Rebellious Youth:
The Development of Fiction for the Adolescent Audience, 1850-1900

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Abstract

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of both the idea of adolescence and a new genre of literature designed for this young audience. In this dissertation, I trace the development of adolescent fiction across several textual forms—including youth novels, boys' periodicals, and girls' periodicals—analyzing the ways it drew from and informed ideas about young people's behavior during the Victorian era. I focus, in particular, on literary representations of youthful rebellion, an increasingly prominent part of the expected adolescent experience. As I show, the authors of adolescent novels and periodical fiction regularly portrayed young people's campaigns for personal and generational independence in their works. When creating these depictions, however, they had to grapple with the conflict between adolescents' desire for freedom and change and adults' insistence upon obedience and stability. The tenuous balance each narrative struck between these competing demands varied depending upon its expectations of its audience's gender and purchasing power, the degree of parental scrutiny it was likely to receive, and its own textual form. In every case, the act of catering to conflicting interests rippled out across the narrative, as texts pointedly framed political, social, and religious ideas in ways meant to repress or enact young readers' rebellious goals. The tension that emerged from this intergenerational conflict ultimately became a defining feature of the adolescent genre, one that continues to inform literature for young people to this day.

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The "doubtful state between boy and man":[1]
The Development of Adolescent Literature in Nineteenth-Century England

In his 1888 review of juvenile literature, critic Edward Salmon argued,

> Whoever undertakes to write the literary history of England during the latter half of the Nineteenth Century will be confronted by a force hitherto almost non-existent. The floods of books for boys and girls with which the approach of Christmas has in recent years been heralded, were unknown four decades ago. . . . [Until that time] books appealing especially to boys and girls—boys and girls, that is, of from ten or twelve to eighteen or twenty years of age, and not children of the nursery—were few and far between. . . . [G]enerally speaking, up to 1850 fiction was confined to the novel and the nursery tale.[2]

Salmon was hardly the only critic to note a new and growing category of fiction for young people. His contemporary, A. J. Buckland, argued that "thousands of books … designed to instruct, to amuse, or to improve the rising generation" had come into existence within living memory.[3] Charles J. Robinson claimed in *The Academy* that books written "to delight and stimulate the imaginative faculty of the young" belonged "especially to the age in which we live."[4] In the early decades of the nineteenth century, "the whole of the literature for children then in existence might have been placed upon a single shelf of the bookcase," but by 1862, critics had begun to complain about the "flood of volumes" designed for youth—especially older youth—that "literally pour[s] in upon us."[5]

Although modern scholars of the young adult novel frequently locate the "new field of writing for teen-agers" in the mid-twentieth century, significant evidence shows that—as Salmon stated—the birth of adolescent literature can be traced to the mid-Victorian era.[6] Critics including J. S. Bratton, Kirsten Drotner, Charles Ferrall, and Anne Jackson have shown that

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[1] "The Struggles of Adolescence," 121.
[2] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 32-33.
[3] Buckland, "On Children's Literature," 319.
[4] Robinson, review of *The Child and his Book*, 280.
[5] Buckland, "On Children's Literature," 319; "Our Library Table," ii.
[6] Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 11.

fiction for "older children and young persons" actually began to emerge in the 1850s, building upon the expanding market for children's literature that appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century.[7] This adolescent genre, which quickly became popular, expanded even further following the 1870 Education Act, as publishers attempted to tap into a newly literate young audience.[8] By the end of the nineteenth century, adolescent fiction was an established part of the literary landscape, making up a sizable fifteen percent of the book trade in Britain and appearing daily in bookstalls in the form of adolescent periodicals.[9]

While this new genre has received some attention from scholars of nineteenth-century literature, its unique position as both a repository for and arbiter of ideas about young people remains underexplored. In the following dissertation, I will analyze the role of adolescent literature in the second half of the Victorian era, looking at the ways that fiction for teenagers engaged with contemporary ideas about adolescence, fostered narratives about appropriate personal development, and—in some cases—became a vehicle for young people to express the needs and desires of a newly discovered generation. I will focus, in particular, on the ways adolescent texts reflected the fraught power dynamics of young people's relationships with adult authority figures, balancing the conservative guidance required by parents and teachers against the more subversive wishes of youthful readers. By assessing the genre's various attempts to meet these competing claims, I will use adolescent fiction to offer a window not just into society's expectations of young people, but also into contemporary teenagers' demands for themselves.

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[7] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 58-59, 102-03; Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 63; Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 5.
[8] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 5; Dixon, "Children and the Press," 135.
[9] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 5-6; Dixon, "Children and the Press," 133.

The Emergence of the Idea of Adolescence

In large measure, the birth of adolescent literature in the Victorian era was linked to the contemporaneous development of the concept of adolescence itself. Although the term "adolescence"—derived from the Latin *adolescere,* "to grow up"—had been in use since the 1830s, the idea that young people past the age of puberty encompass a separate stage of life did not emerge until later in the century.[10] The concept of the child had existed for centuries (Philippe Ariès famously traced the modern idea of childhood to the seventeenth century), but the idea of adolescence—the period bridging dependent childhood and socially mature adulthood—appeared later, emerging only in the wake of developments in education, labor practices, and family structure that paved the way for a generational class of semi-dependent youth.[11]

For the past several decades, there has been debate among scholars about the date of the "discovery" of adolescence. The earliest historiographers of youth generally argued that the idea of adolescence did not exist until the end of the century, when it was "created almost singlehandedly" by G. Stanley Hall, the president of Clark University and an important figure in the early history of American psychology.[12] In his seminal 1904 work, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education*, Hall chronicled the physiological and psychological development that occurred in young people aged twelve to twenty-five, claiming that adolescence represented a "new birth," complete with a sexual and spiritual awakening and near-constant emotional turmoil.[13] There can

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[10] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 2-3; Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 1.
[11] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 8; Vanden Bossche, "Moving Out: Adolescence," 83, 85. For Ariès' ideas about the development of childhood, see *Centuries of Childhood*, 26.
[12] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 28; Demos and Demos, "Adolescence in Historical Perspective," 635. See also Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 4; Demos, *Past, Present, and Personal*, 93.
[13] Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 1, xiii; Griffin, *Representations of Youth*, 15-16.

be no doubt that Hall popularized the concept of adolescence, as the success of his work in both America and Britain led to a significant increase in discussions about this "intermediate stage" of life.[14] Hall himself also argued for the originality of *Adolescence*, presenting it as "the first attempt to bring together the various aspects of its vast and complex theme."[15]

As a number of critics have noted, however, Hall's work was not an unprecedented invention, but rather a synthesis of earlier nineteenth-century ideas about education, employment, family, and sexuality.[16] In fact, many scholars argue that the idea—if not the scientific study—of this stage of life began in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the transition from childhood to adulthood became increasingly lengthy and complex.[17] In Britain, the expansion of education—particularly through the reform of public schools—was arguably the most important factor in this process, as it led to the cloistering of middle- and upper-class boys in educational institutions.[18] This effectively created an extended state of dependence for young men of higher social classes, keeping them out of the workforce, subjecting them to the continued authority of teachers, and restricting them to a space outside the worlds of both childhood and adulthood.[19] This educational separation began to trickle down into the working class with the advent of universal schooling in 1870, which—coupled with the increasing expenses of setting up a household that forced many teenagers to postpone marriage—delayed young people's ability to exercise their independence.[20] Middle-class girls, too, might be sent away to the liminal world of boarding school or, if they failed to marry, find themselves no

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[14] Savage, *Teenage*, 66.
[15] Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 1, xix.
[16] Griffin, *Representations of Youth*, 11-12; Gillis, *Youth and History*, 105; Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 29; Vanden Bossche, "Moving Out: Adolescence," 82.
[17] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 8; Griffin, *Representations of Youth*, 12-13.
[18] Gillis, *Youth and History*, 102, 105; Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 52.
[19] Gillis, *Youth and History*, 107; Vanden Bossche, "Moving Out: Adolescence," 84-85.
[20] Vanden Bossche, "Moving Out: Adolescence," 85; Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 8.

longer children, but unable to take on the adult role of wife and mother.[21] This latter issue was especially problematic at mid-century, when, as the 1851 Census revealed, the number of marriageable women far outstripped the quantity of available men.[22]

Additional changes in labor practices and leisure habits also informed the mid-century development of the idea of adolescence. The steady limitations placed on child labor diminished young people's importance to the national economy and delayed their entry into the adult world of work.[23] The contemporaneous creation of youth clubs and societies divorced leisure activities for teenagers from those for children and adults.[24] Reformatories and industrial schools also offered separate spaces for adolescent lawbreakers and destitute young people, segregating them from adult offenders and offering new routes to rehabilitation and recovery.[25] Taken together with changes in education and the rising age of marriage, these new programs and practices fostered the idea of youth as a distinct social category that shared generational enthusiasms and challenges.

The changes in young people's experiences sparked popular conversations about adolescence as a separate stage of life. Parenting manuals, religious journals, newspapers, and magazines began to consider this new category of human that was "something more than a child, but yet scarcely [an adult]."[26] The concept of adolescence gained scientific traction with the launch of the child study movement in the late 1870s and 1880s, as scientists like James Sully began exploring the youthful mind.[27] Ideas of adolescence also informed the work of educational and social reformers in the 1890s and 1900s, shaping ideas about the "boy labor problem" and

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[21] Gillis, *Youth and History*, 99-100.
[22] Liggins, *Odd Women?*, 29.
[23] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 8, 70-71.
[24] Ibid., 36, 148-49, 155.
[25] Ibid., 36, 164-66.
[26] "The Two Roads," 203.
[27] Shuttleworth, *The Mind of the Child*, 7-8, 145-46.

juvenile delinquency.[28] By the time Hall produced *Adolescence* in 1904, his arguments were, as John Springhall has remarked, "simply a culmination of views that had been around in less systematic form for much of the nineteenth century."[29]

There are, it should be noted, some scholars who argue that adolescence was not a product of the nineteenth century, but existed in some form in earlier periods. Lawrence Stone, for example, posits that London apprentices developed "an adolescent sub-culture" in the early sixteenth century, while Patricia Spacks looks to the writing of Samuel Johnson and John Locke to prove that youth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries "displayed the characteristics we have come to consider typical of this lifestage."[30] These arguments, however, suffer from two major weaknesses. First, they tend to focus only on very select groups, presenting adolescence as an experience available under exceptional circumstances, rather than as a general stage of life.[31] Second, and perhaps more problematic, they apply modern conceptions of youth, developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to populations that lacked this cultural context, cherry-picking examples of past youth behavior that fit modern expectations. The reality is that, while some individuals did discuss or even experience a phase of life between childhood and adulthood, the vast majority of people before 1850 did not recognize this concept. Rousseau's *Emile* (1762), for example, described puberty as "a second birth" and the period of dependent youth as full of "storm and stress," but for much of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, his work primarily informed only theories of education in England.[32] It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that British sociologists and psychologists embraced Rousseau's

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[28] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 26-27; Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 2.
[29] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 29.
[30] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England*, 376; Spacks, *The Adolescent Idea*, 7-8.
[31] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 9-10.
[32] Savage, *Teenage*, 13; Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 22-3; Shuttleworth, *The Mind of the Child*, 6.

work as representative of a new life stage, finding in his descriptions of youth development the reflection of their own theories about adolescence.[33]

As the idea of adolescence developed in the nineteenth century, critics began to identify and codify certain expectations of adolescent growth and behavior. Some of these expectations were physiological changes associated with puberty, including an increase in weight, height, and body shape; the development of the reproductive organs; the beginning of menstruation; etc.[34] More often, however, nineteenth-century discussions about adolescence focused on young people's psychological characteristics, as the authors of popular articles and parenting manuals described the common behavior seen among young people in their teens and early twenties. Adolescence—referred to simply as "youth" until the end of the century—became associated with egotism, selfishness, and a general desire for attention.[35] Critics warned adult guardians that their young charges were undergoing a "disagreeable age," during which young people would experience "too much sentiment," become overwhelmed by contradictory emotions, and develop a consciousness of spiritual life that might break out into religious or political fervor.[36] Some of these ideas could be traced back to writers like Rousseau, but others were derived from the social norms of—and adult anxieties about—middle-class boys and girls who were moving outside the realm of childhood.[37]

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[33] Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 174; Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 1, xiii. Interestingly, many psychologists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries turned to literary works to substantiate their interpretations of adolescent behavior. Clouston and Burnham, for example, used characters like Maggie Tulliver and Gwendolen Harleth to illustrate adolescents' "imprisoned passions," "intense desire for admiration," "impulsive activity," and "inchoate religious and ethical sentiments." Hall, too, argued that novels provided "admirable descriptions of … the changes characteristic of every stage of the [adolescent] transformation." For more, see Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 177; Clouston, *Clinical Lectures on Mental Diseases,* 537; Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 1, 513.
[34] Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 175-76; Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 33.
[35] Middle Age, "Seniors and Juniors," 79.
[36] "School and College Life," 131; Pullan, *Maternal Counsels to a Daughter*, xi; Demos and Demos, "Adolescence in Historical Perspective," 635; "Debatable Ground," 493.
[37] Gillis, *Youth and History*, 116-17, 114.

One of the most frequent characteristics attributed to adolescence in the second half of the nineteenth century was a desire for independence, which often manifested as rebellion against adult authority. Writers complained about "the waywardness of youth" and young people's "determined disobedience," arguing that youth offered adults "none of the respect, the docility of spirit, the reverence which should belong to living under a superior rule."[38] Some critics attributed this "want of reverence" to modern society, arguing that "the progress of democratic opinions has tended to encourage the spirit of rebellion even against authority."[39] For many, however, this desire for freedom from adult control seemed an innate characteristic of the youthful experience. As the *Journal of Women's Education Union* argued in 1877, "On the continent of Europe and in America, as among ourselves, there is the same lament over the absence of reverence and respect in the young, shown in manners, in language, in the literature preferred, in the forms of amusement sought, in the formation of their social code."[40] This indicated that young people's rebellious instincts were "not caused by individual peculiarities of home life, or of education," but instead were an integral part of the adolescent life stage.[41]

These early discussions about adolescence informed late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scientific developments. Scottish psychiatrist Thomas Clouston highlighted the "sentimentality" and "egotism" of the age group, arguing that young people were craving notice and action.[42] William Burnham, writing in 1891, also drew on past arguments about youth development in his statement on adolescent psychology, claiming, "The adolescent mind is filled with hopes, dreams, tempestuous passions, and new ideas. Social and ethical impulses become

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[38] Ellis, *The Daughters of England*, 190; "Address to Our Readers," 6; E. S. "Some Modern Hindrances to Education," 115.
[39] "Our Modern Youth," 116, 118.
[40] E. S. "Some Modern Hindrances to Education," 115.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Clouston, *Clinical Lectures on Mental Diseases*, 537-39.

dominant. . . . Political or religious zeal sometimes becomes the main-spring of action."[43] Even Hall himself famously framed adolescence as "a period of storm and stress," arguing that it was an "age of sentiment and of religion, of rapid fluctuation of mood," in which "'teens' are emotionally unstable" and "Self-feeling is increased, and we have all degrees of egoism."[44] Although psychologists presented these as scientific insights, the characteristics they referenced—and even the language they used to frame them—regularly harkened back to earlier discussions by non-specialist writers.

Turn-of-the-century psychologists also drew on mid-century ideas about youth when they presented a desire for autonomy and a tendency toward rebellion as hallmarks of the adolescent experience. Burnham noted that adolescents' "will seems often to grow stronger" after childhood, leading to a "reaction against authority."[45] Hall, too, argued that adolescents would experience "the passion to realize freedom," leading them to "strain to their uttermost against old restrictions" and show a sudden lack of respect to their parents, who would have "ceased to be the highest ideals."[46] John Slaughter, Chairman of the Eugenics Society and Secretary of the English Sociology Society, even defined adolescence in 1911 as a period of "revolt from authority and struggle toward individuality."[47] A similar focus among European psychological schools (including Freud's argument that "the whole progress of society rests upon the opposition between successive generations") meant that, by the end of the century, young people's desire to reject adult control had become a definitive—even necessary—part of the adolescent experience.[48]

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[43] Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 176.
[44] Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 1, xiii, xv; Vol. 2, 74, 79.
[45] Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 180, 191.
[46] Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 2, 89-90, 383.
[47] Slaughter, *The Adolescent*, 6.
[48] Freud, "Family Romances," 237.

Literature for Adolescents

Fiction for adolescent readers emerged against this backdrop. As parents, critics, sociologists, and psychologists identified and drew attention to a new class of young people, authors and publishers began producing works for this newly recognized audience. Thanks to increasing literacy, an expansion in textual production, and reductions in the newspaper, advertising, and paper taxes, the genre expanded quickly. Publishers began to produce both single-volume novels and weekly or monthly periodicals for adolescents, most of them explicitly targeting readers of a particular gender and, in some cases, religious preference.[49] A number of authors built successful careers around this new type of literature, with some, such as the popular boys' writer, G. A. Henty, selling as many as one hundred and fifty thousand copies of his works each year.[50] Although teenagers did not exclusively read adolescent literature—as an 1884 survey by Charles Welsh revealed, young people regularly read and enjoyed texts by authors including Scott, Dickens, and Shakespeare—producers of adolescent works were uniquely attuned to the needs and desires of their young audience.[51] In order to attract readers, they paid careful attention to young people's expectations, delivering tales of adventure, school life, history, or domesticity, as their audience demanded. They also spoke directly to young readers' needs, offering the guidance, support, and, on occasion, chastisement that they expected readers would require.

When tailoring their works to suit the needs and preferences of their youthful audience, authors and publishers invariably looked to contemporary expectations of young people's psychological characteristics. In fact, as I will show in this dissertation, they consciously

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[49] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 6.
[50] Ibid., 5-6.
[51] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 12-14, 21; Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 76.

developed literature in dialogue with nineteenth-century ideas about adolescence, using these beliefs to guide their understanding of readers' struggles and values. In doing so, writers hoped to engage young people by focusing on ideas and topics that would naturally appeal to them. At the same time, anticipating that the adolescent journey would be fraught with challenges, authors also aimed to use literature to shepherd youthful readers safely through this dangerous developmental landscape. Adolescent literature thus came to serve seemingly opposing purposes: on the one hand, it offered conservative guidelines for appropriate youthful development, and—on the other—it functioned as a vehicle for young people to express their unrealized, often radical aspirations and desires.

In order to demonstrate the ways adolescent literature engaged with and fostered contemporary ideas about adolescence, I will focus in particular on the topic of youthful rebellion. As I will show, almost every writer for adolescents engaged in some way with young people's desire for autonomy, recognizing this as a primary characteristic of the adolescent experience. Texts for young people offered narratives about rebellious schoolboys who thwarted their masters, girls who disobeyed their parents and governesses, and youthful soldiers and sailors who flouted the commands of their smallminded captains to thwart enemy forces. The ways that texts presented these stories, however, varied according to each writer's expectations about the sex, class, and purchasing power of the narrative's anticipated audience. Authors and publishers balanced young people's expected joy in rebellion against parental demands for obedience, the social requirements for male and female readers, and even the presentation and durability of the text itself, carefully tailoring their depictions of rebellion to meet the demands of the widest possible audience.

Past critics of adolescence have addressed parts of this argument. Charles Ferrall and Anne Jackson have considered adolescent rebellion in the context of the Victorian middle class, while Jon Savage and John Springhall have assessed juvenile delinquency, the iteration of adolescent rebellion that nineteenth-century sociologists associated with the working class.[52] Barbara Hanawalt's "Historical Descriptions and Prescriptions for Adolescence," too, looks into the conflict between adults' desire to "direct, train, and control adolescent behavior" and youth's aspirations for "a personal identity and independence," although she traces this "natural tension" from the Middle Ages through the modern period.[53] Other critics, including Kirsten Drotner and J. S. Bratton, have considered some of the commercial and educational goals of adolescent literature, agreeing that producing narratives for young people allowed authors to have their say "in the fictional guidance of the newly-discovered boy."[54] Bratton and Springhall also note the dialogue between adolescent literature and the developing sociology of adolescence itself, arguing that adolescent literature reinforced stereotypes about middle-class youth and "aimed at the moulding of aspirations and expectations to fit readers for a social role which was being newly defined."[55] Diana Dixon has even gone so far as to argue that juvenile literature offers "a vital source of social history."[56]

Yet almost all previous scholarship of adolescent literature has failed to consider its nuances, addressing such a broad sweep of texts that the resulting criticism inevitably produces misleading generalizations. Some critics—such as Peter Hunt, Julia Briggs, and Dennis Butts—fail to distinguish between adolescent literature and children's literature, lumping hyper-didactic

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[52] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 13; Savage, *Teenage*, 41; Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 27.
[53] Hanawalt, "Historical Descriptions and Prescriptions for Adolescence," 344.
[54] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 133; Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 63, 76.
[55] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 148; Gillis, *Youth and History*, 104.
[56] Dixon, "Children and the Press," 148.

works for the nursery in with texts meant to shepherd a more discerning adolescent audience through the beginnings of independent life.[57] Other critics conflate works for adolescents with texts intended for adults that feature adolescent characters, effectively treating all works with a youthful protagonist as part of a single genre. Ferrall and Jackson, for example, include works by Conrad, Stevenson, and Kipling in their discussion of "juvenile literature," while Sarah Bilston treats *Jane Eyre* and *The Daisy Chain* as equivalent examples of girls' texts.[58] While these comparisons do offer an opportunity to study the figure of the adolescent in Victorian literature, they do not present a clear picture of works designed specifically for youth. As such, it is impossible for these critics to offer accurate assessments of the way these works aimed to engage young readers, since many of the texts they study did not target this audience.

