in these publications served as a precedent for future adaptations of Irish folk literature and fairy tales. During a period of burgeoning nationalism, these recreational trends in the Irish press signalled a shift towards child-centrism, which can be understood as a corrective to the extreme religious sentimentalism of the Victorian era and a critique of imperialism.

Centring the Child in Irish Juvenile Print Culture

Despite having a rich oral tradition and a society well disposed to literary and intellectual recreations, Ireland's colonial status was a formidable impediment to the growth of printing and publishing industries in the country. The Act of Union, passed in 1800, resulted in the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and led to the extension of copyright laws prevalent in England to Ireland, which established greater colonial control of the Irish press and sounded a death knell for cheap reprints.⁷ It was only after the Catholic Emancipation in 1829 that the tides began to turn as far as publishing was concerned. Existing scholarship on periodicals printed and distributed in Ireland before the 1830s is limited to accounts by certain personalities such as the doctor, writer, historian, and abolitionist Richard Robert Madden, who wrote the two volumes of *The History of Irish Periodical Literature, from the End of the 17th to the Middle of the 19th Century* (1867). Christopher Clinton Hoey, another notable person, was a regular contributor to magazines like the *Irish Builder* (1867–1929) and the *Irishman* (1858–85), although these publications were not particularly aimed at a juvenile readership. The *Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals: 1800 to 1900* lists the *Casket* (1797–8) or *Hesperian* magazine, edited by Anna and Richard Milliken and printed in Cork, as one of the earliest pre-emancipation juvenile periodicals known in Ireland. The *Juvenile Magazine*, edited by Thomas Fisher, and the *Dublin Family Magazine or The Dublin Juvenile Magazine or Literary and Religious Miscellany*, printed by William Curry Junior and Sons, are not listed in the directory but are accounted for in the Irish National Archives (National Library of Ireland) as some of the extant Irish publications to appear before or around the time of Catholic Emancipation that were not imitations or reprints of British magazines. Owing to the strict laws controlling the printing of

books in Ireland, not all juvenile periodicals printed in England were circulated in Ireland. Of the few that were reprinted in Ireland, the majority were by religious societies. In keeping with the contemporary trend in the nineteenth century, juvenile literature was meant to ‘improve and instruct the young’ (Drotner 1988: 21). Most nineteenth-century juvenile periodicals in Britain prior to the 1850s, published by tract societies and Sunday schools, ‘agreed that reading was of central importance in the moral edification of the young’ (Drotner 1988: 24). For example, the articles published in the British magazines such as *Youth’s Magazine; or Evangelical Miscellany* (1805) and the *Child’s Companion*, the *Children’s Friend*, and the *Child’s Magazine*, all launched in 1824, were similar in tone and subject matter. The articles were based on topics such as the conflict between good and evil, the importance of reading the Bible, choosing a life of piety instead of one of affluence, understanding the difference between sin and virtue, and showing unwavering fealty to God and family.

As Mary Shine Thompson rightly points out in her introduction to *Young Irelands: Studies in Children’s Literature*, juvenile print literature in Ireland came to be characterised by the complex dilemma of balancing British imperialistic and Irish nationalistic attitudes (Thompson 2011: 13–14). British periodical literature experienced several transformations during the long nineteenth century. Kirsten Drotner attributes the changing nature of the appeal of magazines for young people and also for their parents to the broadening of the marketplace, which meant that publications attempted to cater to the class, gender, and social conditions of the intended reader. For example, titles such as *Aunt Judy’s Magazine* (launched in 1866) and *Every Boy’s Magazine* (founded in 1862) catered to the children of the gentry and middle classes, whereas cheaper periodicals such as *Chatterbox* (from 1866 onwards) targeted less affluent families. This diversification of the market reflected and responded to the intellectual needs of young people growing up during a period of thriving consumerism and increasing access to education for all. In Ireland, though, this need came to be characterised by ‘differentiating Ireland’s political, ethical and cultural agenda from that of its imperial neighbour, Britain’ (Thompson 2011: 10). Editors operating in the Irish market particularly focused on this need by publishing magazines that appealed to young people, adopting a more secular approach to literature, and publishing a variety of articles. By ‘managing culture, particularly print culture’ so that ‘ideas could be firmly embedded and powers centralised – and so ideological and political change could be generated’, among Young Irelanders (Thompson 2011: 10), editors of magazines such as *Dublin Juvenile Magazine* further amplified the Irish voice in their publications.