Even critics who do restrict their focus to adolescent literature frequently fail to distinguish between different textual forms, overlooking the different goals of and audiences for novels, periodical fiction, and nonfiction magazine articles. Alec Ellis, J. S. Bratton, and Sally Mitchell all address fiction published in novels and periodicals simultaneously, often neglecting to note the initial publication venue of texts under discussion.[59] Benjamin Watson's *English Schoolboy Stories* assesses bound books, but it fails to note which texts were originally published as novels and which were initially published in periodicals and later re-released in volume form.[60] Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig also do not distinguish between different types of literary publications in *You're a Brick, Angela!*, and they even go so far as to note that "Details

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[57] Hunt, *An Introduction to Children's Literature*, 59-61; Briggs and Butts, "The Emergence of Form," 133-37, 149-53, 162-65.
[58] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 47, 51, 65; Bilston, *The Awkward Age in Women's Popular Fiction*, 17, 34.
[59] Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature,* l48; Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 125-26; Mitchell, *The New Girl*, 14-15, 94-95.
[60] Watson, *English Schoolboy Stories*, 188.

of publications have deliberately been omitted from the text."[61] (Cadogan and Craig do include a bibliography at the end of their work that separates "Books" from "Periodicals," but they frequently list under "Books" works that originally appeared in serialized form.[62]) In reality, publication venue was a crucially important factor for each text, determining not just the narrative's formal presentation, but also its cost, cultural impact, and likely readership. Because novels and periodicals had different implied audiences, their goals did not always align. Neglecting to separate them thus invariably leads to critical misinterpretations, as scholars offer arguments about the function or focus of all adolescent texts without allowing for the distinctions among them.[63]

In the following chapters, I aim to correct these oversights by acknowledging the formal, social, and economic distinctions among Victorian texts for adolescent readers and assessing the unique goals of each type of literature. My first chapter considers youthful rebellion in relation to the adolescent novel, looking at the ways authors depicted young people's desire for independence in novels about school, adventure, and domestic life. As I demonstrate, the relatively high cost of novels meant that writers and publishers generally tailored their depictions of rebellion to suit the didactic preferences of parents and school officials, who would, in most cases, be the ones to purchase novels for youthful readers. Fearful that young people would

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[61] Cadogan and Craig, *You're a Brick, Angela!*, 11.
[62] Ibid., 377-89.
[63] In the interest of fairness, I must note here that it is incredibly challenging to determine accurately the original publication venue of most adolescent works. Victorian texts for young people rarely acknowledge their status as reprints of earlier works, and, as I discuss in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, bibliographic studies of children's and adolescent literature are very limited. This lack of information—coupled with the fact that most authors of adolescent fiction published in multiple venues simultaneously and sometimes anonymously—turns the question of any text's provenance into an archival treasure hunt, as the researcher must review countless periodicals and library catalogues to find the work's earliest iteration. In my own research, I benefited significantly from the use of periodical databases, which allowed me to search quickly through a number of different magazines. For earlier scholars who had to sift through endless library stacks, tracking down a little-known novel's original printing in a hard-to-access periodical would have been practically impossible.

avoid overtly moralizing literature, they did not tell adolescents to avoid rebellion, but instead reframed it as a necessary trial that young people must overcome to reach maturity. By linking rebellion with sin, with unpopularity, and, in the case of adventure novels, with physical danger, adolescent novels acknowledged both the temptation and the danger of personal autonomy, encouraging their readers to save themselves by embracing adult authority. This effectively made rebellion a necessary—but also necessarily finite—part of the growth process, directly connecting maturation with acquiescence to existing power structures.

In my second chapter, I turn my attention to periodical fiction for boys, which depicted youthful rebellion much more positively. Since boys' periodicals were financially accessible to young readers, they generally catered directly to adolescent preferences, offering the positive depictions of adolescent freedom that authors expected would appeal to young readers. At the same time, however, the producers of these texts recognized that parents could censor their children's reading material, and so—even as they aimed to capture boys' imaginations—they also were careful not to alienate parents. To meet the needs of both groups, boys' periodicals only depicted successful youthful rebellion in foreign locations, displacing boys' revolts into spaces where they posed no threat to parents or teachers. Almost inevitably, this linked young people's rebellions with battles for and against the British empire, since imperial sites became common settings for boys' stories. On the one hand, this served as an advertisement for the British empire, encouraging boys to embrace conquest as a form of growth and independence. On the other, celebrating revolt against authority in these locations effectively aligned boys with other oppressed groups, indirectly encouraging them to sympathize with conquered native peoples.

My third chapter focuses on the fiction of girls' periodicals, looking at the ways their depictions of youthful independence from adult control attempted to straddle different perspectives. In girls' periodicals, I argue, authors and publishers drew a distinction between lengthy serialized fiction, which catered to the imaginations of young readers, and complete stories and articles, which offered concrete guidance that publishers anticipated might be reviewed by parents. Catering to dual audiences meant that girls' periodicals regularly offered contradictory information, often encouraging girls to embrace and reject adult control within the same issue. As I show, this conflicted stance effectively put girls' periodicals in the position of their own "hybrid" readers, who were considered equal parts child and adult. Periodicals' willingness to push back, however moderately, against the tyranny of adult preferences thus functioned as a kind of adolescent rebellion, allowing the magazines themselves not just to depict, but also enact, the disobedient instincts of their youthful readership.

Finally, my conclusion briefly considers the impact of these depictions on both contemporary readers and the long-term development of adolescent literature. I trace the progress of psychological ideas about adolescent rebellion, showing how nineteenth-century expectations have continued to inform both scientific and literary ideas of youth. In particular, I look at the ways Victorian ideas about youthful revolt manifest in the modern young adult novel, highlighting their consistent emphasis on adolescent psychology and on balancing the demands of parents, teachers, and young people.

It is worth noting that, unlike many studies of adolescent literature, this dissertation does not aim to deliver a thorough overview of the subgenres within this field. Past critics have helpfully assessed the development of the school story, the adventure story, the girls' domestic story, etc., tracking patterns in these works throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

Such an approach, however, necessarily requires critics to review periodicals and novels as part of the same study. In order to accurately assess the development of the boys' school story, for example, one must consider seminal texts like *Tom Brown's Schooldays* and "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," both of which helped define the field. However, as I noted above, the formal differences between these types of texts mean that each holds very different goals for its adolescent audience, making any attempts to discuss the adolescent reader's relationship with the school story as a genre misleading. With this in mind, I have not prioritized large-scale generic studies in this project. Although I do often classify works by subgenre within individual chapters, I have grouped texts according to form, gender, and class when organizing my dissertation as a whole.

In addition, because my focus is on literature written explicitly for adolescents and published in venues accessible to them, I have necessarily omitted famous stories for adults that feature adolescent characters. Many of these, such as Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861) and Rudyard Kipling's *Stalky & Co.* (1899), are often discussed in the same breath as adolescent texts, since they depict youthful figures and address familiar adolescent experiences. However, because these texts were written for a general audience, they were not subject to the same pressures as texts deliberately designed to guide and entertain young readers. Literature for adults might use depictions of young people to appeal to adult nostalgia or offer veiled social critiques, but it rarely wrestled with the ways these representations might inform the behavior of youthful readers. Because my dissertation focuses on the ways texts spoke to adolescent audiences specifically, I have concentrated exclusively on works written for young people, even when comparisons to other literary works might seem apt.

The result of these choices is a study that takes seriously not just adolescent literature, but also the youthful readers for whom it was created. By treating literature for youth as a topic worthy of consideration in its own right, I hope to help validate adolescent fiction's position as part of the larger canon of Victorian literature. As Hall argued in 1904, adolescents want nothing more than "to be respected, consulted, and taken into confidence."[64] This dissertation—like so many nineteenth-century texts—aims to meet their demands.

[64] Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. 2, 79.

"The age when the character is forming":[1] Repurposing Rebellion in Adolescent Novels

In his seminal text, *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, Walter E. Houghton argues that literature provides the best resource to discover "the inward thoughts of a generation."[2] For decades, scholars of Victorian juvenile texts have taken this advice quite literally, scouring boys' adventure stories and girls' domestic tales for clues to the adolescent generation's ideas, preferences, and values. When it comes to the novel for young people, however, Victorian authors did not have just an adolescent audience in mind. In fact, as I will show in this chapter, the authors and publishers of adolescent novels wrote for an adult audience as much as—if not more than—their ostensible young readership. Driven by both economic need and social pressures, authors shaped their works primarily to meet the approval of adult, not teenage, readers.

Catering to adult preferences meant providing models of virtuous behavior for adolescent readers, encouraging young people to embrace "parental rule" and "moral discipline."[3] Although contemporary demands for realism prevented authors from simply omitting the undesirable aspects of adolescent behavior from their works, they consistently represented these behaviors in negative terms or depicted them in ways that made them palatable to adult readers. Adolescent rebellion, in particular, became a primary target for authors and publishers of youth novels. Rejecting young readers' desire for autonomy, each volume presented disobedience as dangerous and sinful. Crucially, however, the novels went further and reframed adolescents' expected

[1] Sewell, *The Experience of Life*, 177.
[2] Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, xv.
[3] "Our Modern Youth," 120.

rebellion against authority as a personal and spiritual trial that young people must learn to overcome in order to mature successfully.

In this chapter, I will trace the development of this type of fiction, tracking the rise of the adolescent novel, the growth of its implicit adult audience, and the ways pressures from adult readers shaped the novels' representations of youth. In the process, I will show how adults—alarmed by the emerging ideas about adolescence—did not just push back against young people's rebellious instincts, but also pointedly co-opted them to facilitate the preservation of the status quo.

The Adult Audience of the Adolescent Novel

In the 1850s, the adolescent reading public, which had gone largely untended in previous years, suddenly became the beneficiary of a boom in youth publishing.[4] While previous decades had offered young readers only a few works, most of them aimed at children, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed "a host of fresh books for the young," with "thousands of books … issu[ing] from the press, season after season."[5]

Arguably foremost among these new works was the adolescent novel, which, by the end of the century, comprised about fifteen percent of the book trade in Britain.[6] In place of the traditional lesson books and Sunday school tracts, authors began producing stories of adventure, school life, and domestic drama for readers "from ten or twelve to eighteen or twenty years of age."[7] Although initially only a few publishing houses offered adolescent texts, the number of publishers catering to this youthful market grew rapidly throughout the ensuing decades.[8] The

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[4] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 102.
[5] "Writers for the Young," 717; Buckland, "On Children's Literature," 319.
[6] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 5.
[7] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 32. See also Buckland, "On Children's Literature," 319; Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 102.
[8] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 102.

outlets for juvenile novels also skyrocketed, as the books found their way not just into bookshops and personal collections, but also into schools and libraries, which were themselves increasing in number throughout Britain. By the end of the century, magazine editors claimed that their "tables fairly groan[ed] beneath the weight" of the adolescent novels sent to them to review, and the most popular writers sold well over one hundred thousand volumes each year.[9]

From the outset, adolescent novels were didactic, aiming to direct young people towards proper, socially sanctioned paths. Authors spoke frankly about their desire to "preach" to young people, hoping to use their novels to "reach the hearts" of adolescents and "serve the cause of . . . morality."[10] Reviewers, too, celebrated juvenile novels' ability to "impart useful information, and give moral impulse," arguing that young readers should be "moulded as much by their reading as by contact with the world."[11] Implicit in such statements was authors' awareness that young people must *choose* good conduct. Unlike children, whose actions could be compelled by parents, adolescents must be convinced to behave properly.

Many scholars have acknowledged this didactic impulse. As Jeffrey Richards argues in his introduction to *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, "The aim of juvenile literature was clearly stated for a century. It was both to entertain and to instruct, to inculcate approved value systems, to spread useful knowledge, to provide acceptable role models."[12] Although authors might avoid "overt moralizing," they deliberately used their novels to offer "fictional guidance" for "newly-discovered" adolescents.[13] Critics have focused especially on the appearance of moral guidance in girls' books, which "aimed at the moulding of aspirations and expectations to fit

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[9] "New Century Gift Books," 281; Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 5.
[10] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 15; Anstruther, *Dean Farrar and 'Eric'*, 53.
[11] "Writers for the Young," 720; Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 209.
[12] Richards, "Introduction," 3.
[13] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 18; Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 133.

readers for [their] social role."[14] Judith Rowbotham notes that authors "claimed to write stories that would act as guides, influencing children in the ways in which they should think and act for the rest of their lives" and teaching girls, in particular, "to conform to conventional expectations of [their] sphere."[15]

There is, however, less critical consensus about the reasons why authors used adolescent literature to convey moral lessons. Some scholars have suggested that the didactic impulse was an outgrowth of the texts produced for children in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which were uniformly "designed to inculcate a moral" and used chiefly "to direct [children] to God and to their duty."[16] Others have focused on the religious goals of authors and publishing houses, noting that Evangelical writers, in particular, viewed adolescent novels as "an antidote to the dangerous effects of popular pulp fiction," often published in periodical form.[17] Still others have argued that there was an implicit societal consensus, especially among the middle class, that adolescent literature "could be used as a means of social control for children."[18]

While significant evidence exists to support each of these readings, they all skip over one of the most basic forces underlying the adolescent novel's didactic focus: the genre's large adult audience. Although ostensibly produced for young readers, adolescent novels were almost invariably also read by adults, either for personal enjoyment or to confirm that they were suitable for the young. Some novels were consciously designed to target an adult audience alongside their expected youthful readership. *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), for example, spoke to "dear boys, old and young," directly addressing adult readers who "wish to refresh our lingering

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[14] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 148.
[15] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 5, 8.
[16] Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, 5; Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 208.
[17] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 146.
[18] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 3; see also Holt, *Public School Literature*, 114.

reminiscences of the happy days" at school.[19] Yet even novels that appeared to target young readers exclusively—such as those that addressed "My Dear Young Readers" or self-consciously noted, "This is a boy's story"—invariably catered to adults' literary expectations, rather than to those of adolescents.[20]

In part, authors focused on an adult audience for economic reasons, as young people were not the primary purchasers of adolescent novels. The price of novels in the second half of the nineteenth century was beyond the means of most adolescents. New works, in particular, could cost up to 6*s*. or 7*s*., and while they often dropped in price after their initial publication, most texts still cost several shillings in subsequent years.[21] At this time, the purchasing power of working-class youth was in pennies, not shillings, and even middle-class young people rarely had the funds to develop sizable collections of novels.[22] As a result, although many adolescents could afford to purchase cheap periodicals, the majority of young people were not able to buy novels for themselves.[23]

Instead, most juvenile novels were bought for and given to adolescents by adults. Young people, especially those in the middle class, frequently received novels through circulating libraries or as gifts from parents and relatives.[24] Literary gifts were particularly popular at the Christmas season, when publishers produced "floods of books for boys and girls."[25] Working-class adolescents were more likely to encounter novels at school, either through school libraries or as prize books for good behavior. The latter part of the nineteenth century saw the expansion of a number of different types of schools, including Sunday schools, national schools, and board

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[19] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 93; "Tom Brown's School Days," October 1857, 513.
[20] Ballantyne, *Martin Rattler*, 7; Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 36.
[21] Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, 76, 36.
[22] Ibid., 35, xii.
[23] Ibid., 78, 125.
[24] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 102.
[25] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 32.

schools, all of which offered prize or reward books, in addition to their regular lesson books. Many of these schools also developed library collections for students.[26] Once again, these novels were invariably purchased by adults: committees and teachers were generally responsible for purchasing reward books, while school managers and teachers oversaw the development of libraries.[27]

Almost all of these adults expected novels for adolescents to impart virtuous moral lessons. Contemporary critics insisted that parents had a responsibility to ensure that their children's reading material was wholesome, arguing for "the absolute necessity of supervising the literary subjects of their daughters' leisure" and claiming that "it is chiefly through this [literary] field that the boy can so easily be led astray."[28] Parents therefore purchased gift books known to offer "sterling worth" and good moral guidance, while circulating libraries like Mudie's were "censorious" about juvenile literature.[29] School committees also consciously sought out prize books that would teach students to practice good behavior and Christian values. Joshua Finch, an inspector of national schools, even argued in 1881 that school libraries should avoid not just poorly written books, but also "all books which the teacher was sorry he had ever read, would be ashamed to be seen reading, or which he believed to be harmful to children."[30] With adults as the primary buyers of novels for young people, it was their goals, not young people's preferences, that decided the sales figures of adolescent novels.[31]

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[26] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 102; Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, 77.
[27] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 102; Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, 39.
[28] "Novels in Relation to Female Education," 519; "What Should the Boys Read," 394.
[29] "New Century Gift Books," 281; Richards, "Introduction," 18.
[30] Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, 101.
[31] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 21.

As a result, authors and publishers hoping to earn a strong return from their literary productions consistently catered to adult expectations. Although some religious societies did publish "good" books with the primary aim of fostering Christian virtues, most publishers—especially among secular firms—produced morally upright novels in hopes of generating strong financial returns.[32] Alexander and Daniel Macmillan, writing to Thomas Hughes in the months before the publication of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, spent significant time strategizing about ways to make the novel "worth the Circulating Libraries + book clubs taking up" and attempting to make the book "fit for a present book for boys."[33] Their suggestions included heightening Christian elements, including East's confirmation; removing vulgar language; and including high-minded, improving guidance for boys.[34] Such adjustments, they promised Hughes, would allow the book to "have a very large sale + do a deal of good — + make lots of money."[35] (Tellingly, this comment sandwiches the virtuous results of the novel's moral guidance between promises of strong financial returns.) Hughes, hoping to turn a profit on his literary endeavors, complied with the Macmillans' suggestions, even when he felt less than comfortable with the literary merit of the changes.[36]

Some authors also tailored their work to adult readers in hopes of increased social respectability. As Bratton notes, publishing literature in volume form carried with it a certain prestige, especially in comparison with producing stories for periodicals.[37] For some children's

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[32] Richards, "Introduction," 18; Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 6.
[33] Daniel Macmillan to Thomas Hughes, November 5, 1856, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library; Alexander Macmillan to Thomas Hughes, October 16, 1856, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library.
[34] Alexander Macmillan to Thomas Hughes, October 16, 1856, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library; Thomas Hughes to [Daniel?] Macmillan, March 2, 1857, MS 54918, Macmillan Archives, British Library; Daniel Macmillan to Thomas Hughes, October 23, 1856, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library.
[35] Alexander Macmillan to Thomas Hughes, October 16, 1856, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library.
[36] Thomas Hughes to Alexander Macmillan, December 24, 1863, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library; Thomas Hughes to Daniel Macmillan, October 11, 1856, MS 54918, Macmillan Archives, British Library; Thomas Hughes to [Daniel?] Macmillan, March 5, 1857, MS 54918, Macmillan Archives, British Library.
[37] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 134.

authors, novel writing thus became a way to earn greater respect in society, as a sense of their religious duty and the conviction that their writing was good for young people bolstered their social capital.[38] As adults, not children, were the arbiters of respectability, authors catered to their preferences to earn positions as men and women "of substance."[39] Frederic Farrar, for example, made hundreds of changes to the text of *Eric, or Little by Little* (1858) throughout his lifetime, continually working to keep it in line with the attitudes and values of reviewers and other adult critics.[40]

When it came to adolescent rebellion, in particular, authors and publishers were quick to cater to adult demands. Many adults in this period believed that youthful rebellion was both increasingly prevalent and highly alarming. Newspaper articles fretted about young people's "spirit of rebellion," arguing that their "want of reverence" and "determined disobedience to parents" was destroying the stability of the family and society itself.[41] "There is," a columnist for *Fraser's Magazine* warned, "too much reason to fear that those who begin as children by questioning all that falls from a parent's lips, will grow up to reverence nothing."[42] This lack of respect posed a particular danger to Britain's class system, since young people's "want of reverence for what is above them—their rebellion against constituted authorities and accepted conventionalisms—ought also, if consistently carried out, to strike at the root of [society's] very distinctions and privileges."[43]

Responding to these concerns, writers of adolescent novels attempted to use their works to reinforce adult authority. Embracing the larger trend of didacticism in juvenile literature,

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[38] Ibid., 140.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Anstruther, *Dean Farrar and 'Eric'*, 20-21.
[41] "Our Modern Youth," 126, 116; "Address to Our Readers," 6.
[42] "Our Modern Youth," 120.
[43] Ibid., 126.

authors viewed their texts as opportunities for "moralising put into action," allowing them to "usurp . . . a large share of the old preacher's office."[44] A contemporary emphasis on realism in writing for young people—which emerged from both contemporary theories of the novel and the idea that young people would learn better from verisimilitude—prevented authors from omitting adolescent rebellion entirely from their narratives.[45] Yet even as they depicted rebellion, novels tried to discourage it, working instead to present filial obedience as the right choice for young people and the foundation of a happy, successful life.[46]

There was, however, a major problem with this approach: young people were increasingly rejecting overtly didactic literature. Even at the time, critics recognized that youth did not share adults' literary priorities, preferring stories of "Pandaemonical vice" over those of "philistine purity."[47] The emphasis on obedience and virtuous behavior that adult readers demanded threatened to alienate adolescents, who had "an inherent detestation of anything approaching 'humbug.'"[48] Critic A. J. Buckland noted in 1871 that didactic books might be "bought by the elders and presented by them to the children," but the recipients of these gifts were unlikely to "ever [take] them down from the shelf in the old bookcase."[49] The key then, as Daniel Macmillan suggested in a letter to Hughes, was to disguise one's didacticism, taking care "not to let [young people] the least see that you are trying to make them good."[50]

This type of embedded guidance, I argue, came to define the adolescent novel, especially in its presentation of youthful rebellion. Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century,

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[44] Yonge, *What Books to Lend and What to Give*, 10; "School and College Life," 145.
[45] As J. S. Bratton notes, mid-century theories of the novel "held that an idealised realism was a necessary prerequisite for fiction if it was to carry conviction" (*The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 26). See also Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 4-5, 79.
[46] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 54.
[47] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 123.
[48] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 141. See also Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 54.
[49] Buckland, "On Children's Literature," 319.
[50] Daniel Macmillan to Thomas Hughes, October 23, 1856, MS 54917, Macmillan Archive, British Library.

novels for young people depicted the desire for autonomy as universal, drawing adolescent readers in by sympathizing with their demands for freedom from constraint. Knowing that these readers were resistant to moralizing, novels did not tell them to reject their rebellious instincts outright. Instead, they depicted rebellion as a challenge that adolescents had to overcome in order to mature successfully, rebranding it as a quintessential trial of the youth experience. In these texts, young people's desire for freedom became a period of "storm and stress," full of natural discomforts that adolescents could counter only by empathizing with adults, embracing adult guidance, and learning to value their own submissive role. Novels offered readers both positive and negative models for "surviving" this rebellious period, using narrative examples to steer readers towards compliance. By depicting adolescent rebellion as something that young people had to overcome to reach maturity, novels framed young people's desire for autonomy not as a demand for independence, but as a step towards embracing existing models of authority. In other words, adolescent novels did not reject youthful rebellion—they simply redirected it.

Previous criticism of juvenile literature has taken a relatively simplistic view of novels' approaches to disobedience. Although numerous critics have discussed these texts' work to enforce discipline among the young, many have focused on the didactic message authors conveyed and not on the literary means of conveyance.[51] Some critics have explored this subject in more depth, but their discussions have focused largely on the ways novels appealed to religious strictures and gender-based expectations to discourage readers from stepping out of line.[52] Other critics, such as Jenny Holt, have looked at the ways authors used emotional persuasion to "make literature itself into a virtual disciplinary institution," but none, to my

[51] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 208.
[52] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 42, 54, 129.

knowledge, has considered the ways this type of persuasion intersected with contemporary cultural ideas about adolescence.[53]

In order to fill this gap in the critical conversation, I have addressed depictions of rebellion in three different types of adolescent novels: those about school, those about adventure, and those about domestic life. The first two of these types of novels were aimed at male readers, although girls often read books intended for boys;[54] the third type of novel, domestic stories, targeted young women exclusively. Out of the many adolescent works that fall into these categories, I have focused primarily on popular texts that sold well. While sales figures do not necessarily guarantee a wide youth readership, these are the texts that adolescents were likely to encounter and that often appeared in contemporary reviews. Many of the works I discuss were also listed as favorite texts in Charles Welsh's famous 1884 survey of juvenile reading preferences, although, as Edward Salmon pointed out, this survey was almost certainly biased in favor of school-approved texts.[55]

I have also deliberately limited myself to discussing stories that were designed for and originally published in novel form, differentiating these from the fiction created for periodicals. (Periodical fiction, which I discuss in the second and third chapters of this dissertation, was likely to be purchased by adolescent readers, and so catered to their preferences in ways that novels did not.) This restriction is more constraining than it might seem at first glance. Because periodical stories for adolescents were frequently republished in volume form and bibliographic records of Victorian children's texts are often incomplete, it is not always possible—especially over a century after a narrative's debut—to determine its initial publication venue.[56] In order to

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[53] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 146.
[54] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 6; Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 28.
[55] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 12-13, 27.
[56] Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, 78.

ensure the accuracy of my analysis, I have therefore focused exclusively on works that either have been the subject of previous bibliographic studies or that have publication histories traceable through contemporary reviews and advertisements. I have omitted not just works initially published in periodicals, but also any texts that have an uncertain provenance. As might be expected, this restriction has limited the number of novels I am able to assess within each subgenre, and it has reinforced my focus on popular texts, as obscure works are less likely to appear in either modern or Victorian critical conversations. Especially in the case of boys' stories, it has also led me to focus heavily on novels from the 1850s and 1860s, as the increasing number of periodicals during the later decades of the century led many authors to turn their talents to periodical fiction.

The texts that do appear in my study, however, tell a clear story of the novel's unique role in engaging and directing young people, guiding them not just with warnings, but also with sympathy, encouragement, and commiseration. In the face of growing concerns about youth rebellion, adolescent novels promised to shepherd young people through this "turning point" in their lives, ensuring that they ended up healthy, responsible, and, above all, compliant.[57]

Rebellion and Redemption in School Stories

Throughout the Victorian period, adults were quick to point to the constant danger of boyish rebellion. They referred to adolescence as a "disagreeable age" during which boys metamorphosed from innocent children into "an animal under your roof that is rather unmanageable."[58] Youthful animus seemed to engulf the whole country, as critics found that

[57] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 89.
[58] "School and College Life," 131; "A Plea for Our Schoolboys," 120.

even "young people brought up in remote country places are often . . . strongly embued [*sic*]" with "the spirit of rebellion . . . against authority."[59]

At public schools, however, young people's rebellious instincts posed a real and immediate threat. At every school, the students outnumbered the masters, so youthful revolt could—and sometimes did—upend the school's stability. The nineteenth century saw numerous public school riots, some of which were only quelled when the masters brought in troops.[60] During the most famous public school mutiny, the Marlborough Rebellion of 1851, schoolboys responded to ill-treatment—including overcrowding, a lack of food, and the loss of student privileges—with a week-long "revolution," in which they attacked local townspeople, set off over a thousand explosives, and caused several thousand pounds' worth of damages to the school buildings.[61] This rebellion, which ended only with the complete surrender of the masters, served as a warning to parents and teachers alike that youthful demands for independence were just a few steps removed from open violence.

With these threats in mind, the authors of school stories were particularly determined to quash young people's rebellious instincts. Some, like Frederic Farrar, were themselves masters at public schools, eager to use their works to "serve the cause of public school morality."[62] (Farrar actually arrived to teach at Marlborough shortly after the 1851 rebellion, when remnants of the revolution—including graffiti calling for "Bread or Blood"—were still visible.[63]) Other writers had no personal stake in the stability of particular institutions, but used the public school

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[59] "Our Modern Youth," 118.
[60] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 111.
[61] Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, 104-05.
[62] Anstruther, *Dean Farrar and 'Eric'*, 53.
[63] Ibid., 43.

setting—which was known to be a hotbed of adolescent insurgency—as a vehicle to capture the youthful imagination and address young people's demands for independence.

In order to accomplish this, authors first sympathized with boys' desire for autonomy, drawing young readers into their stories by depicting rebellious instincts as a universal "stage of [a boy's] inner life."[64] In these works, boys of all backgrounds experience "a sense of defiance" and "self-will," longing to "fling off the trammels of duty and principle altogether."[65] Authors acknowledged the tendency for animosity between boys and masters, allowing young characters to call masters their "natural enemies."[66] Even good boys, like the hero of H. C. Adams's *Schoolboy Honour* (1861), experience a desire "to break rules" and "openly defy [their] master[s]."[67] By framing rebellious instincts as a normal experience for adolescent boys, public school novels not only highlighted the importance of addressing this issue, but also attracted young readers by assuring them that their own insubordinate feelings were perfectly natural.

Yet even as they acknowledged the universality of adolescent tendencies towards disobedience, authors portrayed adults as kind, virtuous guides. Parents were consistently generous and benevolent, supporting their children even when separated from them during the school term. In Frederic Farrar's *St. Winifred's, or The World of School* (1862), for example, the hero, Walter, finds his parents a continual source of "fresh strength, and hope, and consolation," leading him to love them "with almost passionate devotion."[68] Headmasters, the paternal figures with whom boys had more contact when school was in session, also became beacons of

[64] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 213.
[65] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 53, 48.
[66] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 210.
[67] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 62, 70.
[68] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 83, 50.

generosity and support, men "in whom a boy could repose the fullest trust, and for whom he could feel the warmest affection."[69]

Masters, too, frequently appear to be on "warmer and friendlier terms with [boys]" than might be expected, often going so far as to become boys' friends.[70] Mr. Rose, a compassionate teacher who supports the eponymous hero in Farrar's *Eric, or Little by Little* (1858), rejoices over Eric's academic triumphs and attempts to shield him from punishment when he goes astray.[71] Eric's affection for Mr. Rose leads him to "love him as a brother";[72] to view him as "his oldest, his kindest, his wisest friend";[73] and, at times, to feel that he "would have died for Mr. Rose."[74] Even strict teachers generally prove to be supportive of their pupils: Mr. Paton, the "severe" master in *St. Winifred's*, is "never unkind" to his students, and even offers forgiveness and "Christian gentleness" to a boy who burns the manuscript that Mr. Paton has been working on for years.[75]

In many instances, authors reinforced their arguments that adults sympathized with boys by presenting the novels themselves as the products of friendly adult narrators recounting their own boyhood experiences. Both of Farrar's novels introduce first-person narrators in the final chapters, revealing the previous stories to be the remembrances of men reflecting on the "lovable and noble" characters they encountered during their "old schooldays."[76] Thomas Hughes, too, named the narrator of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) an "old boy," using the term for former students of public schools to connect this figure with the "young boys" who were his primary

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[69] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 32.
[70] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 104, 80.
[71] Farrar, *Eric,* 63, 104.
[72] Ibid., 42.
[73] Ibid., 111.
[74] Ibid., 46.
[75] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 73, 79.
[76] Farrar, *Eric,* 127, 129. See also Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 385, 401.

readers.[77] Although phrases like "in my time" and "in my youth" acknowledge the narrator's current position as an adult, he also pointedly refers to the sentiments of "us boys," allying himself with the experiences of contemporary youth.[78] Even at the time, critics argued that this narrator spoke in a "*natural*, boy-like way," which, with its "cheerful, friendly" approach, was likely to "win the heart" of "the ordinary boy reader."[79]

Rejecting the guidance of such benevolent and sympathetic figures must, these novels suggested, be wrong. Although rebellion might be naturally appealing, insubordinate acts—including smoking, drinking, lying to masters, and otherwise disobeying school rules—would force boys to injure those adults who had become their staunch supporters and friends. In public school novels, boys invariably recognize that their bad behavior is "very damaging to [their masters'] authority," and they are quick to see that their parents will disapprove of their "forbidden" activities.[80] When Kenrick, one of the disobedient schoolboys in *St. Winifred's*, adopts "an independent and almost patronizing tone towards his tutor," he recognizes that his "disrespectful" behavior is a poor return for "the kindness of the master" and knows that "he ought to be grateful for the interest [the master has] shown towards him."[81]

In addition, school stories often depicted rebellion against adult guidance as dangerous and potentially harmful. In some cases, this harm was bodily, as forbidden acts like smoking could "seriously injure [boys'] health" and drinking might "one day be [their] ruin."[82] In extreme instances, these indulgences actually caused boys to deteriorate physically, "alter[ing a boy] for the worse" and leaving "traces" of "degenerate years" upon his face.[83] Rebellion might also lead

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[77] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 116.
[78] Ibid., 26, 194, 27, 124.
[79] "Tom Brown's School Days," January 1858, 572; Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 85.
[80] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 74; Farrar, *Eric,* 53.
[81] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 260.
[82] Farrar, *Eric,* 52, 89.
[83] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 271.

to beatings or even expulsion, two punishments that appeared in nearly every school novel. Relatively minor infractions would earn boys a "severe flogging";[84] major ones—including public drunkenness, lying to adults, or gravely insulting a master—would result in a boy's removal from the school.[85] The horror of rebellion could also injure those close to boys, who would suffer—even when hardened young people did not—from the pain and shame of boys' rebellious behavior. In Farrar's *Eric*, for example, Eric's mother dies immediately after hearing of her son's disgrace at school, making it clear that Eric's descent into disobedience is directly responsible for her death.[86] (Lest any readers miss this cause-and-effect relationship, Eric exclaims, "I have killed my mother!"[87]) *St. Winifred's* Kenrick also loses his mother, in part because "his pride and waywardness" have caused her constant anxiety.[88]

Perhaps most striking of all, public school novels painted rebellion as sinful, a revolution not just against adults, but also against God. H. C. Adams referred to the defiance of school rules as a "sin in God's sight," while Farrar defined everything from unapproved drinking to insubordinate behavior as a "sin most dangerous and disgraceful."[89] His protagonist, Eric, finds that "all of the vice which he had seen and partaken in"—including smoking, foul language, and general disobedience—allows the "stain and shame of sin" to fall "heavier than ever on his heart," "haunt[ing] his fancy with visions of guilty memory, and shapes of horrible regret."[90]

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[84] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 248.
[85] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 131; Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 126, 361; Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 337; Farrar, *Eric,* 51.
[86] Farrar, *Eric,* 129.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 376.
[89] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 245; Farrar, *Eric,* 102. See also Farrar, *Eric,* 83, 104, 105, 111; Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 86, 115.
[90] Farrar, *Eric,* 64. It is worth noting here that some critics have read Farrar's comments on "sin" as references to homosexuality, as same-sex relationships were common at many contemporary public schools (see Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 158). While a subtext of homosexuality certainly permeates Farrar's work, it is too limiting to consider ideas of sin only in this context. In his novels, Farrar frequently refers to sin as the product of specific disobedient actions like smoking and cursing. As I show here, similar links between rebellion and sin

While this emphasis on sin was not uncommon for Evangelical novels like Farrar's, in this particular context, it heightened the importance of schoolboys' behavior.[91] Rebellious boys in public school novels were not just disobeying parents and teachers; they were also risking potential damnation by displaying "wickedness and forgetfulness of God."[92]

Connecting youthful desires for independence with sin allowed school novels to frame rebellious instincts themselves as a kind of religious trial. The "perilous crisis in a boy's school history" came when "the devil's agents"—often themselves rebellious boys—"bate[d] their hook[s]" to tempt obedient boys "into disobedience and sin."[93] Every boy, school novels made clear, would invariably face such a challenge, no matter how agreeable and compliant he was as a child. Mr. Holford, an insightful master in *Schoolboy Honour*, aptly summarizes this point when he warns the young hero, Austen, that temptations from his friends "would not only inevitably come, but would come *soon*; and that he must be firm in his resistance, if he meant to be the servant of God for life and eternity."[94] Recognizing the supreme importance of such adolescent struggles, parents and teachers pray fervently for boys to return to obedience, and masters and headmasters preach sermons on the dangers of breaking rules and the importance of adhering to duty.[95]

However, equating rebellion with a religious trial did not just raise the stakes for those who failed the test. It also provided young people with a way to show their religious devotion by overcoming the temptation to revolt against authority. In *St. Winifred's*, for example, young

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also appear in many contemporary school novels, most of which consciously avoided any suggestions of homosexual behavior.

[91] Anstruther, *Dean Farrar and 'Eric'*, 15-16.

[92] Farrar, *Eric,* 82.

[93] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 103; Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 284; Farrar, *Eric,* 74.

[94] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 180.

[95] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 17, 103; Farrar, *Eric,* 82; Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 260; Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 203-04.

Charlie Evson's classmates attempt to lead him into disobedience, but Charlie is able to conquer this challenge "thanks to the grace that sustained him."[96] In *Schoolboy Honour*, too, Austen fends off his friends' encouragement to lie to the masters by turning to the Bible, finding comfort in the passage, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."[97] Authors did not hesitate to frame boys' ordeals as a form of religious sacrifice. Farrar describes Charlie's trial as a "long martyrdom," while Adams argues that "there have been martyrs, to whom it was a less exertion of faith and courage to defy the cross or the stake, than it was to Robert Austen to renounce the good will of his companions and resist the entreaties of his friend."[98] By presenting continued obedience as a struggle on behalf of God, authors underscored both the suffering that came from resisting rebellious impulses and the rewards that awaited those who did this successfully.

Young people who failed their initial trial might also redeem themselves by repenting of their bad behavior and "aton[ing]" for their sins.[99] Farrar was quick to remind his readers that no boy could "sin too deeply to be forgiven," and many of his young heroes, having come to regret their bad behavior, find they have acquired "the strength which comes through trial."[100] Boys could be redeemed not just by praying for salvation, like the hero of *Eric*, but also by turning to adults for help and guidance.[101] Schoolboys routinely find strength in the support of their parents and achieve peace by confessing their crimes to their masters or headmasters.[102] Kenrick, the rebellious boy of *St. Winifred's*, finds relief in telling Dr. Lane about "all the many sins I've been guilty of," while *Schoolboy Honour*'s Cole overcomes "a sense of guilt and degradation" by

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[96] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 317.
[97] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 180-81.
[98] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 299; Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 181.
[99] Farrar, *Eric,* 105.
[100] Ibid.; Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 83.
[101] Farrar, *Eric,* 129.
[102] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 83-84.

confessing his disobedience to Dr. Campbell.[103] Even Harry East's discussion with Dr. Arnold in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, although ostensibly about his position on confirmation, allows him to redeem himself for his rebellious instincts. East's initial rejection of confirmation stems from his sympathy with those who do not recognize God's authority, implicitly pointing not just to his fears of Christian hypocrisy, but also to his general dislike of control.[104] After confessing this concern "and much worse things" to Dr. Arnold, however, East receives "healing, and strength" that make him comfortable assuming his expected position in Christ's army.[105]

In addition to repenting of their sins, boys could overcome the temptations of disobedience by aligning themselves with adult authority figures, thereby positioning themselves on the right side of the moral battlefield. In *Eric*, for example, the schoolboys turn on a classmate who pelts a teacher with food and then lies about it, "hissing" at the disobedient boy for his "lying and cowardice" and giving a "hearty and spontaneous cheer" in support of the master who disciplines him.[106] This association does the boys good, as it allows the master's "noble moral influence to gain tenfold strength" among them, ultimately helping them to overcome their own bad instincts.[107]

Boys might also align themselves with adults by accepting positions as monitors or praepostors, responsible for enforcing the school's rules and punishing those who broke them.[108] Generally appointed with the consent of the headmaster and governing under his explicit sanction, these groups were, historian Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy notes, effectively minor members of staff.[109] Schoolboy novels frequently celebrated these pseudo-masters. Tom Brown,

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[103] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 361; Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 257, 357.
[104] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 216.
[105] Ibid., 217.
[106] Farrar, *Eric,* 87-88.
[107] Ibid., 87.
[108] Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, 118.
[109] Ibid., 120.

for example, respects the praepostors of his house, who "rule well and strongly," and *Schoolboy Honour* argues for the justice of the monitors' inquiries into younger boys' disobedience.[110] *St. Winifred's* even depicts young boys leading a revolt against the monitors—much in the way boys usually revolt against the masters—which the heroes put down by pointing out that the monitors are not only "the cleverest, the strongest, and the wisest among us," but also that "their right depends on an authority voluntarily delegated to them by the masters [and] by our parents."[111] As this argument suggests, all school novels ostentatiously position the monitors as emissaries of adult interests. Moreover, they suggest that being a monitor helps make boys good "at the most critical periods of their lives, by enlisting all of their sympathies and interests on the side of the honourable and just"—that is, on the side of adult values.[112]

Much as they aligned themselves with masters, boys might also rise above the trial of adolescence by taking on—and learning to empathize with—the perspectives of their parents. This occurs most notably in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, when Dr. Arnold, viewing Tom's increasingly mischievous behavior as a sign that his character hovers "on the edge of a razor," decides to "steady" him by giving him "some little boy to take care of."[113] Tom thus finds himself charged with helping a delicate new boy, George Arthur, acclimate to life at school. In this role, Tom begins to parent Arthur, keeping a careful watch over his diet, chastising him for getting dirty or running late, and worrying about Arthur's safety whenever he is out of Tom's sight.[114] The others boys quickly identify these as parental feelings, mocking Tom for "cackl[ing] after [Arthur] like a hen with one chick."[115] By taking on the experiences of a parent,

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[110] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 104; Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 232.
[111] Farrar, *St. Winifred's*, 243.
[112] Farrar, *Eric,* 70.
[113] "Tom Brown's School Days," February 1858, 139; Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 142.
[114] Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 153-54, 174.
[115] Ibid., 154.

however, Tom begins to empathize with their adult perspective. His moral behavior improves, as he "becom[es] a new boy," fighting "hard battle[s] with himself" and "for the first time consciously at grips with self and the devil."[116] By connecting Tom's parental role with his newfound understanding of his own moral weakness, Hughes draws attention to the enlightenment that boys could achieve by empathizing with adults.