Of the British magazines published in London and reprinted in Ireland, a similar change in editorial preferences can be observed, to a degree, in

the *Select Magazine for the Instruction and Amusement of Young Persons* (1822). The opening piece in the first issue of the first volume of the magazine is a verse from the Book of Genesis, followed by several sermonic stories such as 'The Infant's Grave', a cautionary tale of the consequences of an irreligious life leading to a woman's separation from her infant (Jan 1822: 9–18; see Figure 2.1). A later piece, 'The Faithful Little Girl', about a little girl's zeal for the missionary work of the Anglican Church, is particularly striking in its use of racialised language when Lucilla declares that she 'might go abroad too, and preach to the poor black people' (Jan 1822: 21). At the same time, by including secular material such as an extract from the explorer Captain Parry's journal from the voyage for the discovery of the North West Passage (Jan 1822: 42–5), a contemplative piece on chemistry (Jan 1822: 37–9), and educational articles such as 'Table of Very Simple Freezing Mixtures' (Jan 1822: 41–2), alongside stories of atonement, infant death, and evangelical missions in colonies, the editors sought to balance religious melodrama with the educational articles that they thought would engage juvenile minds. The ethnocentrism and gendered narrativisation seen in the first issue are revised in the subsequent numbers. For example, 'Courageous Female', a non-fiction article on the adventures of a slave girl who saves several lives from a calamity belonged to this category and demonstrates a positive view of class differences and female agency (July 1822: 47–8). Similarly, unlike the article in the first issue where Lucilla's mother quite conveniently presupposes the hostility of the 'blacks' towards the missionaries in line with colonial stereotypes, 'Industry of an African Slave' presents an opinion piece on an African slave in America who relentlessly strives for his independence in the face of several disappointments (Jan 1823: 33–4). Editors became aware of the changing sensibilities of the reading public and sought to make these publications interesting for young people who already had a lot of exposure to solely evangelical literature.

Irish juvenile periodicals such as the *Juvenile Magazine*, however, arguably take this changing sensibility much further by adopting a more clearly youth-centric approach. The 'Prospectus to the *Juvenile Magazine*' published by its proprietor, Thomas Fisher, in 1814 'promises a rich and palatable selection of matter' filled with 'entertaining, brilliant, profound and profitable ideas', with the inclusion of literature and poetry and occasionally 'essays of a serious cast' soliciting generous correspondences from the readers (Jan 1814: 1–2). When compared with the 'Address' to the *Select Magazine*, which calls the magazine a 'select fund of instruction and amusement' and does not distinguish between instruction and pleasure, believing that 'much of the latter is procured by means of the former', the distinction in the editorial objectives is clear. Fisher's magazine seeks engagement with readers, offering a balance of amusement and education. By contrast,



THE INFANT'S GRAVE.

Published by T. Agnew & Son, Wellington Square, January 1st 1822.

THE

SELECT MAGAZINE,

FOR THE

INSTRUCTION AND AMUSEMENT

OF

Young Persons.

FOR THE YEAR 1822.

VOLUME I.

PRINTED BY F. HOULSTON AND SON,
WELLINGTON, SALOP:

And sold by
Scatcherd and Co. Ave-Maria Lane, London; W. Whyte and Co. St. Andrew's
Street, Edinburgh; and R. Tins, Grafton Street, Dublin.

[Entered at Stationers' Hall.]

Figure 2.1: Cover of the Select Magazine for the Instruction and Amusement of Young Persons 1, 1822

Select Magazine lacks the playfulness of Fisher's articles and intends to 'teach' children rather than share ideas. The editor of the *Select Magazine* emphasises 'learning', specifically moral and religious, but Fisher is keen on representing the 'thoughts and ideas' that come to the young minds. In the correspondence published as an address to the editor of the *Select Magazine*, titled 'On the Influence of Encouragement', the author, Cecil, solicits the 'attention of those Parents and Instructors of youth through whose hands your successive numbers will probably pass, before they reach the ultimate objects of their destination' (Mar 1822: 159), thus trivialising the agency of the child reader in the selection and perusal of leisurely reading matter.

Conversely, similar notes to the editor of the *Juvenile Magazine* reflect a genuine interest in the preferences, enquiries, and musings of young readers. The articles that appeared in *Select Magazine*, including the more secular ones, had a stern, admonishing, rather impersonal tone, suggestive of an adult voice and perspective rather than that of a young person. But the articles and correspondences that appeared in Fisher's magazine were mostly humorous, intimate, and written in a light-hearted conversational style representing juvenile utterance. Even those that were of a more pensive nature, like the poem written by a young girl called Amelia during an illness or 'Dream' by an unnamed girl of fourteen, both of which appeared in the first volume of the *Juvenile Magazine*, foregrounded ideas of cherishing the present and living in the moment as opposed to resentment or defeat regarding the children's predicaments. Childhood inflictions, death, and children's attitudes towards death are common themes in Victorian literature. As M. F. Thwaite observes:

Long drawn-out death scenes (a typical feature of Victorian fiction), such as the fate of the little boy bitten by a mad dog, were apparently a source of a horrific or inspiring enjoyment, for what did all the protracted sufferings matter, if the little victim died with the words, Happy! Happy! on his lips? A celestial home, a heaven as beautiful as fairyland, awaited these young souls. (1967: 9)

In the above-mentioned poems, however, this 'enjoyment of death' is replaced by introspection and contemplation on life. When Amelia writes, 'When I could dance or sing no more / It then occurred how sad 'twould be / Were this world only made for me' (Jan 1814: 9), she expresses her sorrow and disappointment at her imminent death, imagining a world only made for her. The young girl in 'Dream', on the other hand, philosophises about the importance of 'Youth and manhood', which are but 'seasons of joy and pleasure, that is the time to provide for the cold winter of age, to store up the honey of good actions' (Jan 1844: 14), after she dreams of the four

seasons of life during her illness. The Horatian injunction of 'carpe diem' is implied in the ruminations of the girl.

As opposed to the representation of women in tract society publications or in many later Victorian periodicals, which were dominated by male authors and editors, the young female correspondents, their opinions, and their literary endeavours were greatly encouraged by the editor. In the first issue of the *Juvenile Magazine*, Fisher invites 'Ladies who are good enough to favour him', to put their thoughts on paper because he would want to 'by no means prevent a female genius' from 'producing their charming compositions' (Jan 1814: 8). For example, in the July 1814 issue of the *Juvenile Magazine*, Julia's description of a party not only articulates the meditations of a young mind but also sheds light on several contemporary issues about education and parenting. Instead of adult opinions on children, Julia's letter to the editor is an opinion piece on the behaviour of adults. She recounts an incident in which Miss Ridge, presumably a governess, decides to read Maria Edgeworth's 'Rosanna' to a gathering of young people, despite Julia proposing 'popular tales' for the occasion. Soon children are overcome with ennui at the reading of Miss Edgeworth's book and Miss Ridge requests a more entertaining one for the next session. Julia then asks the editor to suggest some reading material for the idle hours, stating that good counsel, especially the 'mild authority of the parent[,] contribute[s] to the regular and true happiness of children, both in business and pleasure' (July 1814: 4). This letter from a young girl implies that early nineteenth-century adults failed to understand the child and its needs in ways that echo debates about children's reading habits that are still ongoing, and also demonstrates that child readers could resist adult assumptions about what constituted suitable reading matter and advocate for their own reading pleasure.

The letters written by the magazine's female readers presented varying and interesting viewpoints. For example, one girl observes that when a boy writes letters to his friends and family he tries to sound clever, assuming that his parents 'will despise a history of his pleasures', when she is most certain that the parents of a boy 'delight in hearing of his amusements as well as his learning' (*Juvenile Magazine* Mar 1814: 24), debunking contemporary notions of parental motivations in prioritising austerity and instruction over the childish manners of juveniles and consolidating the magazine's youth-centric approach.

Even articles by adult correspondents were not purposefully instructive or pedantic. For instance, letters by Zachariah Inman and Bridget Wilkins discuss basic human nature in an anecdotal and humorous style. Inman wonders why it is that women stare at him all the time although he is not particularly young or handsome, while Wilkins shares a letter from her sister who fails to understand the peculiar behaviour of her daughter after

the arrival of a young tenant in their house. Thoughts on love and conjugal understanding were also considered for publication. In one article, a young boy called Jeremiah Truelove writes to the editor about the changes in his beloved after she returns from the city and entreats the editor to 'give a hint to the ladies to carry their own little articles, lest they lose their lovers by not doing so' (*Juvenile Magazine* Sep 1814: 17). Even those articles or letters which were instructive in nature, like 'Industry and Idleness', 'Contentment', or 'The Art of Being Happy', were playful and witty. Also, the magazine had an 'Original Poetry' section, soliciting original compositions. Articles extolling Christian virtues talked about realistic expectations and desires, not the extremism of religious fervour. For instance, the article 'To the Boys of Ballitore School', on the passing of a teacher, compares the teacher's reaction on his deathbed to that of a rich man at his, to underline what it means to be a true Christian. Whereas the teacher's last thoughts were on doing away with anything in his house that measures time, the rich man laments the missed opportunity of enjoying his five thousand pounds. The conflict between rational moralism and romanticism was never as pronounced as in the nineteenth century. Topics pertaining to folklore or the supernatural were not necessarily considered to be suitable material for children and were chosen judiciously by the British periodical editors. Those which did appear were admonitory or doleful, such as the story 'Harry's rash wish, and how the fairies granted it'.⁸ In this story, Harry wishes there were no babies in the world, perturbed by the constant cries of his infant sister, and in his dream the fairies wipe the earth of children. The supernatural beings are described as 'a strange lot' who engage in some ceremony that 'terrifies' little Harry. He meets an old man who tells him how fairies harm 'silly folks by granting their silly wishes' (De Vries 1967: 73–8).