In every case, characters who triumph over the challenge of disobedience are then able to develop successfully, becoming models of growth and maturity. In *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, a reformed Tom, full of "manfulness and thoughtfulness," becomes a student at Oxford, while Harry East, having "learn[ed] the lesson of obeying," leaves school to become a military officer, happily "at work in the world."[117] *Schoolboy Honour* shows Austen passing through the "trial" that "was the turning point for good or evil of his soul," and then moving on to a successful school career in which he is respected by students and masters alike.[118] Kenrick, the rebellious boy of *St. Winifred's*, sees "clearly how much he had erred," and thus becomes "strenuous, diligent, modest, earnest, kind" and "be[gins] his career '*from strength to strength*.'"[119] Even Eric's death at the end of *Eric, or Little by Little* is presented as a triumph, as Eric, having been forgiven by God, is "happy, happy, at last—too happy" to be reunited with his family in Heaven.[120]

Perhaps the most striking reward for overcoming one's trial appears in *Schoolboy Honour*, where Cole, like many disobedient characters, finds that his mother is dying as a penalty for his own bad behavior.[121] Certain that he has "provoked God to visit his sin by taking his

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[116] Ibid., 167-68.
[117] Ibid., 168, 233, 230.
[118] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 181.
[119] Farrar, *Eric,* 344, 410.
[120] Ibid., 129.
[121] Adams, *Schoolboy Honour*, 304.

mother from him," Cole prays to God for forgiveness and vows to make a full public confession of "all that he had done amiss" upon his return to school.[122] Immediately after Cole's repentance, his mother makes a miraculous recovery, convincing Cole that "his mother's unexpected restoration had been granted in direct and immediate answer to his prayer, and the resolve which had prompted it."[123] Cole's wise teacher, Mr. Holford, confirms this conviction, telling Cole that "God's Providence . . . made use of your mother's danger and recovery, to awaken your conscience to a sense of your own sin."[124] Once Cole makes his confession—first to Mr. Holford and then to his headmaster and his fellow pupils—the headmaster accepts Cole's apology and claims that his "atonement" for his bad behavior will ensure his integrity in the future.[125] Cole is, therefore, allowed to remain at school without punishment, and—it should go without saying—his mother's health flourishes.[126]

In all of these novels, then, the lesson was the same: rebellion was not just a natural feature of adolescence, but a universal moral challenge, a "trial [that] come[s] to us, by which we are disciplined and perfected."[127] Boys who continued to pursue the path of disobedience would be punished with both expulsion from school and—far more worryingly—eventual damnation. However, boys who overcame the challenge posed by their own rebellious instincts would mature gracefully, becoming "honest, steady" boys and, eventually, successful men.[128]

The Fight for Survival in Adventure Novels

While school novels viewed adolescent rebellion as a moral obstacle, adventure novels considered its dangers in distinctly practical terms. These narratives almost always engaged with

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[122] Ibid., 301, 311.
[123] Ibid., 312.
[124] Ibid., 313.
[125] Ibid., 363.
[126] Ibid., 362.
[127] Ibid., 41.
[128] Ibid., 110.

boys' role in the growing British empire, positioning boys as explorers and conquerors of foreign lands. Although running an empire necessarily required boys to be fierce and bold, they also needed to remain loyal to their country and, more immediately, to their military or civil supervisors.[129] A little independent spirit might therefore be helpful to boys, encouraging them to strike out for foreign climes and lay claim to new territories, but too much could undermine the order of the Empire.[130]

Writers of adventure novels used this premise to shape depictions of rebellion in adventure fiction, advocating for adult authority by highlighting the importance of obedience in foreign contexts. Although the majority of boys who read (and adults who purchased) adventure novels were secure at home or at school, authors focused primarily on the dangerous situations boys might face while abroad. By pointing to the value of adult guidance under these circumstances, writers were able to offer the didactic instruction that parents and teachers demanded without appearing to preach to their young readers. Moreover, they could count on their exotic narratives about seafaring, warfare, and foreign exploration to draw in young readers, sugaring the pill of authorial moralizing.

Like the writers of school stories, the authors of adventures novels recognized the pervasiveness of adolescent rebellion, frequently introducing young characters with a strong desire to set adult authority at odds. R. M. Ballantyne's *Martin Rattler* (1858) opens with the assurance, "Martin Rattler was a very bad boy," and goes on to discuss the many ways that Martin's young life is "full of mischief."[131] The titular hero of William H. G. Kingston's *Peter the Whaler* (1851), too, is extravagant in his youthful disobedience, sneaking out of the house,

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[129] Green, "The Robinson Crusoe Story," 46.
[130] For more on the position of rebellion in the growing British empire, please see the second chapter of this dissertation, which addresses this theme in boys' periodicals.
[131] Ballantyne, *Martin Rattler*, 7, 9.

befriending "scampish youths" and generally "shut[ting] his ears to all remonstrances" from his father.[132] In some ways, these depictions actually draw on the ur-text for boys' adventure novels, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). As critics Charles Ferrall and Anne Jackson point out, Crusoe himself interprets his experiences on the desert island as penance for ignoring his father's warning never to go abroad upon adventures.[133]

Yet even as they acknowledged the ubiquity of adolescent rebellion, adventure novels still depicted it as harmful. As in school novels, youthful revolt in adventure stories invariably leads to punishment and regret. In *Peter the Whaler*, for example, Peter goes poaching "in spite of [his father's] warnings and commands," only to be caught and exiled from his home.[134] Peter quickly repents of his actions, realizing "how much suffering and grief I should have been saved, had I attended to the precepts and warnings of my kind parent."[135] His realization, however, comes too late, and Peter is required to go to sea under the command of a bad captain who treats him as a slave.[136] Once in foreign locations, adolescent disobedience proves additionally hazardous, as rejecting adult wisdom makes it difficult for boys to survive in unfamiliar and hostile landscapes. G. A. Henty depicts the dangers of this situation in *By Sheer Pluck* (1884), a novel set in Sierra Leone during Wolseley's Ashanti expedition of 1873-74.[137] Soon after his arrival in Africa, the fifteen-year-old hero, Frank Hargate, abandons the party of his adult companion, Mr. Goodenough, to chase an exotic butterfly.[138] On his own, Frank quite literally loses his way, wandering vainly through the jungle until he is attacked and severely injured by a

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[132] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 13, 14.
[133] Ferrall and Jackson, *Juvenile Literature and British Society*, 18.
[134] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 10, 24-25.
[135] Ibid., 12.
[136] Ibid., 59.
[137] Richards, "With Henty to Africa," 79.
[138] Henty, *By Sheer Pluck*, 123.

pack of wild baboons.[139] The novel reinforces the figurative lesson suggested by these trials—that young people should not seek to be independent from adult supervision—when Frank, recovering from injury-induced fever, wakes up to find that Mr. Goodenough has found him and is using his medical skill to keep Frank alive.[140]

Indeed, the importance of adult guidance became a recurring theme throughout adolescent adventure novels, which consistently argued that young people must overcome their desires for independence and rely on adult wisdom in order to survive. In *Peter the Whaler*, Kingston repeatedly highlights the ways Peter's reliance on adult mentors allows him to make it through seafaring life. When on board the initial ship taking him from Ireland to America, Peter looks to an experienced sailor, Dick Derrick, to learn "to hand, furl, and steer, to knot and splice, to make sinnet and spun-yarn, and the various other parts of a seaman's business."[141] When the ship catches fire and seems doomed to sink, he relies on Silas Flint, an adult hunter and trapper, for a plan of action to survive the wreck.[142] Several adventures later, he leans on Andrew Thompson, a sailor and a "good man," for "mentor[ship]" and "instruction in all branches of seamanship."[143] It is only "thanks to Providence and [Andrew's] advice" that Peter is able to survive the sinking of his ship, several days stranded atop an iceberg, and, most improbably of all, a winter in the frozen Arctic.[144] In *Martin Rattler*, too, Martin relies on an Irish sailor, Barney O'Flannagan, not just to save him when he is adrift at sea, but also to clothe him, defend him,

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[139] Ibid., 124-28.
[140] Ibid., 130.
[141] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 49-50.
[142] Ibid., 40, 64.
[143] Ibid., 367, 174.
[144] Ibid., 192, 318-19. Like most authors of boys' adventure stories, Kingston insisted that the events he described, "wonderful as [they] may appear," were based in reality (v). In the case of *Peter the Whaler,* Kingston attributed the most outlandish incidents in his narrative to experiences recounted by a sailor of his acquaintance, and he claimed that he had "rigidly adhered to the truth" when integrating them into his novel (iv-v).

and help him escape from pirates.[145] Midway through their adventures in Brazil, Martin acknowledges how much he needs Barney, admitting that he has "long leaned on [Barney] for support in all their difficulties and dangers."[146] Henty also depicts the necessity of adult wisdom in *By Sheer Pluck*, as Mr. Goodenough teaches Frank about Sierra Leone, shows him how to engage with the local people, and uses his medical knowledge to save Frank from fever.[147] Perhaps most strikingly, Mr. Goodenough teaches Frank to survive an alligator attack by thrusting his fingers into the creature's eyes, a technique Frank later uses on his own to save an English soldier from a hostile alligator.[148] In this way, the novel suggests that obedience to Mr. Goodenough's directives actually makes Frank a more successful young man when he is forced to take independent action.

Embracing adult guidance also allows boys to form strong friendships with adults, which often prove to be their most profound relationships. After his initial disobedience, Peter comes to embrace his "kind parent[s]," and the novel ends with a celebratory reunion between Peter and his father.[149] Peter also acknowledges that his life is "infinitely richer" because of his bond with "my good friend Andrew," an "excellent man" who "never lost an opportunity of giving me a useful lesson."[150] Martin Rattler forms a pseudo-familial relationship with Barney, who comes to regard Martin "with almost a mother's tenderness."[151] Martin, too, is surprised by "the strength of his affection for the rough, hearty sailor," repeatedly recognizing him as a "friend," as well as a traveling companion.[152] In *By Sheer Pluck*, Mr. Goodenough admits that he has "come to look

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[145] Ballantyne, *Martin Rattler*, 34, 36, 148-49, 40.
[146] Ibid., 151.
[147] Henty, *By Sheer Pluck*, 92-97, 104-05, 122.
[148] Ibid., 116, 262.
[149] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 19.
[150] Ibid., 389, 243, 384.
[151] Ballantyne, *Martin Rattler*, 149.
[152] Ibid., 30, 150-51.

upon [Frank] as my son," going so far as to leave Frank a small fortune in his will.[153] Frank, in turn, is "utterly prostrated with grief" after Mr. Goodenough's death, and he continues to rely on Mr. Goodenough's advice throughout the rest of his time in Africa.[154]

Still, for many boy heroes, valuing obedience over personal freedom proves a sore trial. Like Robinson Crusoe himself, Martin Rattler struggles with his aunt's refusal to let him go to sea, "doing his best to curb that roving spirit within him" before ultimately—albeit unintentionally—disobeying her.[155] Frank, too, must grapple with his long-held desire to be "independent," knowing that he must give it up in order to journey with Mr. Goodenough to Africa.[156] (Mr. Goodenough, seemingly aware of the dangers of youthful rebellion, is pointedly looking for a traveling companion who will not want "to have his own way."[157]) Peter admits that the adolescent temptation towards disobedience was one of the "severest trials" he encountered as a boy, acknowledging how difficult it is to fight "an instigation of the evil one" and encouraging his audience to "Fly from [this temptation] as you would from the slippery edge of a precipice."[158]

This tension between rebellious instincts and the need for obedience manifests on a grand scale in R. M. Ballantyne's most famous novel, *The Coral Island* (1858), which focuses on the exploits of three adolescent boys—Ralph, Jack, and Peterkin—on a deserted island. During the first part of the novel, the boys enjoy being marooned on the island, celebrating the ways their "glorious" island provides freedom from any adult control.[159] Peterkin, in particular, argues that their position is "capital—first-rate—the best thing that ever happened to us" primarily because

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[153] Henty, *By Sheer Pluck*, 203, 292.
[154] Ibid., 203.
[155] Ballantyne, *Martin Rattler*, 29.
[156] Henty, *By Sheer Pluck*, 103.
[157] Ibid., 88.
[158] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 12, 15.
[159] Ballantyne, *The Coral Island*, 22.

they have "got an island all to ourselves" and are not subject to any authority or supervision.[160] After a time, however, the boys find that the island is "very unlike Paradise in many things."[161] In relatively quick succession, they experience a series of difficulties, including a shark attack, a terrible storm that strands them overnight on a bare rock, an invasion by island natives, and finally an attack and capture by pirates.[162]

Although these "terrible adventure[s]" ostensibly have nothing to do with adolescence, Ralph deliberately connects the boys' experiences on the island with their personal development.[163] Shortly after experiencing the third of these four trials, he claims:

> [T]he more I consider it the more I am struck with the strange mixture of good and evil that exists not only in the material earth but in our own natures. In our own Coral Island we had experienced every variety of good that a bountiful Creator could heap on us. Yet on the night of the storm we had seen how almost, in our case—and altogether, no doubt, in the case of others less fortunate—all this good might be swept away for ever. We had seen the rich fruit-trees waving in the soft air, the tender herbs shooting upwards under the benign influence of the bright sun; and the next day we had seen these good and beautiful trees and plants uprooted by the hurricane, crushed and hurled to the ground in destructive devastation. We had lived for many months in a clime for the most part so beautiful that we had often wondered whether Adam and Eve had found Eden more sweet; and we had seen the quiet solitudes of our paradise suddenly broken in upon by ferocious savages, and the white sands stained with blood and strewed with lifeless forms. . . .[164]

In this passage, Ralph juxtaposes the island's bounty with its dangers, weighing the "rich fruit-trees" and "soft air" against the "ferocious savages" and the storms that threaten to erase "every variety of good." He then links this contrast to "the strange mixture of good and evil . . . in our own natures," allowing the island's shifting characteristics to reflect personal development. Although it is tempting to read the phrase "our own natures" as a reference to the character of

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[160] Ibid., 16.
[161] Ibid., 28.
[162] Ibid., 54-57, 165-66, 170, 190, 196.
[163] Ibid., 57.
[164] Ibid., 187-88.

humans in general, Ralph's repetition of the phrase "our own" in the next sentence ("our own Coral Island") limits the scope of its application. The "our" in this passage refers to the three boys marooned on the island, and the island's characteristics—both its blessings and its difficulties—reflect the triumphs and trials inherent in their experience. The island's transition from an Edenic paradise to a gruesome battlefield thus suggests the shift from childhood to adolescence, a period known to be full of "storm[s]" and violent emotions. These storms—which, Ralph notes, have swept away other, less fortunate young people—have so far failed to carry off Ralph, Jack, and Peterkin. He recognizes, however, that, just as Adam and Eve sinned and were cast out of Paradise, so too will the boys' actions—like those of all adolescents—inevitably remove them from the blessings of an innocent childhood and thrust them into the "hurricane" of teenage impulses.

The phrase "our own Coral Island" also points to the boys' sense of ownership over the island as a space without adult control. While the blessings Ralph points to on the island can thus be read as references to the delights of adolescent freedom, the challenges the boys encounter suggest the dangers and difficulties that young people must find without adult guidance. The "ferocious savages," too, offer a nod to contemporary descriptions of boys, whom critics often referred to as "a picture of savage humanity" with "[t]he same love of cruelty for its own sake, the same taste for petty theft, and the same indifference to knowledge . . . as in a tribe of painted Ojibbeways."[165] The threats these savages pose to the island can thus suggest the dangers posed by disobedient boys, who might tempt others to follow their example, thereby staining the character of the converted boys. With this in mind, the storms by which "good might be swept away for ever" and the hurricanes that threaten "destructive devastation" point not just to the

[165] "Against Boys," 145.

dangers of adolescence in general, but to the dangers of adolescent rebellion in particular. Rebellion not only threatens boys' physical and moral success, but also represents an obstacle that boys must overcome if they want to survive on the island—and at home.

Tellingly, the novel itself shows the boys ultimately turning to adults for assistance in times of crisis, unable to solve the difficult problems they face themselves. When kidnapped by pirates, for example, Ralph relies on a kind member of the crew, Bloody Bill, to survive his captivity and eventually escape.[166] Later, after Ralph's return to the island, the boys are taken prisoner by natives and their own "vigorous resistance" cannot overcome their jailers, so they must rely on an adult missionary to effect their freedom.[167] Ballantyne even suggests that the boys' initial ability to survive on the island may have been due to their willingness to accept adult guidance. In their first weeks on the island, the boys allow Jack to become their leader primarily because of "his being older and much stronger and taller than either of us," and they note that, when the old captain's boots wash up on shore, Jack is quite literally able to fill the captain's shoes.[168] Ralph and Peterkin readily admit that they benefit from following the orders of the boy who is most "manly for his age," and their willingness to promote Jack based on his age implicitly suggests that they find it both convenient and natural to recreate a system of adult supervision on the island.[169]

By embracing adult guidance, the boys are able to overcome the "storms" of adolescent rebellion, which soon leads to their desire to return home. After the boys are rescued by the missionary, Ralph notes that "[t]he desire to see our beloved native land was strong upon us,"

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[166] Ballantyne, *The Coral Island*, 253.
[167] Ibid., 328, 332.
[168] Ibid., 24, 28-29.
[169] Ibid., 168.

and the boys soon set out to return to their "dear parents" in England.[170] Even as they leave behind "the beautiful, bright green coral islands," Ralph feels "a thrill of joy" at being homeward bound, suggesting that he recognizes the limitations of an island run by boys and has come to welcome the idea of adult authority.[171]

Overcoming the trial of rebellion also allowed boys in other adventure novels to return home and embrace adult guidance. Kingston's Peter returns to his family having "learned to know myself, and to take advice and counsel from my superiors in wisdom," a prize with which his father is fully content.[172] Martin, too, learns that "with all their beauties and wonders, tropical lands had their disadvantages, and there was no place like the 'ould country' after all."[173] Two years after journeying to Brazil, he is glad to return to England, where he makes amends to his aunt and becomes a dutiful clerk at a local business, his good character quickly leading him to become partner.[174] After losing the guidance of Mr. Goodenough, Frank of *By Sheer Pluck* also decides that he has "had more than enough of Africa," and he is glad to return to England, where his friends comment on how changed he is "after all [he has] gone through."[175] He also discovers that his submission to Mr. Goodenough inspired the latter to leave him £15,000, which Frank uses to become a successful doctor in the West End.[176] In each case, these boy heroes' experiences abroad teach them to repress their own rebellious instincts and to welcome adult support, decisions that lead directly to their successful maturation and, in some cases, material wealth.

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[170] Ibid., 338, 4.
[171] Ibid., 339.
[172] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 389.
[173] Ballantyne, *Martin Rattler*, 137.
[174] Ibid., 212.
[175] Henty, *By Sheer Pluck*, 242, 291.
[176] Ibid., 292-93.

By depicting the successful development of boy heroes, the authors of adventure novels made clear to their young readers that rejecting rebellion and embracing adult authority was the key to positive growth. In the dedicatory preface to *Peter the Whaler*, Kingston acknowledged that his aim in writing was to prepare boys "for encountering the difficulties and dangers to which, in your course through life, whatever may be your calling, you must inevitably be exposed."[177] The surest way to avoid these dangers, he—and all other authors—suggested, was to overcome one's initial inclination towards independence and instead rely on adult guidance, a move that could steer boys safely through the wilds of a foreign country and through the hazards of adolescence at home.

Rebellion, Popularity, and Marriage Prospects in Girls' Novels

Adolescent authors separated youthful novels by gender, assuming that stories about travel and adventure would be most appropriate for boys and those about domestic dramas, best suited for girls. They wrote school novels for both audiences, but these, too, were sex-segregated, much like schools themselves. School stories for boys focused on all-male public schools, while those for girls focused on the experiences of young women at girls-only day and boarding schools.

However, despite the differences in literature for boy and girls, concerns about adolescent rebellion spanned gender divides. In her famous guide to proper behavior for young women, *The Daughters of England*, Sarah Stickney Ellis argued that—as with boys—it was common for girls to give in to "the waywardness of youth" and to show "a want of respect towards the heads of the family, which is alike distressing and disgraceful."[178] Mary Wood-Allen's *What a Young Woman Ought to Know* agreed that girls passing through the "crisis" of "changing from the girl to the

[177] Kingston, *Peter the Whaler*, 3.
[178] Ellis, *The Daughters of England*, 190, 184.

woman" were inclined to show "willfulness," rather than respect.[179] Cultural critics, too, claimed that the youthful girl was naturally inclined to "rebel against the control exercised over her . . . at the cost of much discomfort and unhappiness" to herself and those around her.[180]

In some ways, the rebellion of girls posed even more dangers than that of boys. While boys' demands for autonomy were seen as threats toward their own moral and physical development, girls' insurgency presented a danger to the entire family. Since, as Judith Rowbotham notes, girls were more likely than boys to remain under their parents' roof until marriage, filial obedience was crucial for the orderly proceedings of the entire family's day-to-day life.[181] In addition, while boys might carve out independent careers, the social pressures and limited employment opportunities facing middle-class girls meant that they generally aspired to become wives and mothers.[182] Rebellion, which threatened to lead to domestic disorder and even scandal, might make a girl less attractive not just within her family circle, but also to potential marriage partners.[183] Adults also feared that, even if independent girls did manage to marry, they might reject their parents' plans for their union and instead make a disadvantageous match. This was especially the case for middle-class girls, whose parents generally could not enforce obedience by threatening to withhold a dowry. Quashing a girl's rebellious instincts, then, was not just a priority for her own personal development, but also a necessity for the protection of her family and community.

To discourage rebellion among girl readers, girls' school and domestic novels pointedly highlighted the connection between a girl's submission to adults and her improved social capital.

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[179] Wood-Allen, *What a Young Woman Ought to Know*, 108.
[180] Lomax, "American and English Girls," 775.
[181] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 54-55. See also Ellis, *The Daughters of England*, 9.
[182] Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 24, 26-28; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 325. As Eliza Warren makes clear in her 1865 parenting memoir, even those girls whose family situations required them to work usually aspired to marry (*How I Managed My Children*, 61).
[183] Ellis, *The Daughters of England*, 226.

They began by pointing to the virtues of obedience, noting both the merits of adult authority figures and the positive effects of a girl's willingness to follow their commands. Girls' novels repeatedly illustrated the kindness of girls' mothers, presenting them as friends, heroines, and role models for their daughters.[184] Hester, the heroine of L. T. Meade's school story, *A World of Girls* (1886), thinks of her mother as "her guardian angel," while Cicely, of Amy Clarke's *The Ravensworth Scholarship* (1894), shares "a bond of passionate affection" with her mother.[185] Headmistresses, too, are subjects of adoration and respect, often "nearly worshiped" by their students, who "respect [them] beyond any other human being."[186] Girls are generally "fond" of their teachers, and even monitors—who, as in boys' novels, are older girls responsible for enforcing adult authority—are "looked up[on] with affection and admiration."[187] By framing these adult (or adult-aligned) figures as benevolent and worthy of admiration, girls' novels encouraged readers to embrace their well-intentioned guidance.

Novels reinforced this point by suggesting that adult guidance was beneficial for girls. They reminded readers that the natural "manner of a child to a parent" is "reverential," "humble and respectful," and suggested that girls who followed these precepts would find fulfillment and happiness.[188] Sally, for example, the narrator of Elizabeth Missing Sewell's *Experience of Life* (1853), discovers that she is "thankful to have some one to obey" when she goes to visit her aunt as a teenager, eventually realizing that, in a happy household, an adult's "will is law, a law implicitly but cheerfully obeyed."[189] Polly, the disobedient heroine of *Polly: A New-Fashioned Girl* (1889), also feels appreciative when her mother quiets her "spirits of insubordination . . .

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[184] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 129.
[185] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 6; Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 32.
[186] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 63.
[187] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 188; Green, *Everybody's Friend*, 8.
[188] Sewell, *The Experience of Life*, 61, 62.
[189] Ibid., 56, 377.

with a firm and gentle hand."[190] In Evelyn Everett Green's *Everybody's Friend* (1893), too, seventeen-year-old Hilda's willingness to respect adult authority makes her seem "sweet-tempered" and womanly.[191] This contrasts with the experiences of her young friend, Sally, "a regular hoyden" who is often ignored by her family, and selfish Rose, who ignores her parents' wishes only to find that she has grown "tired of doing nothing but amuse myself."[192]

Yet even as they highlighted the value of obedience, girls' novels acknowledged the tendency of both readers and characters to fight for independence from adult authority. Girls, they noted, would frequently display "wild, naughty, impulsive" behavior, their days full of "wild pranks, of naughty and disobedient deeds."[193] Their "undisciplined mind[s]" would cause them to be "defiant of all authority," some of them—like the titular character in L.T. Meade's *Polly*—admitting that they have not only rebelled in the past, but "mean to go on rebelling."[194] As the adult narrator of Evelyn Everett Green's *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory* (1885) reminds readers:

> I suppose no one who has studied the characters of the young will deny that the best and strongest characters are sometimes sadly hard to understand or deal with during the period of development. They seem set round with angles and bristles. There is no getting near them, no way of gaining their confidence. They show all their bad points, and carefully hide away the good that lies beneath, and give to those who love them a world of anxiety and fear. . . .[195]

As this passage illustrates, girls' novels depicted disregard for adult authority as a product of the "restive" period of adolescence, one that threatened the domestic harmony of every family unit.[196] Even girls of good character were, at this period, likely to behave poorly, and their

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[190] Meade, *Polly*, 11.
[191] Green, *Everybody's Friend*, 93, 8.
[192] Ibid., 30, 134.
[193] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 62, 77.
[194] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 45; Meade, *Polly*, 13, 26.
[195] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 142-43.
[196] Ibid., 170.

disobedience represented a danger serious enough to cause their family members "anxiety and fear."

In girls' novels, no matter whether set at school or at home, this disobedient behavior generally took the form of pranks, lying, and defiance of authority figures. For example, fifteen-year-old Cicely, the heroine of *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, regularly flouts and embarrasses her teachers, her hatred of being "under authority" causing her to place herself "in fierce opposition to anything and everything in the school."[197] In *A World of Girls*, too, teenage Annie loves her headmistress, but is "seldom out of hot water" due to her delight in pranks and her disregard for school rules.[198] In the domestic sphere, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*'s "wild, reckless" Kate regularly ignores her mother's guidance, while Polly, the heroine of *Polly: A New-Fashioned Girl*, takes advantage of her father's absence to throw a party for her younger siblings and then runs away from home when she is punished.[199] In perhaps the most extreme example of adolescent rebellion, thirteen-year-old Flower kidnaps a baby from its nurse, keeps it overnight, and then returns it home the next morning.[200] This act of revolt, which seems more criminal than mischievous, is certainly more serious than the other examples mentioned here, but its outlier status actually serves to highlight the comparative insignificance of most cases of girlish rebellion.

Despite their general mildness, however, all instances of disobedience cause the characters who commit them countless hours of regret and sorrow. Cicely's disobedience leaves her "sorry for [her] bad conduct" and "vexed with herself for loss of self-control."[201] Annie, too,

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[197] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 48, 73. For additional examples of rebellion, see pages 77, 143.
[198] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 24, 99, 190-92.
[199] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 27; Meade, *Polly*, 81-82, 120-21.
[200] Meade, *Polly*, 174-75, 214.
[201] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 186, 156.

finds herself "not a little anxious and depressed" about her bad conduct, leading her to experience dejection and a "want of vivacity."[202] Thanks to her "dim ideas of honor and trustworthiness," she comes to realize that "if [she] learned her lessons, and obeyed the school rules, she would prove her affection for Mrs. Willis [the headmistress] far more than by empty protestations."[203] Polly also comes to feel ashamed of her disobedience, going so far as to request punishment from her father for her bad behavior.[204] By highlighting the sorrow that accompanies rebellion—especially in contrast with the happiness experienced by obedient characters—girls' novels suggested to their readers that they would be more comfortable if they embraced their duties to parents and teachers alike.

In addition, like boys' school stories, girls' novels suggested that young people's disobedience would inevitably lead to extreme punishments. In *A World of Girls*, for example, Annie's bad behavior not only causes her anxiety, but also allows a passing gypsy who observes one of Annie's forbidden picnics to blackmail her.[205] Her schoolmate, Susan, is punished for her own pranks (which include caricaturing the headmistress, parodying another student's poorly written essay, and filling a girl's desk with plum cake and Turkish delight) with expulsion and a strong lecture from the local clergyman on "[y]our meanness, your cowardice, [and] your sin [which] require no words on my part to deepen their vileness."[206] Hester, who lies to her teacher when asked if she has any knowledge about Susan's pranks, experiences an even more severe punishment.[207] Almost immediately after she fails to disclose Susan's guilt, Hester's sister is

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[202] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 221, 252.
[203] Ibid., 194, 65.
[204] Meade, *Polly*, 129.
[205] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 202-03.
[206] Ibid., 324. For descriptions of Susan's pranks, see pages 80-81, 214-15.
[207] Ibid., 265.

kidnapped, and Hester herself experiences "that awful emptiness and desolation which those know whom God is punishing."[208]

Polly: A New-Fashioned Girl offered similarly dire depictions of the repercussions for disobedient behavior. Polly, who plans a secret feast for her younger siblings, is punished for her "glaring act of rebellion" by being forced to spend four days locked in her room with almost no human contact.[209] Flower, who steals away Polly's baby sister in a fit of rage, soon after finds herself drugged, robbed of her valuable possessions, and left for dead on the nearby moor.[210] Her punishment does not end even after she returns the baby the next morning, for she discovers that her act of disobedience has caused Polly's father, Doctor Maybright—whom Flower believes to be "the dearest man in all the world"—to go blind from mental and physical strain.[211] The narrator acknowledges that these punishments are extreme, but notes that they are the natural "consequences of unbridled passion."[212] As Evelyn Everett Green reminds readers in *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, "As we sow, so shall we reap"—and girls who are disobedient inevitably reap an outsized harvest of discord, misery, and despair.[213]

For many girls, however, the greatest danger posed by rebellion was not regret or suffering, but decreased social status. Since girls' societal value came largely from their positions within their families and communities, a decline in social capital effectively meant a decline in power and personal worth. Authors capitalized on this to discourage rebellion, aligning their novels with the line of contemporary discourse that depicted disobedience not just as undutiful, but also as socially unattractive. In their novels, rebellious characters become

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[208] Ibid., 271, 267.
[209] Meade, *Polly*, 100, 132.
[210] Ibid., 183-84.
[211] Ibid., 152, 218-19.
[212] Ibid., 221.
[213] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 209.

unkind and unlikable, cast out by their communities because of their unsociable behavior. In *A World of Girls*, for instance, Susan is considered a "mean, mean girl" by her classmates, while Annie's mischievous acts make her the subject of "openly expressed . . . dislike."[214] In *Polly*, too, Flower's disobedient behavior is framed in socially unattractive terms: her brother warns others of her tendency to rebel by claiming that "Flower is sometimes not nice," and she soon realizes that "No one will love such a naughty girl" as she has become.[215] *The Ravensworth Scholarship* also depicts disobedience as unkind, as Cicely's attempts to embarrass her teachers lead her to compete for an academic scholarship that another girl, Ruth, has worked hard to win.[216] This "selfish, thoughtless" act is not "nice or kind" towards either her teachers or her schoolmate.[217] It causes Cicely to feel herself "a traitor towards Ruth" and leads Cicely's family to feel ashamed of her.[218]

Authors made sure to highlight the ways these girls' unpopularity effectively diminished or even removed their social power. Annie's bad behavior causes her to be "sent to Coventry" by her classmates, while Susan's expulsion from the school serves as the ultimate form of ostracism.[219] After causing the Doctor's blindness and realizing that his children "cannot love [her]," Flower chooses to exile herself from their home, only to find that her social stock has sunk so low that the others hardly acknowledge her absence.[220] Cicely also finds herself "left alone to battle out her anger," as her "defiant critical mood" alienates potential friends like Ruth and her mother and brother disapprove of her behavior.[221] In each of these cases, girls'

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[214] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 319, 243.
[215] Meade, *Polly*, 158, 235. For additional examples of Flower's unlikability, see pages 218-19, 221.
[216] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 137.
[217] Ibid., 147, 149.
[218] Ibid., 110, 179.
[219] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 102.
[220] Meade, *Polly*, 221, 238.
[221] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 147, 103.

disobedience does not just alienate their parents, but also their peers, even though—according to contemporary ideas of adolescence—one might expect those peers to be dealing with their own rebellious instincts. Girls' decline in social status effectively removes them from their communities, suggesting to both characters and readers that disobedience must inevitably lead to isolation.[222]

In addition to threatening girls' relationships with their friends and family, authors also suggested that disobedience threatened girls' marriage prospects. Contemporary critics argued strongly that rebellious girls made for unattractive marriage partners. As Sarah Stickney Ellis warned her young readers in *The Daughters of England*, "If . . . your lover perceives that you are regardless of the injunctions of your parents or guardians . . . his opinion of your principles will eventually be lowered, while his trust in your faithfulness will be lessened in the same degree."[223] Adolescent novels reinforced this idea by highlighting the ways a girls' behavior towards adult authority would affect her potential marital relationship. Obedient girls, they implied, were perceived as kind and were thus likely to marry well. For example, Hilda, the heroine of *Everybody's Friend*, recognizes young people's duty to their parents and insists that the girls around her show respect to adult authority figures.[224] These positions, which help shape her reputation as "Everybody's Friend," attract the attention of a handsome suitor, who proposes to her because of her friendliness and her orderly influence upon others.[225] In contrast, girls who were not respectful of their parents' authority risked developing a reputation as unlikable, which

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[222] Disobedient characters in boys' school stories also experience social isolation as a result of extreme disobedience. Farrar's Evangelical heroes, in particular, often find themselves "snubbed, reproved, and threatened" by their peers for their bad behavior, leaving them "feeling unhappy and alone" (*St. Winifred's*, 256, 319). For Victorian boys, however, popularity did not have the same impact upon personal worth, family status, and marriage prospects that it did for girls. Thus, while social isolation might seem unappealing in boys' novels, it did not pose the same threat that it did in works for girls.

[223] Ellis, *The Daughters of England*, 226.

[224] Green, *Everybody's Friend*, 95, 93.

[225] Ibid., 160, 111.

might lead them to end up alone. Joanna, a beautiful eighteen-year-old, faces this phenomenon in *The Experience of Life*, as her "undisciplined" behavior—combined with the family's diminished circumstances—causes her to be "thrown more and more into the back-ground" of society and fails to entice any attractive suitors.[226] Girls who do not follow their parents' wise guidance also risk making disastrous marriage choices, as teenage Kate discovers to her horror in *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*. Determined to be "my own mistress in all things," Kate ignores her mother's recommendations that she marry a "good, steady husband," and, in the process, nearly unites herself with a bigamist and a rake.[227] When she does eventually marry, her "self-will," "hasty temper," and continued inclination toward disobedience make her an ineffective helpmeet to her husband and cause them both great pain.[228] Failing to follow adult authority as an adolescent thus threatened to shape a girl's entire future career. Since her declining social capital made her unattractive to acceptable suitors, she risked marrying inappropriately, uncongenially—or not at all.

Yet even as they highlighted the dangers of mischief and disobedience, girls' novels acknowledged that it was a trial for adolescents to overcome their rebellious instincts. Depicting adolescence as "a state of weakness when temptation is least easily resisted," they showed girls struggling to repress their desires for personal independence, drawing attention to the strength of character that was required to overcome a longing for revolt.[229] Cicely, for example, admits that it is "a sacrifice" to give up her attempts to embarrass her teachers in *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, telling her mother "I did want to see Miss Sawle's [her teacher's] face when I

[226] Sewell, *The Experience of Life*, 193, 365.
[227] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 39, 27.
[228] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 93, 111.
[229] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 189.

handed my name in [for the scholarship]."[230] Hester, the heroine of *A World of Girls*, also comes to understand that adolescence "has its trials" and to see that she is "surrounded by temptations," including the temptation to lie to her teachers.[231] Kate, in *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, summarizes the difficulties of the adolescent experience by recounting the narrative of a girl who, discovering that she has "a violent temper and a great inclination to selfishness . . . set[s] herself steadfastly and prayerfully to conquer them."[232] Kate underscores the difficulty of this trial not only by pointing to the length of this girl's battle for inner virtue, which has spanned several years, but also by acknowledging that, since the girl is not yet an adult, her "struggle . . . still went on at times."[233]

If, however, girls were able to overcome this trial, they stood to achieve not just social redemption, but also increased personal maturity. As *A World of Girls* assured readers, the "brave and noble girls" who embrace adult authority "often find this time of discipline [i.e., adolescence] one of the best of their lives."[234] Proving this point, Cicely, who has "gone through a struggle [for self-mastery] . . . and won the victory," reconciles with her teachers, accepts that she should not try for the scholarship—and, in the process, renews her bonds with her family and finds herself promoted to a higher form at school.[235] Hester and Annie similarly "come out on the winning side" of the battle against disobedient instincts, allowing both girls to achieve great popularity and, in Hester's case, to be reunited with her kidnapped sister.[236] Flower, having recognized the faults of her rebellious nature, becomes "more or less a changed creature" and devotes herself to Doctor Maybright's care, finding a sense of purpose in her new duties and

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[230] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 165.
[231] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 30.
[232] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 221.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 30.
[235] Clarke, *The Ravensworth Scholarship*, 178, 187-88.
[236] Meade, *A World of Girls*, 31, 329.

becoming, in his daughter's words, "the nicest girl I know."[237] Even Caroline, the subject of Kate's narrative about disobedience, eventually suppresses her tendency toward self-will enough to attract a kind, wealthy husband.[238]

In girls' novels, then, as in adolescent novels generally, youthful rebellion represented not just an inevitable threat, but also an opportunity for development and reform. By acknowledging young people's desires for autonomy, adolescent novels sympathized with the feelings of their youthful readers; by framing those desires as a necessary obstacle on the path to maturity, novels catered to the expectations of their adult buyers. It remains, of course, uncertain what effect these novels actually had on their readers, as even adolescents who enjoyed a novel's plot and characters might have missed or ignored its larger didactic purpose. It is clear, however, that the authors of these works wrote with a conscious purpose, aiming to guide adolescents through "those warring impulses of good and evil which, though their object may be sometimes trivial and sometimes ludicrous, are nevertheless all important to [them], and are forming [their] character for future life."[239]

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[237] Meade, *Polly*, 252-53, 281.
[238] Green, *The Mistress of Lydgate Priory*, 221.
[239] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 265; "School and College Life," 145.

Growing Insurrection:
Rebellion and Personal Development in Victorian Boys' Periodicals

In his 1939 autobiography, *My Life,* Havelock Ellis, the English essayist and physician, reflected on his experience growing up in the late nineteenth century. In great detail, Ellis recorded his youthful travels, schooling, and sexual development, paying attention to the ways these events shaped—and were shaped by—his reading habits. Although much of his discussion focused on "very serious books," Ellis also recalled his initiation into a new kind of "literary experience":[1]

> I was introduced by a schoolfellow to the *Boys of England*, a penny weekly full of extravagantly sensational and romantic adventures in wild and remote lands. The fascination with which this literature held me was a kind of fever. . . . My mother forbade me to read these things, but, though I usually obeyed her, in this matter I was disobedient without compunction.[2]

Ellis's description of reading as a kind of "fever" is, in this case, quite apt. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, enthusiasm for adolescent periodicals, including the *Boys of England*, reached an almost fanatical pitch, as boys clamored for weekly stories about heroes who challenged pirates or triumphed over schoolyard bullies.

His reference to magazine-inspired disobedience, however, is perhaps even more notable. As I will show in this chapter, boys' periodicals championed youthful disobedience, framing it as a natural, enjoyable, and—in keeping with the nascent science of adolescence—necessary part of the growth process. They invited "usually obe[dient]" boys like Ellis to see the value of insubordination, encouraging them to rebel against adult control in order to become men.

At the same time, however, editors feared upsetting domestic stability and angering teachers and parents, who, like Ellis's mother, might withhold subversive reading material from

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[1] Ellis, *My Life*, 74, 75.
[2] Ibid., 75.

their young charges. As a result, boys' periodicals never depicted successful youth rebellions in England. Instead, they displaced adolescent mutinies to foreign spaces, where boys' revolts became intertwined with battles for and against the British empire. Growth in boys' periodicals thus became both a personal project and a national one. For these magazines' young readers, becoming a man meant not just overcoming the rough seas of adolescence, but also addressing questions about the legitimacy and integrity of their imperial position.