The mid-Victorian period marked a transition in the consumption of British children's literature and print culture with adventure stories and imaginary tales gaining popularity, but religion and morality continued to dominate main literary themes (Ackerman 1984: 86–7). This shift in what was deemed suitable for juvenile reading influenced Irish publications such as the *Juvenile Magazine* and the *Dublin Juvenile Magazine* or *The Dublin Family Magazine* too. These publications turned their attention to Ireland's pagan and supernatural past and especially in resurrecting and adapting these legends with an anti-colonial stance. In the article 'Account of an Excursion to Poolafouca', published in *Juvenile Magazine*, the editor describes a visit to the falls of Poolafouca in Wicklow with some boys of Ballitore school, informing readers about the legend behind the name of the falls. He writes, 'The romantic features of this scene must have always made an impression, from which it has derived its name, signifying the hole of the Demon, or Pouca', addressing it as a 'sort of familiar spirit that used to be a

very important personage in the popular superstitions of the Irish' (*Juvenile Magazine* July 1814: 5). In doing so, the article orientates the readers to Irish folklore and its geographical associations. 'The Historical Sketches of Ireland', published in the May 1829 issue of the *Dublin Juvenile Magazine*, is a piece on Irish antiquities corroborating the legend of the Druids and the Druidic ceremonies. It speaks of the 'spiritual and refined religion of the Druids' (May 1829: 7) before the coming of Christianity. It is also hinted that the Celts would have destroyed all the remnants of this pagan religion had it not been for the advent of Christianity and the effort of the monks to preserve what remained. Therefore, in the pages of these magazines, we see the rise of the Irish voice through the publication of articles with typically Irish (as opposed to British) themes, including supernatural tales (which became synonymous with Irish national identity and postcolonial nostalgia) and legends, as well as religious and educational articles, anecdotes, and personal letters, for the distinctly Irish juvenile reader.

In Amicus's note to the editor published in the first issue of the *Dublin Juvenile Magazine*, lauding the intentions of the editor for publishing this magazine, the author writes:

Our metropolis has long lain in the background, in this respect; but now it seems to be emerging from the thralldom of circumstances, and its *patriotic literati* may be allowed to hope it will go on progressively improving, till it bears some share of affinity with that of its lesser neighbour kingdom, whose literary productions are so many. (Apr 1829: 5)

He also states in the same article that 'Ireland's children are confessedly not inferior in mental endowments to those of any part of the British Empire' (*Dublin Juvenile Magazine* Apr 1829: 3) and perfectly capable of producing their own. The daily outpouring of British and Scottish religious and literary works in Ireland does not signify that Ireland 'should forbear an attempt at having her own' (Apr 1829: 3).

Such early nineteenth-century magazines served as a precursor to those that appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century in Ireland, especially after the Young Ireland movement and the emergence of a distinctly nationalist press, which offered a different perspective from those imported from London. In Victorian England children were being taught rhymes such as 'Play up Tom Green, "God Save the Queen", / And "Rule Britannia" too; / With colours gay we'll march away, / And rival Waterloo!' and magazines published by the Anglican Church such as the *Juvenile Missionary Magazine* (from 1844; see Figure 2.2) perpetuated images of depravity and barbarism in British colonies in Africa and India, calling upon the youth to embark on missions to convert heathens. In this way, tract society and missionary magazines aided colonial expansion and the proselytising mission of the British Empire.

THE

JUVENILE MISSIONARY

MAGAZINE.

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VOL. I.

JUNE TO DECEMBER.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR AND PUBLISHED BY
The Directors of the London Missionary Society;

AND SOLD BY
J. SNOW, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1844.

Figure 2.2: Cover of the *Juvenile Missionary Magazine* 1, 1844.