Empire in Victorian Boys' Periodicals

The first boys' periodical arguably appeared in 1855, when Samuel Orchart Beeton launched the *Boy's Own Magazine: An Illustrated Journal in Fact, Fiction, History and Adventure*. Like many contemporary publications, Beeton's periodical offered its readers thirty-two pages of fiction, articles, and correspondence on a monthly basis.[3] Unlike other magazines, however, Beeton's paper explicitly targeted adolescent readers, aiming "to form the taste and influence the mind of a youth; whose glorious heritage it is to possess the Empire that their fathers have founded and preserved and whose duty it will be to hold that Empire, handing it down greater, more prosperous, to future generations."[4]

The *Boy's Own Magazine* itself had a relatively short tenure. By 1867, it had passed out of Beeton's hands, and in 1875, it ceased publication altogether.[5] Its legacy, however, was long. In fact, Beeton's magazine famously inaugurated a new literary genre: magazines aimed not at children or adult men, but at "boys . . . from ten to twenty years of age."[6] These adolescent periodicals tapped into an underserved, but quickly growing, juvenile market. The Victorians' discovery of adolescence, coupled with educational reforms that expanded youth literacy and

[3] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 8.
[4] Quoted in Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 66.
[5] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 8.
[6] Salmon, "What Boys Read," 248.

technological advances that reduced the cost of printing, had created a large new literary audience.[7] Some publishers had already attempted to exploit this market by releasing juvenile novels and Sunday school prize books. As I noted in the previous chapter, however, the price point of these texts made them unavailable to the average young person, and their content was closely supervised by teachers and parents.[8] On the less respectable end of the literary landscape, the publishers of penny dreadfuls also attempted to attract a youthful readership by introducing boy heroes—including "boy apprentices, link boys, trace boys, call boys, boy gypsies, boy sailors, boy soldiers, and boy crusoes"—but these texts were aimed at adult readers, as well as young ones.[9]

Boys' periodicals were among the very first types of literature overtly created for and marketed directly to an adolescent audience. Drawing upon the traditions of both children's literature and penny dreadfuls, these magazines were packed with fiction about overseas adventures and schoolyard hijinks, along with a healthy sprinkling of articles about history, science, and travel; colorful accounts of sports matches; jokes and songs; and correspondence columns that allowed young readers to seek advice.[10] Each magazine spoke directly to readers of the "ambiguous age" between childhood and adulthood, offering them entertaining ways to fill their "hours of leisure and play."[11] Since they could be produced and sold cheaply, boys' periodicals were affordable for most adolescent readers, allowing publishers to fine-tune them to meet the preferences of young consumers, rather than prioritizing the demands of parents.[12] These magazines also targeted youth from a broad range of social classes; although they were

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[7] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 13-15.
[8] Richards, "Introduction," 4.
[9] Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 73.
[10] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 27.
[11] "Sensations of Sixteen," 36; Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 26.
[12] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 76; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 2; Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 23.

initially aimed at upper-middle class readers, the genre quickly expanded to address an audience coming "from school, from the office, the work-room, or the shop."[13] In addition, they attracted both male and female readers, despite explicitly targeting young men.[14]

With a large potential audience and a clear focus on young readers' entertainment, boys' periodicals quickly dominated the adolescent literary landscape, becoming one of the most widely consumed forms of entertainment in Victorian Britain.[15] Kelly Boyd notes that, in the wake of Beeton's initial publication in 1855, these magazines became "the established leisure activity of millions of boys."[16] As might be expected, they received some pushback from concerned adults. A number of conservative critics conflated them with penny dreadfuls and complained—in the words of contemporary reviewer Edward Salmon—that they were "devoid of every element of sweetness and light," "contemptible in literary execution," and a "pernicious influence" on the minds of young people.[17] Among young readers themselves, however, the magazines gained enormous popularity, and their numbers grew quickly throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1855, there was only one periodical for boys; in 1900, there were twenty-three weekly or monthly magazines appearing simultaneously.[18] Within this forty-five year range, 106 boys' periodicals came into existence, and although not all of them had a long lifespan—due to the volatility of the marketplace, some journals ran for only a few weeks

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[13] Stevens, "The Editor's Address," 16.
[14] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 171.
[15] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 3, 34. Anecdotally, many Victorian writers recalled the prominence of boys' periodicals in their youthful lives. H. G. Wells spoke of devouring these magazines as a boy, while Edgar Jepson hunted down back copies of the *Boys of England* in his youth. Havelock Ellis recalled reading boys' magazines in "every spare moment" with "a kind of fever," and R. A. H. Goodyear savored the "picturesque adventures" in the *Boy's Own Paper* and the *Boys' Comic Journal*. For fuller descriptions of these accounts, see Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 75-76; Ellis, *My Life*, 75; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 45.
[16] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 2.
[17] Salmon, "What Boys Read," 255. See also Holt, *Public School Literature*, 146; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 4.
[18] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 17.

before ceasing publication or merging with another magazine—the genre as a whole continued to flourish into the twentieth century.[19]

In keeping with Samuel Beeton's early editorial statement, almost all of these magazines did attempt to "form the taste" and "influence the mind[s]" of their readers. Although practical business concerns came first with most publishers, editors frequently strove to inculcate approved ideas and values within the "unhewn material" of their young readers' psyches.[20] In recent decades, several critics, including Diana Dixon, Claudia Nelson, and Kelly Boyd, have explored this subject, charting the ways editors used friendly editorials, propagandistic fiction, and polysemic narratives to persuade readers to embrace everything from patriotism and manliness to the virtues of the publication before them.[21]

For many critics, however, it is the second part of Beeton's statement—"whose glorious heritage it is to possess the Empire . . . and whose duty it will be to hold that Empire"—that has proved most compelling. In fact, as Christopher Banham has rightly noted, "the British empire has become the single most developed theme of study in the historiography of Victorian boys' periodicals."[22] Almost universally, scholars of boys' periodicals have concluded that boys' magazines were both dedicated to and highly supportive of the British empire and imperial expansion. Louis James, Patrick Howarth, Patrick Dunae, and Jeffrey Richards, for example, have all argued that boys' periodicals "played an important role in promoting an interest in empire among a large and impressionable audience," especially in the latter part of the nineteenth century.[23] John Springhall, too, claims that periodicals' "enthusiastic promotion of

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[19] Ibid., 17, 26.
[20] "School and College Life," 131. See also Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 32; Richards, "Introduction," 3.
[21] Dixon, "From Instruction to Amusement," 64-65; Nelson, "Mixed Messages," 3; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 7, 46.
[22] Banham, "England and America," 151.
[23] Dunae, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire," 120-121. See also James, "Tom Brown's Imperialist Sons," 89; Howarth, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 89; Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 13; Richards, "Introduction," 5.

stories featuring manly heroism, racial stereotypes and military glory" reflected and reinforced positive ideas about the British empire.[24] Even recent critics who have questioned the idea of "unwavering" support for empire within select periodicals still agree that most boys' magazines framed adventure stories in "staunchly patriotic" terms.[25]

Scholars have offered numerous rationales to explain boys' periodicals' support for the British empire. Many highlight the pragmatic patriotism that animated editors and writers, claiming that periodicals inflated national and imperial pride in order to engage young readers.[26] Especially later in the century, when British overseas activities became an increasingly popular topic of conversation, critics argue that "patriotism and belief in the imperial mission were unvarying features of editorial policy."[27] Critics also point to some magazines' missionary agendas, arguing that religious journals like the *Boy's Own Paper* found empire to be an "ideal vehicle for the spread of Christian civilization."[28] In some cases, publishers may also have had a financial stake in the expansion of the British empire. Alfred Harmsworth, for example, arguably supported the empire not just for ideological reasons, but also because he owned five hundred shares in the British South African Chartered Company.[29]

Despite publishers' different motivations, however, most scholars agree that the primary goal of magazines' imperial writing was to cultivate adolescent readers for national duties in the armed forces and the civil service. They note that publishers bragged about their magazines' utility as military recruiting tools, claiming to have "do[ne] more to provide recruits for our Army and Navy and to keep up the estimation of these two services in the eyes of the people of

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[24] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 123.
[25] Banham, "England and America," 157.
[26] Ibid.; Arnold, *Held Fast for England,* 63.
[27] Howarth, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 89.
[28] Richards, "Introduction," 5. See also Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 137.
[29] Banham, "England and America," 154.

this country than anything else."[30] Boys' periodicals also pushed middle- and upper-class readers towards civil service careers, especially since it was generally taken for granted that boys at public schools would serve as the empire's leaders.[31] For boys entering both the military and civil service, obedience and an adherence to the established social order were crucial civic values. Therefore, numerous critics have argued, boys' periodicals encouraged readers to embrace a sense of duty and submit to agents of authority.[32]

To support these arguments, scholars have focused almost exclusively on boys' periodical adventure fiction, which often framed exploration and conquest as both great fun and a good way to build character. These magazines made much of the "wild beauty" of foreign landscapes, highlighting the "pleasure and excitement" of being a backwoodsman, a colonial farmer, or a soldier, rather than focusing on "the darker aspects of that life."[33] They also pointedly framed surveying new territories as "First-rate fun! . . . Just like what you read about in Livingstone and Baker," and talked about "fight[ing] the savages" and "put[ting] up with all sorts of privations, [while] try[ing] to get rich" as a kind of glorious adventure.[34] Articles describing new colonies even directly encouraged "self-reliant young men who find England too small for them . . . to play their part in consolidating and permeating the new country with the civilization, the commerce, the religion of the old."[35]

In addition, critics have analyzed boys' magazines' narratives about heroic military exploits, arguing that they functioned as a kind of propaganda for the armed forces and for British imperialism more generally.[36] Many periodicals ran stories depicting recent military

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[30] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 113-14. See also Howarth, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 89.
[31] Rich, *Elixir of Empire*, 31.
[32] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 2; Dunae, "Boys Literature and the Idea of Empire," 108.
[33] Timperley, "Bush Luck," April 05, 1890, 420; Ballantyne, "The Red Man's Revenge," November 28, 1879, 129.
[34] Ker, "The Lost Expedition," July 26, 1890, 674; Timperley, "Bush Luck," May 03, 1890, 483.
[35] B.O.P. Special Correspondent. "The Natal of To-Day," 602.
[36] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 118; Dunae, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire," 114-15.

battles and offering accounts of soldiers' heroism in India, Egypt, Afghanistan, and the Transvaal.[37] Fiction and nonfiction celebrated the "determined . . . spirit that animates British soldiers," whose "do or die" attitude allowed them to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds.[38] Even military defeats were framed as noble, and boys were invited to mourn the loss of fine British men while also looking forward to future military successes.[39]

In focusing their attention on these aspects of boys' periodicals, however, critics have overlooked two important factors. First, stories of foreign adventure and imperial violence were not the only fictional narratives that appeared in boys' periodicals.[40] In reality, these stories were printed alongside many other types of fiction, including school stories, historical fiction, and apprenticeship tales. These additional stories served to contextualize narratives of exploration and conquest, adding nuance to their representations of foreign peoples and places. By either focusing their attention entirely on imperial stories or addressing adventure fiction, school stories, and historical fiction in separate chapters, previous critics have largely failed to recognize the interconnected discourse among the magazines' many fictional texts.[41]

Second, established critical interpretations frequently engage with contemporary political and socioeconomic discussions about empire, race, and class, but they largely ignore mid- and late-Victorian ideas about periodicals' youthful readers. As I have shown, Victorian society viewed adolescents as "strange lump[s] of shyness and impudence" known for their "impatient

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[37] Dunae, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire," 114-15; Banham, "England and America," 115.
[38] "Left-Handed Jack; or, The Royal Dragoon," 2.
[39] St. John, "Who Shall Be Leader?" January 22, 1867, 9; Powell, "Marksmen of the Veldt," 11.
[40] Like most previous critics, I focus in this chapter almost entirely on the fictional content of boys' periodicals. For an in-depth assessment of the relationship between periodical fiction and nonfiction, please see the third chapter of this dissertation, which assesses the complicated dialogue between articles, essays, and serialized fiction in girls' magazines.
[41] Patrick Howarth and E. S. Turner address adventure fiction and school stories in separate chapters, while Louis James, Patrick Dunae, and John Springhall focus their criticism almost entirely on adventure fiction, without considering other narrative genres.

… yearning" to "try [their] young wings."[42] Adolescents' desire for autonomy was a subject of particular concern at the time, as critics expected young people to demand freedom from the proscriptions and strictures of adult authority figures.[43] This issue would have been top of mind for editors aiming to "enthrall" and "delight" their young consumers, especially since contemporary wisdom held that successful writers for boys must "identify [themselves] entirely with youthful aspirations and ideas."[44]

In this chapter, I will offer a new reading of boys' periodicals' engagement with duty, authority, and empire that places the full sweep of their narrative productions in dialogue with developing ideas about adolescence. Breaking with previous critics, I argue that stories in these magazines actually focused less on service and duty than on rebellion. In fact—in keeping with contemporary views about adolescence—the stories in boys' magazines connected maturation with the seizure of authority, requiring their heroes to experience autonomy from and even power over adult authority figures in order to become men.

Aiming to maintain national stability and to avoid alienating adults, however, boys' periodicals almost always displaced these stories of rebellion from Britain itself. Instead, boys' magazines set them in geographically distant locations: a foreign country, a far-flung colony, or even the high seas. While periodicals depicted boys at school in the British countryside or at work in London as subject to adult commands, those beyond national borders were perpetually prone to mutiny against their superiors. Assigning youthful rebellions to foreign spaces allowed boys' periodicals to remove the threat of rebellion from home, even as they embraced it as a

[42] "School and College Life," 131; "Sensations of Sixteen," 37; "Love in Boyhood and Manhood," 150.
[43] For a review of Victorian ideas about adolescent rebellion, please see the introduction to this dissertation.
[44] Stevens, "The Editor's Address," 16; Salmon, "What Boys Read," 250.

necessary step in the maturation process. As a result of this division, however, adolescent autonomy in boys' journals became closely correlated with setting.

By consistently placing narratives about youths seizing power in distant locations, boys' magazines linked them with the growing empire. On the one hand, this served to reinforce the imperial agenda, as the triumph of young British heroes over established powers in far flung locales mimicked imperial conquest. On the other hand, magazines' support for defying authority pushed readers to recoil from British authoritarian structures, including the military and colonial administration, and encouraged them to question Great Britain's domination over colonized peoples. As a result, the periodicals' stories of travel, adventure, and conquest served not only as an advertisement for the British empire, but also as a challenge to the justice and sustainability of the empire itself.

In making this argument, I will, like many past critics, be focusing primarily on the fiction in boys' periodicals, as this was "the core of all boys' magazines," and, for many readers, the magazines' primary attraction.[45] Editors advertised the production of new fictional narratives, and readers filled the magazines' correspondence sections with letters attesting to their interest and engagement with those texts.[46] In most cases, I have studied lengthy serialized stories, which allowed authors to develop nuanced characters and gave readers an opportunity to grow invested in the narratives' outcomes. In some cases, however, serialized stories were not available; in those instances, I have reviewed shorter complete stories, which generally ran for only one issue. Although these stories did not inspire the same sense of investment and connection among young readers, they still served as a primary attraction for the magazines' audience and allowed readers to engage imaginatively with the text's subject matter.

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[45] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 29. See also Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 111.
[46] Banham, "England and America," 166.

The stories that I have analyzed come from three popular boys' periodicals—the *Boys of England,* the *Boy's Own Paper*, and the *Halfpenny Marvel*—which I have selected to serve as representative samples of the genre. The *Boys of England* (1866-1899) was one of the earliest successful boys' periodicals. A sixteen-page penny weekly produced by Edwin James Brett, the magazine's mix of exciting fiction, informative nonfiction, large illustrations, and competitions, all depicted in "the clipped style of the penny dreadful," set the tone for every boys' journal that followed.[47] Although Brett's paper was ostensibly "dedicated to all readers of all classes" and claimed that Prince Arthur and Count William Bernstorff were subscribers, the majority of its audience came from the lower-middle and working classes.[48] Among these readers, Brett's paper quickly became immensely popular. In its first year of publication, it boasted a circulation of 150,000, which grew to 250,000 by 1870.[49] Brett attempted to capitalize upon this success by producing a host of similar periodicals, including *Young Men of Great Britain* (1868)*, Boys of the World* (1869), the *Boys' Favourite* (1870), *Our Boys' Journal* (1876), the *Boy's Comic Journal* (1883), and *Boys of the Empire* (1888). His competitors, William L. Emmett and Charles Fox, also released numerous offerings modeled on the *Boys of England*, such as the *Young Englishman's Journal* (1867), *Young Gentlemen of Britain* (1868)*, Sons of Britannia* (1876), the *Boys' Standard* (1875), the *Boy's Leisure Hour* (1884), and the *Boy's Champion* (1889).

In contrast, the *Boy's Own Paper* (1879-1967) was a religiously oriented magazine that aimed to counter the influence of "mischievous" publications.[50] Produced by the Religious Tract Society, the *Boy's Own Paper* offered readers a weekly dose of fiction and nonfiction that met

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[47] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 73. See also James, "Tom Brown's Imperialist Sons," 89.
[48] "Correspondence," 32. See also Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 75; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 2-3.
[49] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 25.
[50] Ibid., 22-23.

the requirements of the paper's conservative general management committee, although the de facto editor, George Andrew Hutchinson, made sure that the periodical was "written for boys and not for their grandmothers."[51] Like the *Boys of England*, the *Boy's Own Paper* was immensely popular. The RTS claimed it sold 200,000 issues each week during its first year, with sales climbing to 500,000 in the 1880s and 650,000 in the 1890s.[52] Unlike the *Boys of England*, however, the *Boy's Own Paper* catered primarily to a middle- and upper-middle-class audience, making it one of the "high class" boys' magazines.[53] Similar magazines included *Young Folks* (1871), *Young England* (1880), *Chums* (1892), and the *Captain* (1899), all of which enjoyed a reputation as "quality periodicals."[54]

Finally, Alfred Harmsworth released the *Halfpenny Marvel* (1893-1922) at the end of the century, ushering in a new era of fin de siècle boys' magazines. Each edition of the "brash and rather bumptious" weekly magazine included sixteen pages, most of which were taken up by a single complete story of 20,000 words or more.[55] These stories—which generally focused on adventure, with occasional interludes for narratives about school, historical battles, detection, and even science fiction—proved, as Harmsworth himself put it, to be "just what the public wanted."[56] The magazine's halfpenny cost, which was half the price of other boys' magazines, was also very attractive to readers, especially those who found it "a great social step [to go] from a halfpenny to a penny."[57] By catering primarily to youths from the lower-middle and working classes, the *Halfpenny Marvel*—sometimes referred to simply as the *Marvel*—became incredibly

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[51] Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 97. See also Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 23.
[52] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 34. Although these self-reported numbers are suspect, the paper did, by all accounts, sell quite well. In 1880, it netted £2,600 for the RTS, which rose to £5,000 by 1890. For more on circulation figures for the *Boy's Own Paper*, see Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 23, 28-29.
[53] Salmon, "What Boys Read," 256. See also Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 100-01.
[54] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 24. See also Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 100-01.
[55] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 31. See also Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 110.
[56] "The Editor Speaks," 16.
[57] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 108.

popular.[58] In its first week, the magazine sold over 120,000 copies, and sales for the rest of the decade fluctuated between 125,000 and 150,000.[59] Harmsworth soon capitalized upon its success, quickly releasing a slew of similar magazines, including *Union Jack* (1894)*, Pluck* (1894)*,* and the *Boys' Friend* (1895).

Each of these magazines has been a subject of discussion for empire-focused critics of boys' periodicals. Critics have paid particular attention to the *Halfpenny Marvel*, arguing that the magazine's combination of "wild adventure, staunch patriotism, and strong racism" reflects "the upsurge of aggressive British imperialism and racism" that emerged in the 1890s, as well as Harmsworth's own financial stake in empire-focused companies.[60] The *Boy's Own Paper*, too, has been recognized for its depictions of Christian heroes "expanding the Queen's realms or defending her possessions overseas."[61] Even the *Boys of England*—which, critics have traditionally argued, treated foreign locations as nothing more than "a colorful backcloth"[62]—has been reclaimed as an imperial text in recent decades by scholars like Kelly Boyd and Christopher Banham.[63]

As I will show in the following pages, however, these magazines were also similar in their approach to readers' psychological concerns. Although the papers differed greatly from each other in price, form, and readers' class background, each took a strikingly similar approach in displacing depictions of youthful rebellion and autonomy. Studying the fiction of these

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[58] For a discussion of class in the *Halfpenny Marvel*, see Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 2-3. Harmsworth himself claimed that "at all the public schools there is a great rush for the *Halfpenny Marvel*" (quoted in Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 113), but critics generally agree that the bulk of Harmsworth's readers were boys from the working class.
[59] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 36; Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 113.
[60] Banham, "England and America," 152; Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 109. See also Howarth, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 89.
[61] Dunae, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire," 108. See also Banham, "England and America," 151-52.
[62] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 123. See also Dunae, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire," 107.
[63] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 124-26; Banham, "England and America," 152, 154.

magazines in conjunction reveals that the position of empire in boys' periodicals was not just a product of politics, patriotism, and self-serving financial interests, but also a result of views—and concerns—about a growing generation.

Location and Authority in Boys' Fiction

Despite their arguments about the importance of duty and submission in Victorian boys' periodicals, most critics acknowledge that boys themselves preferred reading about "independence, rebellion, and self-realization."[64] Boys' periodicals largely catered to these demands, depicting rebellion against adults as both frequent and fun. In their stories, "fearless, reckless," and good-looking British boys—who are, to a one, "the very embodiment of pluck itself"—repeatedly delight in flouting, undermining, and even rewriting the rules.[65] They lead mutinies against their teachers, prank their foolish coworkers, and disobey direct orders from both parents and superior officers. Young heroes also frequently assert their authority over adults by taking control of ships or armies and seizing leadership positions within foreign towns or colonies.

Tellingly, these seizures of power serve not just as entertainment, but also—when successful—as crucial pathways to development. Boys' periodicals depicted them as a required step in the maturation process, framing rebellion as the crucial factor in the process of converting boys into men. While, in these stories, obedient boys fail to age beyond adolescence, rebellious ones find that they have become "men—quite men" and that, "in spite of [their] youth [they]

[64] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 147.
[65] Gerrish, "The Fags of the Fifth," September 21, 1897, 12, and February 05, 1898, 14.

command universal respect."[66] As a rule, the boys themselves attribute their maturation to their seizure of authority, claiming, "It isn't the years, it's the spirit that makes a man."[67]

These depictions were in keeping with contemporary ideas about youth, which viewed rebelliousness as a natural part of adolescent development. In addition, scenes of youthful revolt were appealing to young people, who were the primary purchasers and consumers of boys' magazines. In order to attract readers and subscribers, boys' periodicals pointedly offered boys "only what seemed most entertaining and enjoyable."[68] Editors advertised that their magazines were created "expressly for your [boys'] *amusement*" and promised to avoid anything that might be construed as "sermons in disguise."[69] By providing young readers, who had often been "raised to propriety and abnegation," with the chance to immerse themselves in rebellion against domestic and social strictures, these magazines allowed boys to enjoy what Claudia Nelson refers to as "the kind of excitement that comes from breaking the rules."[70] They invited young readers to identify with the disobedient hero and—in imagination, at least—to triumph over oppressive authority figures alongside him.

Even as they reveled in youthful autonomy, however, boys' periodicals were careful to prevent rebellion from coming too close to home. Publishers recognized that boys enjoyed reading about young heroes upsetting the status quo, but they did not intend to inspire actual

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[66] St. John, "Who Shall Be Leader?" April 20, 1867, 342; Verne, "The Boy Captain," July 24, 1880, 676.
[67] Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," December 16, 1879, 118. As Kelly Boyd has noted, Victorians made a distinction between "manliness" and "manhood." Showing "manliness" meant representing the best qualities of the ideal adult male: bravery, patriotism, strength of character, and a strong sense of justice. Boys and women, as well as men, could demonstrate this characteristic. "Manhood," on the other hand, referred to the state of being an adult man, rather than a child. When reviewing these stories, I have focused on depictions of manhood, rather than manliness, as these reflect the growth process. For more on "manliness," see Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 45-46.
[68] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 111.
[69] Stevens, "The Editor's Address," 16; "Correspondence," 32.
[70] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 107; Nelson, "Mixed Messages," 6.

rebellions.[71] Contemporary fears that young people would model their behavior upon the stories they read inspired an effort to keep "distorted" scenarios out of works that boys and girls could apply directly to their own lives.[72] Critic Edward Salmon highlighted numerous accounts of "bad literature" turning boys against their families and employers, claiming, "What the hero may do the reader considers himself justified in attempting to do. . . . Upon the works for boys and girls, therefore, rests a responsibility equal at least to that of the parent or tutor."[73] Especially given the violent rebellions that had occurred at public schools in recent memory, editors would not want to encourage youth to reject adult authority while at school or at home.[74]

Editors also likely worried about inciting physical revolts among their periodicals' working-class readers, whose delinquent actions had become an increasing subject of public concern during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although juvenile crime had long been a popular topic of discussion, anxiety about youthful offenders in the working class spiked during the 1880s and 1890s.[75] Developing ideas about adolescence, especially youthful rebellion, coupled with existing concerns about poverty and immorality among the working class, transformed juvenile delinquency from an exceptional criminal act into an expected characteristic of working-class adolescent behavior.[76] Youthful "outbreaks of rowdyism" posed, in the words of Matthew Arnold, a serious threat to "settled order and security" in Britain.[77] Editors may have been willing to push the boundaries of acceptable content, but—especially

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[71] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 2.
[72] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 189.
[73] Salmon, "What Boys Read," 256, 249.
[74] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 121-22; Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, 104-05.
[75] Gillis, *Youth and History*, 171, 129.
[76] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, 174, 27; Griffin, *Representations of Youth*, 101.
[77] Quoted in Savage, *Teenage*, 41.

given their determination to differentiate their works from "dangerous" penny dreadfuls—they tried to avoid encouraging criminal behavior among the working class.[78]

Moreover, although young people were the primary audience for boys' magazines, publishers were careful not to antagonize teachers and parents, recognizing their ability to control boys' reading material. Hutchinson consciously cultivated a reputation of respectability for the *Boy's Own Paper* to earn the approval of adult authority figures, while Brett attempted to appease parents by promising to offer only "healthy fiction."[79] Harmsworth addressed parents directly, assuring them that his magazine was free of "injurious tendencies" and that "Nothing objectionable will ever appear in the 'Halfpenny Marvel.'"[80] When titling the *Halfpenny Marvel*, Harmsworth and his brother also consciously looked for a title that would "sound respectable" to parents, acknowledging that it would have to "act as a cloak for [the] . . . fiery stories" that young readers demanded.[81]

As a result of these concerns, boys' magazines almost never depicted successful youth rebellions occurring within Great Britain. Although stories set in England and Scotland frequently featured instances of mischief and even outright mutiny, youthful insurgents were always subdued—and, in many cases, punished—before the end of the narrative. School stories included countless examples of boys learning to respect authority, despite a penchant for disobedience and an insistence that their youthful "rights and privileges . . . must be respected."[82] For example, in George Gerrish's "Fags of the Fifth" (1897), one of the few serialized stories to run in the *Halfpenny Marvel*, young schoolboys attack almost all adults who appear in their path,

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[78] Springhall, "'Pernicious Reading'?," 327.
[79] Salmon, "What Boys Read," 256; Stevens, "The Editor's Address," 16.
[80] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 110; "Advertisement," 7.
[81] Ferris, *The House of Northcliffe*, 60.
[82] Gerrish, "The Fags of the Fifth," September 14, 1897, 14.

pelting servants with soap and hairbrushes, sketching unflattering portraits of their headmaster, and even tying up an unpopular teacher and putting him in a cupboard.[83] In the midst of their mischief, however, a new teacher comes to the school whose "authority [is] undisputed," and in him the boys find "a master, in the true sense of the word."[84] A similar assertion of adult authority occurs in the *Boys of England*'s "Hal and Rue's Schooldays and After" (1881), in which young schoolboys—having screwed their teacher's boots to the floor, sewn the sleeves of his coat shut, and filled his prized flute with treacle—come to regret their misbehavior and learn "to curb their mischievous instincts—their practical joking—when it involves the insulting of those they are bound to respect."[85] Talbot Baines Reed's "Tom, Dick, and Harry" (1892), which ran in the *Boy's Own Paper*, also shows schoolboys' pranks and insubordination being met with punishment, most notably when their plan to burn a teacher in effigy causes them to end up before a magistrate.[86] Eventually, the boys find that "any inclination to rebel or mutiny [is] suppressed" within them, and Reed's young hero even becomes grateful for adult chastisement, as "my conscience had smitten me more than once" over his poorly disciplined behavior.[87]

In addition to highlighting the dangers of misbehaving, school stories also frequently emphasized the benefits of good conduct and rule-following. "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," which set the tone for school stories after it appeared in the *Boy's Own Paper* in 1881, famously celebrates boys who work hard "for the credit of the good old school."[88] The narrator of "Some of Our Fellows" (1879), too, argues that a "boy with any self-respect" must obey both "the laws of the land" and "the rules of the school."[89] The *Boys of England*'s "Captain of the School"

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[83] Ibid., August 31, 1897, 12; December 07, 1897, 31; and November 23, 1897, 15.
[84] Ibid., September 21, 1897, 12.
[85] "Hal and Rue's Schooldays and After," July 22, 1881, 258, 211.
[86] Reed, "Tom, Dick, and Harry," December 10, 1892, 164; December 31, 1892, 211; and January 21, 1893, 260.
[87] Ibid., December 31, 1892, 211; February 04, 1893, 290.
[88] Reed, "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," January 28, 1882, 283.
[89] Millington, "Some of Our Fellows," January 03, 1880, 218.

(1867) points to the rewards of such good behavior, arguing that when a boy is "a good un, everything is in his favour."[90] In many of these stories, fictional schoolboys are also supported in their meritorious endeavors by kindly headmasters, whose names—such as Dr. England, Dr. Senior, and Dr. Placid—testify to their benevolence and respectability.[91] Boys find that their teachers' and headmasters' interest in them "act[s] like magic to [their] soul[s]," and they illustrate their affection for these figures with cheers and friendly handshakes.[92]

Other stories set in Great Britain, such as apprenticeship stories, similarly focused on reinforcing adult authority. In "Sharkey; Or, Too Sharp by Half" (1890), a narrative about a sixteen-year-old lawyer's clerk that appeared in the *Boys of England*, young Sharkey is drugged and kidnapped because he ignores his mother's advice and his father's warnings.[93] In contrast, seventeen-year-old Archie, the working-class hero of the *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Leopold, the Lion Tamer" (1897), immediately stops pranking his fellow traveling show workers when he learns that his father does not approve of his tricks.[94] Such an example of good character must have its reward. In Archie's case, it pleases his father, who soon afterwards agrees to allow Archie to attend military college.[95]

These stories' emphasis on domestic stability and adult authority would certainly have helped to assuage concerns about youthful uprisings, but they did not align with contemporary

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[90] "The Captain of the School," 363.
[91] See Reed, "Tom, Dick, and Harry," December 10, 1892, 164; Reed, "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," October 15, 1881, 33; "The Captain of the School," July 20, 1867, 130. It is worth noting that not all headmasters fit this model. As E.S. Turner has pointed out, a number of stories represent schoolmasters as "pompous, cretinous and bibulous," with names like Birchback and Lashem. Even in these stories, however, boys often come to respect their headmasters, and other, more gentle teachers consistently appear as sympathetic authority figures. For more, see Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys*, 80; "Left-Handed Jack; Or, The Terror of the School," July 18, 1890, 51, and August 22, 1890, 130; "Tom Floremall's Schooldays," February 18, 1876, 185, and May 05, 1876, 354.
[92] Reed, "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," December 03, 1881, 154; Gerrish, "Fags of the Fifth," September 14, 1897, 15, and March 19, 1898, 12; "Left-Handed Jack; Or, The Terror of the School," August 22, 1890, 130.
[93] "Sharkey," April 25, 1890, 278, and May 02, 1890, 296.
[94] Rowe, "Leopold, The Lion Tamer," 10.
[95] Ibid.

views on adolescent development. If, as Victorian critics and psychologists contended, pushing back against authority was a key part of the maturation process, then young people who embraced adult oversight and hewed closely to the rules were doomed to perpetual immaturity.[96] In keeping with this perspective, the obedient boys in these Great Britain-based stories were never able to advance to adulthood within the confines of their narratives. "Tom, Dick, and Harry" ends with the heroes' celebrations at school, while the protagonists of "Hal and Rue's Schooldays and After" have not aged beyond "noble lads" when the story concludes.[97] The final chapters of "Fags of the Fifth" and "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's" both jump forward in time, showing the heroes "talk[ing] over old times" several years after the main events of the story have occurred.[98] Despite the passage of time, however, the heroes of "Fags of the Fifth" still remain "youths" and "boys," while Reed allows his heroes to graduate to "old boys," but pointedly never refers to them as men.[99] Similarly, Sharkey remains a boy for the entire duration of his residence in London, and Archie is still "only a youth" when he heads off to military college.[100]

Without a space for rebellion or development at home, young readers and the writers who catered to them had to find a new location to support the turbulent adolescent growth process. They therefore turned their attention to locations outside of Great Britain, focusing on foreign countries, imperial territories, and even the high seas. In these spaces, young explorers, colonists,

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[96] For a contemporary discussion of the "wholesome" effect of adolescent rebellion, see Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 182, 191.
[97] Reed, "Tom, Dick, and Harry," March 25, 1893, 403; "Hal and Rue's Schooldays and After," September 30, 1881, 15.
[98] Gerrish, "The Fags of the Fifth," March 26, 1898, 13; Reed, "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," June 24, 1882, 623-24.
[99] Gerrish, "The Fags of the Fifth," March 26, 1898, 13; Reed, "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," June 24, 1882, 623.
[100] Rowe, "Leopold, The Lion Tamer," 10. At a later point in "Sharkey; Or, Too Sharp by Half," the young hero travels to Africa, at which point, he seizes authority over adults and becomes a "gentleman" ("Sharkey," July 04, 1890, 31). It is not until he leaves home, however, that this rebellion and transformation can take place.

and midshipmen could fight for authority without jeopardizing domestic stability. Detailing events away from the home front meant that boys' authors generally did not need to worry about inspiring rebellions among schoolboys or apprentices. In addition, many foreign locations were already perceived to be sites of instability and violence, so using them as a backdrop for youthful rebellion allowed authors to boast about their realism and authenticity.[101] Finally, publishers recognized that presenting foreign landscapes as opportune spaces to seize power made them intriguing to young readers. By focusing their attention on youthful quests for power in uncharted African jungles and distant Australian colonies, boys' periodicals managed to titillate their readers, while also capitalizing upon the national fascination with foreign cultures and the British empire.

In contrast to stories set at home, then, fictional narratives set in foreign locations consistently allowed young characters to seize authority over adults. "Plucky adventurers" in their teens and early twenties—all of them boasting "the fearless carriage and the resolute air which stamped [them] as a young Britisher"—regularly took control of their surroundings, asserting their authority over expected adult superiors.[102] Consider, for example, "Alone in the Pirates' Lair" (1866), the first serialized story to appear in the *Boys of England.* Although the hero, Jack Rushton, begins the story as nothing more than a "young midshipman," a pirate attack upsets the usual power structure and allows Jack to gain dominance over the men around him.[103] By the end of the story, the elderly boatswain, who outranked Jack in the ship's original hierarchy, willingly refers to Jack as his "superior officer" and agrees to defer to Jack's judgment

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[101] Banham, "England and America," 155-157; Ker, "The Lost Expedition," July 05, 1890, 627, and July 19, 1890, 658; Verne, "The Boy Captain," March 13, 1880, 382-83.
[102] Denville, "The Old Chief's Quest," 7; "Sword to the Sword," 1. As Kelly Boyd notes, boys' story papers generally equated Britishness with Englishness (123). For an example of this, see the *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "The Three Chums," which describes the English, Scottish, and Irish heroes as friends who "owned to only one nationality—they were all Englishmen—Britishers, if you like" (Herring, "The Three Chums," 5).
[103] Stevens, "Alone in the Pirates' Lair," November 24, 1866, 1.

in all things.[104] Similarly, in "The Boy Captain," a novel by Jules Verne that the *Boy's Own Paper* adapted for serialization in 1879, fifteen-year-old apprentice Dick Sands becomes captain of a whaling vessel after the death of many members of the crew. Although some of the ship's remaining adults object to the idea of receiving orders from a boy, Dick's "firm and resolute" manner soon convinces them that "Orders must be taken from him, and they must be obeyed."[105] Even W. H. G. Kingston's "From Powder Monkey to Admiral" (1879), famously written "to engender . . . a love of 'duty,'" frames young Bill Rayner's triumphant rise through the British navy as an opportunity to give orders to ever-larger numbers of adult men, some of whom he pointedly refers to as "lads."[106]

In addition, stories set in foreign locations often highlighted the virtues of rebelling against authority figures. In the *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Sword to the Sword" (1898), for example, the young hero, Frank Desborough, finds himself imprisoned by a group of Italian bandits, and ultimately leads them "in a rebellion against their tyrant," the bandit chief.[107] The success of this revolt not only releases the bandits from the chief's "spell of terror," but also saves the local population from the group's ongoing campaign of theft and murder.[108] Supporting this argument, "The Horrors of Siberia" (1894) illustrates the danger of respecting adult power, as the young hero's initial failure to rebel against the malicious guidance of his guardians leads to his arrest and internment in a remote Russian prison.[109]

In keeping with Victorian ideas about adolescent growth, these stories depict rebelling against authority figures and seizing power over them as a catalyst that transforms boys into

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[104] Ibid., January 22, 1867, 130.
[105] Verne, "The Boy Captain," November 29, 1879, 140.
[106] Salmon, "What Boys Read," 252; Kingston, "From Powder Monkey to Admiral," September 13, 1879, 546.
[107] "Sword to the Sword," 7.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Blyth, "The Horrors of Siberia," 5.

men. Commandeering power in the wake of the pirate attack catapults Jack Rushton of "Alone in the Pirate's Lair" from a "young" midshipman to a "manly" post-captain.[110] In "The Boy Captain," too, Dick Sands' dominance over villainous adults allows him to "acquit [himself] like a man" who, "in spite of his youth … command[s] universal respect."[111] Bill Rayner has many triumphs in "From Powder Monkey to Admiral," but the narrator does not acknowledge him as "a grown man" until after he begins giving orders to adults.[112] Even Percy Lorrain, the youthful hero of "The Horrors of Siberia," becomes "a splendid specimen of manhood" only when he braves "the world's contempt" by turning against his adult guardians.[113]

The divide between obedience at home and disobedience abroad becomes especially apparent in stories that depict boys in both locations. The *Boys of England*, in particular, featured a number of stories—or, in some cases, series of stories—that saw boy heroes leave public school to explore the world, carving out careers for themselves as adventurers, sailors, or soldiers. Perhaps the most famous of these narratives features Jack Harkaway, the eponymous hero of "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays" (1871), "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays" (1872), "Jack Harkaway at Oxford" (1872), "Jack Harkaway Among the Brigands" (1873), etc.[114] Created by Samuel Bracebridge Hemyng, an unsuccessful barrister who had been educated at Eton and Oxford, Jack was one of the *Boys of England*'s first and most popular heroes.[115] At the beginning of "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays," he appears as a young schoolboy, endowed with

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[110] Stevens, "Alone in the Pirates' Lair," November 24, 1866, 1; February 25, 1867, 223; March 4, 1867, 236.
[111] Verne, "The Boy Captain," January 10, 1880, 236, and July 24, 1880, 676.
[112] Kingston, "From Powder Monkey to Admiral," September 06, 1879, 539.
[113] Blyth, "The Horrors of Siberia," 14.
[114] All told, over a dozen Harkaway tales were eventually published, some written by Hemyng, some by Brett, and some by anonymous authors. Although Jack declares himself a man in the second Harkaway story, "Jack Harkaway After Schooldays," the series continues to focus on boys by incorporating Jack's son and grandson.
[115] Dunae, "New Grub Street for Boys," 29; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 126-27.

strength, intelligence, and strong "propensities for mischief."[116] At school, Jack enjoys playing pranks upon his schoolmasters, fastening firecrackers to the headmaster's gown, using his skills as a ventriloquist to pit his teachers against each other, and even leading his fellow students to tar and feather one of their teachers.[117] In each case, however, Jack is punished for these behaviors: the headmaster beats Jack, puts him in chains, and even temporarily expels him.[118] Jack treats these punishments as the natural, if unwelcome, result of disobeying adult authority, and he "[does not] object to the school," even after a series of severe punishments.[119] As a result, Jack remains a "boy" until the very end of the narrative.[120]

In "Jack Harkaway After Schooldays," however, the teenaged Jack leaves school to go to sea, at which point his subversions of adult control become both more extreme and less frequently punished. When a shipwreck leaves Jack and his companions stranded on a deserted island, Jack takes control over adult figures, proclaiming himself "captain" and "monarch" of the island.[121] One of his former schoolmasters, stranded on the island with Jack, claims that "my age and my position entitle me to be the commander," but Jack uses threats and violence to quash the man's attempts to seize power.[122] Instead, Jack takes control himself, commandeering the island's resources and insisting that his "orders must be obeyed" until even his former teacher "recognise[s] his leadership."[123] This rejection of adult authority catapults Jack himself into

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[116] Hemyng, *Jack Harkaway's Schooldays*, 199. Wherever possible, I have cited the version of "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays" and "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays" that appeared in serial form in the *Boys of England*. In some cases, however, I was not able to locate particular issues containing these texts. In such instances, I have cited the novel versions of these narratives instead, which hew closely—although not perfectly—to the original periodical texts.
[117] Ibid., 115, 173; Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays," November 25, 1871, 6-7.
[118] Hemyng, *Jack Harkaway's Schooldays*, 119, 158-59, 180.
[119] Hemyng, *Jack Harkaway's Schooldays*, 201. The novel version of Hemyng's narrative includes an additional epilogue in which Jack finds himself "touched at [his teachers'] kindness" to him upon his departure from the school, further softening Jack's relationship with adult authority figures (322).
[120] Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays," January 06, 1872, 104.
[121] Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," February 10, 1872, 178, 179.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," February 10, 1872, 178.

adulthood; after a few weeks on the island, he notes that he has "become a man."[124] Even after he and his companions leave the island for Singapore, Harkaway continues to bully his former teacher and to insist, "I am not a boy now—I am a young man and a gentleman."[125]

In the wake of Harkaway's success, Brett published many other stories that followed the Harkaway model, mirroring the narrative both in terms of plot and adolescent development. "Tom Floremall's Schooldays" (1876), for example, features another boy of "the old Saxon breed," who, like Jack, exhibits a "fun-loving disposition" that tends towards mischief.[126] At school, Tom is punished for his bad behavior with numerous beatings, which lead him to "repent of [his] conduct" and to recognize that he "must learn to curb and restrain [his] exuberance."[127] Tom also embraces the school's authority figures, referring to his teachers as his "true friends" and agreeing that his headmaster—despite his tendency to be "harsh"—is "not such a bad fellow at heart."[128] As in "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays," this willingness to accept adult control prevents Tom from progressing beyond the status of "boy" in the narrative, despite numerous acts of bravery and heroism.[129]

Yet in the sequel, "Tom Floremall in Search of his Father" (1877), Tom travels to Spain, a move that allows him to revise his relationship with adult authority figures. In Spain, Tom faces assassins, brigands, and the villainous machinations of his quondam headmaster, whom he now recognizes as an "old scoundrel" and an "old humbug."[130] Although only a short time has passed since his English schooldays, Tom is now able to defend himself against adult violence

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[124] Ibid., March 09, 1872, 244.
[125] Hemyng, *Jack Harkaway's Adventures Afloat and Ashore*, 233.
[126] "Tom Floremall's Schooldays," February 11, 1876, 162; March 10, 1876, 226.
[127] Ibid., February 18, 1876, 185; June 23, 1876, 59; and March 31, 1876, 275-76.
[128] Ibid., September 28, 1876, 287, and March 31, 1876, 275.
[129] Ibid., June 09, 1876, 26.
[130] "Tom Floremall in Search of His Father," September 14, 1877, 263; September 28, 1877, 294; and October 12, 1877, 327.

and to take his former headmaster prisoner.[131] As in the Harkaway series, this act of rebellion transforms Tom from a "brave boy" into an adult, allowing him to leave the schoolyard and assume his adult positions as viscount and husband.[132]

It was not just Harkaway-esque stories that adhered to this model. "Who Shall Be Leader?" (1866), a story that appeared in the very first issue of *Boys of England*, also drew a sharp line between domestic boyhood and foreign manhood. The narrative opens by detailing the schoolboy experiences of young Harry Graham. At school, Harry eschews rebellion, befriends his teachers, and even tells them about the pranks of other boys to facilitate punishment.[133] Harry leaves school still a "youth," but soon afterwards, he heads to France and Spain to join Wellington in the fight against Napoleon.[134] After many months abroad, Harry learns that his former teacher is also his father, and that—in his new role as parental authority figure—he refuses to allow Harry to marry the girl he loves.[135] Fresh from the battle of Waterloo, Harry refuses to accede to the "tyran[ny]" of his teacher-cum-father, and he defies him by proposing to his chosen bride despite his father's objections.[136] As expected, it is this act of rebellion against schoolmaster and parent that allows Harry—previously referred to only as an "English youth" and an "English boy"—to "grow to man's estate."[137]

In each of these dual-location narratives, both the rebelliousness and the maturation of the heroes align with the established expectations for domestic and foreign narratives. At home, boys remain obedient, but undeveloped; abroad, they rebel, which allows them to transform into men.

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[131] Ibid., October 19, 1877, 342.
[132] "Tom Floremall's Schooldays," April 21, 1876, 323; "Tom Floremall in Search of His Father," October 26, 1877, 360.
[133] St. John, "Who Shall Be Leader?" November 24, 1866, 7; December 4, 1866, 22; and December 22, 1866, 70.
[134] Ibid., January 15, 1867, 119.
[135] Ibid., March 25, 1867, 279, and April 20, 1867, 343.
[136] Ibid, April 20, 1867, 342.
[137] Ibid., March 11, 1867, 246, and April 20, 1867, 343.

Significantly, many of these narratives show boys continuing to interact with their headmasters and teachers even after they have left school, enabling them to redefine their relationships in new locations. In every case, boys who were submissive and friendly to their teachers at school come to dominate their former "tyrant[s]" once on foreign soil, bullying them into submission and reminding them that now "Our positions are reversed."[138] By including the same adult figures in both locations, these stories emphasize the changed power dynamic between youths and adults in each place. It is not, they make clear, that young people are encountering different types of adults when they travel abroad; it is simply that their regard for established authority figures disappears when away from home. It is telling that, when Jack first "take[s] successful command" over his former teacher in "Jack Harkaway After Schooldays," his teacher responds by drunkenly hallucinating that he is back in his space of empowerment, the schoolroom.[139] He refers to himself, too, as Jack's "*late respected* senior master," underscoring the shift that has occurred not just in his status as teacher, but also in the respect Jack accords him.[140]

It is worth noting that there is an important exception to this division between stories of obedience at home and stories of rebellion abroad. Historical romances—which included stories set in Roman Britain, Anglo-Saxon England, and the ever-popular Tudor Era—featured myriad depictions of young men seizing agency within the borders of the Great Britain. In these stories, British boys regularly fight on behalf of national factions or lead battles against invading forces, all of which allow them to exhibit "the manly courage of an English boy of the period."[141] The *Boys of England*'s "Chevy Chase" (1866), for example, focuses on the 1388 Battle of Chevy

[138] "Tom Floremall's Schooldays," March 17, 1876, 244; Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," February 03, 1872, 163.
[139] "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," February 03, 1872, 163.
[140] Ibid., February 10, 1872, 178.
[141] Stagg, "Chevy Chase," March 25, 1867, 283.

Chase, fought by the English Harry Percy and the Scottish James Douglas. In the run-up to this battle, young Harry Percy travels through England and Scotland, regularly ignoring and disobeying adult instructions and earning himself a reputation for being a "headstrong youth" and "wild youngster."[142] In Talbot Baines Reed's "Sir Ludar" (1889), too, young Humphrey Dexter, a printer's apprentice during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, flouts orders from government officials, lays constables "by the heels," and even commits treason against the queen—all within the boundaries of England and Ireland.[143] In addition, "The Roundhead's Revenge," which appeared in the *Halfpenny Marvel* in 1897, features two brothers, Ralph and Geoffrey Haviland, on opposing sides of the English Civil War (1642-1651). Between the two of them, the brothers manage to rebel against the king, the rule of Parliament, and the orders of their father, both insistent upon protecting their "rights and liberties."[144]

In each story, these rebellious—even treasonous—actions allow the heroes to transition from youth to adulthood. "Hot-headed" Harry Percy grows from a "gallant boy" to "the hero of the north," while Humphrey Dexter believes that fighting men of the watch and consorting with "a declared enemy of our gracious Queen" permit him to "call [himself] a man."[145] The tensions of the English Civil War also help propel Ralph and Geoffrey Haviland from "gallant youth[s]" to "manhood," even though they never leave their native country.[146]

The publishers of boys' magazines were likely comfortable with domestic rebellion in historical romances because the narratives' temporal distance—much like geographical distance—prevented them from seeming dangerous to modern boys. Just as depicting mutinies in

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[142] Ibid., December 18, 1866, 58-59; December 22, 1866, 76; and April 6, 1867, 318.
[143] Reed, "Sir Ludar," August 10, 1889, 711; June 01, 1889, 550; June 22, 1889, 595; August 24, 1889, 741.
[144] Lewis, "The Roundhead's Revenge," 3.
[145] Stagg, "Chevy Chase," January 1, 1867, 90; April 6, 1867, 318-19; Reed, "Sir Ludar," March 09, 1889, 354, and April 27, 1889, 466.
[146] Lewis, "The Roundhead's Revenge," 11, 3.

foreign locales allowed boys' journals to avoid concerns about youthful mimicry, setting them in historical time periods allowed publishers to position domestic rebellion as a remote, if engaging, concept. In fact, there is some evidence that publishers viewed the historical romance itself as a kind of foreign adventure, treating both genres as similarly "exotic."[147] The narrator of the *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Sword to the Sword" pointedly refers to violent scenes in modern Italy as incidents that "might better have belonged to the old-time age of violence and bloodshed, rather than to the nineteenth century."[148] This emphasis on the violence of historical periods—which, as Kelly Boyd has pointed out, "served as reminders of British strength through the ages and validated a pride in contemporary British power"—also helped to differentiate the "disloyalty and lawlessness" of ancient England from the safety and stability of the present.[149] Thus, although these stories were technically set within the confines of Great Britain, the path to manhood followed by the historical English youth was no longer available to the boys of the present. Modern boys, the magazines made clear, would have to look elsewhere.

Fighting the Oppressor in Imperial Fiction

Setting narratives of personal development almost exclusively in foreign locations necessarily linked the growth of contemporary boys to the growth of the British empire. The empire was a major political, economic, and social force during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and few readers would have failed to see the connection between stories about individual foreign exploration and triumph and the real-life project of imperial conquest and colonization. As Patrick Dunae has noted, British boys at this time were "acutely aware of their imperial heritage," having been exposed to imperial sentiment through school, church groups,

[147] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 103.
[148] "Sword to the Sword," 2.
[149] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 54; Reed, "Sir Ludar," March 09, 1889, 356.

and recreational associations, as well as available literature.[150] Foreign stories in boys' periodicals thus became part of the larger imperial project, and, by allowing young readers to identify with boy heroes who dominated far-off landscapes, they encouraged boys to consider their own position within the empire.

Presenting foreign locations as sites of youthful rebellion, however, complicated the relationship between young heroes and empire. On one hand, depicting the areas outside of Great Britain as spaces for triumph and maturation reflected boys' magazines' support for the imperial agenda. Stories about boys gaining power and recognition in distant lands were likely to inspire imperial fervor in readers, especially when there were relatively few opportunities for boys to distinguish themselves at home. Young heroes' victories over established powers in foreign places also mirrored the real-life conquests of the British military over foreign peoples and offered similar assurances about British vigor and strength. Moreover, by connecting boys' triumphs with personal growth, magazines suggested that development and progress—presumably under colonial rule—would be the inevitable outcome of Britain's violent conflicts in foreign lands. When coupled with a hearty dose of racism and many assertions about the superiority of British civilization, these stories can easily appear to be champions of British imperial expansion.

On the other hand, by highlighting the importance of rebelling against authority in foreign places, boys' periodicals undermined support for British power structures abroad. Although some stories found boys traveling to new locations and "tak[ing] possession of [them] in the name of our gracious Sovereign," other narratives depicted boys journeying to places

[150] Dunae, "Boy's Literature of the Idea of Empire," 105.

already under—or, in the case of America, conceptually affiliated with—British control.[151] In these narratives, heroes came into conflict not just with African cannibals and Indian rebels, but also with British adults, many of them part of the military or colonial administration. In "Jack Harkaway After Schooldays," for example, Jack rebels against the captain of an English ship.[152] In "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," a young soldier—despite his readiness to "fight for the glory of Old England"[153]—repeatedly ignores his superior officers and defies military rules.[154] Building these young heroes' journeys to adulthood around their rejection of British authority meant that, even as boys' magazines celebrated British strength, they also encouraged readers to push back against systems of imperial control.

In addition, by pitting young heroes against authoritarian figures, foreign stories in boys' magazines pointedly aligned young readers with oppressed native peoples, including both imperial subjects and those who had been dispossessed by invading groups. Like colonized subjects and vilified "savages," boys found themselves dominated by unwelcome authority figures, who generally believed them to be in need of protection and guidance. Their resentment of this paternalistic control also paralleled the anger of colonized peoples, which, boys' periodicals acknowledged, "always will [exist] among natives wishing to be free."[155] Even boys' rejection of "tyranny" on the part of adults aligned with native peoples' fights for their "rights and independence" against Anglo "tyrants."[156] As a result, boys' struggles to mature in foreign

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[151] "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," February 10, 1872, 178. As Christopher Banham has illustrated, the close political relationship, strong ideological bond, and doctrine of Anglo-Saxonism that linked Britain and the USA made their heroes and imperial successes roughly interchangeable for contemporary readers. See Banham, "England and America," 162-63.
[152] Hemyng, "Jack Harkaway, After Schooldays," January 20, 1872, 131.
[153] "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," July 03, 1891, 44.
[154] Ibid., June 05, 1891, 388; July 31, 1891, 107; and August 07, 1891, 122.
[155] "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," May 22, 1891, 354.
[156] Fletcher, "Field, Fortress, and Flood," 3; "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," July 24, 1891, 92.

settings became representative of local peoples' wishes to escape the stunting force of imperial control.

Boys' magazines were not original in drawing a connection between boys and native peoples. Contemporary critics frequently described gawky adolescents as "savage[s]" who were "a race apart," directly aligning them with "uncivilized" foreign others.[157] Subject peoples, too, were often referred to as childlike or adolescent, depicted—as Jed Esty has pointed out—"as an underdeveloped or youthful version of their rulers, not quite ready for self-government."[158] This association shaped perceptions of subject peoples in all imperial systems, but it was especially true within the British empire, where it was reinforced by the existing connection between public schools and imperial administration. At the time, as many critics have noted, imperial governance was viewed as a continuation of public school life, with similar rituals, uniforms, and celebrations.[159] Within this context, native peoples—the lowest ranking members of this extended adolescent system—effectively became "the fags of the British Empire."[160]

Boys' periodicals expanded the links between these two groups, reinforcing their alignment in new and unusual ways. Although they continued using the expected language of connection, describing native peoples as "childish" and British boys as "uncouth savages," boys' magazines also used narrative events to link the two groups together.[161] In some cases, they depicted boy heroes who were, at least in part, descended from native peoples. Captain Mayne Reid's "The Fatal Cord" (1867), for instance, features a young hero who is "three-quarters white—the rest Indian," his mother having been "a half-bred Choctaw."[162] More frequently, the

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[157] "Boys," 285; Holt, *Public School Literature*, 116.
[158] Esty, *Unseasonable Youth*, 16.
[159] Rich, *Elixir of Empire*, 15.
[160] Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion*, 226.
[161] Fletcher, "Field, Fortress, and Flood," 11; Ker, "A Bold Climber," 226; "Progress of the British Boy," 4.
[162] Reid, "The Fatal Cord," 82.

journals depicted young British boys consciously participating in native lifestyles, either by working alongside or being adopted by local tribes. In the *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Three Chums" (1896), for example, young British heroes ally themselves with African bushmen, who teach them to sneak through mountain caves in order to defeat a Boer army.[163] The *Boys of England*'s "Strongbow; The Boy Chief of the Delawares" (1867) goes even further, describing a twelve-year-old British emigrant who, having been abandoned by his parents, becomes chief of a Native American tribe. The boy adopts the name Strongbow and embraces the Delaware lifestyle, fighting and hunting alongside the tribe, and even marrying the daughter of one of the Delaware warriors.[164] In fact, Strongbow becomes so attached to the "brave, noble" Delawares that, even after his parents' return, he sets up a wigwam halfway between the Delaware and British camps, making clear his unwillingness to abandon his new Native American identity.[165]

Having aligned boys with native peoples, boys' journals were quick to depict these groups sympathetically. In some cases, this meant featuring natives in the stereotypical role of the "good savage," ready to serve and sacrifice themselves for their white masters. The *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Wizard Scout" (1900), for example, lingers over the scene in which a "copper skinned native" in the Philippines "heroically give[s] up his life" for a white settler.[166] More often than not, however, authors depicted native peoples as friends and guides, emphasizing the ways their support allowed boys to thrive. In the *Boy's Own Paper*'s "Bush Luck" (1889), the young hero avoids death in the Australian outback only through the kindness of his "black friend" who "behave[s] like a gentleman" by bringing him food and water and

[163] Herring, "The Three Chums," 11.
[164] Stagg, "Strongbow," June 8, 1867, 34-5; July 13, 1867, 115; October 5, 1867, 311; and October 19, 1867, 348.
[165] Ibid., June 8, 1867, 34, and October 5, 1867, 311.
[166] "The Wizard Scout," 3, 5.

giving him generous advice.[167] "The Red Man's Revenge" (1879), published a decade earlier, goes even further, depicting an "intelligent red-skin" with an "enlightened conscience" who not only takes care of a young Canadian boy, but also works to reunite him with his family.[168] The boy's father, humbled by the Indigenous man's kindness, ends the story by reflecting that "you and I, Christians though we call ourselves, have something to learn from the savage."[169]

In addition, in keeping with boys' demands for independence from adult control, boys' journals frequently allowed native peoples to take a strong stance against colonizers. In these stories, native peoples from around the world spoke out against Anglo conquerors. Mexican characters complained about "the Yankees that have invaded our country," arguing that they were "invaders and oppressors."[170] Native Americans, too, objected to the encroachment of the "pale-faces," who, they claimed, "kill the game, take the hunting-grounds, destroy the [native] warriors with their fire-bows, and speak lies."[171] Indian and African characters also argued that the British were "drink[ing] the life-blood of our people" through their destructive imperial policies.[172] The *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Desert Chieftain" (1894), set in the fictional African city of Bokheran, offers a particularly striking example of this position, opening with a native man's complaints that the English "wax rich and fat at our cost. They are gathering to themselves all of our gold and silver. They are preparing to make us slaves, as they have done [to] so many of our brethren in Asia."[173] Although this character proves to be a villain, readers would have found it difficult to dismiss his argument, especially since—immediately after the story's conclusion—

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[167] Timperley, "Bush Luck," April 05, 1890, 421. In the nineteenth century, the term "black" was often applied to any person of non-European descent, including Africans, Asians, Aboriginal Australians, and even occasionally southern Europeans. See Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 137.
[168] Ballantyne, "The Red Man's Revenge," October 11, 1879, 18, and February 21, 1880, 322.
[169] Ballantyne, "The Red Man's Revenge," March 20, 1880, 386.
[170] "Tom Tiddler's Ground," January 06, 1882, 231, 232.
[171] Stagg, "Strongbow," June 29, 1867, 82.
[172] "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," June 26, 1891, 27.
[173] Maxwell, "The Desert Chieftain," 1.

the editor included an article detailing the ways the white settlers had cheated and exploited Africans when developing diamond mines.[174]

Validating these critiques, foreign stories regularly acknowledged the ways native peoples suffered under colonial rule. A number of stories pointedly framed conquest and expansion as theft, describing the forces of empire as "restless and for ever pushing forward."[175] In stories about the American frontier, in particular, narrators, as well as native characters, pointed to "the beauty of the land of which the pale-faces had dispossessed [the Native Americans]," often highlighting the unfairness of this loss.[176] In addition, periodical fiction emphasized the violence of imperial forces, claiming that conquering armies "carried fire and sword into the fairest regions of the earth" and "swept off whole races of harmless and peaceful inhabitants."[177] In the *Boys of England*'s "Tom Tiddler's Ground" (1881), the narrator offers a particularly lengthy defense of Native Americans' refusal to cooperate with British prospectors, claiming they "had been abominably treated by the invading hosts of white men" and were often subject to "whole massacres . . . in which not even women or children were spared."[178] "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India" also takes aim at the treatment of native peoples in India, underscoring the country's history of colonial violence and the ways local British officials "bull[y]" native peoples.[179]

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[174] "Famous Diamond Mines," 15. This article opens with a discussion about the Star of Africa, worth £30,000 at the time, which was purchased from an African man for "an old waggon [*sic*], some oxen and goats." It then goes on to discuss contemporary African diamond mines, where "work is done by natives, who are driven in gangs of six, with a white overseer for each gang. . . . When the natives quit work or come up from the mine they are stripped and searched, and even their mouths are examined."
[175] Henty, "In the Hands of the Cave-Dwellers," May 21, 1900, 506.
[176] "Tom Tiddler's Ground," December 23, 1881, 203.
[177] Stevens, "Alone in the Pirates' Lair," January 8, 1867, 98.
[178] "Tom Tiddler's Ground," December 02, 1881, 155.
[179] "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," May 01, 1891, 308, and May 22, 1891, 356.

As part of their campaign against authoritarian oversight and control, some stories in boys' periodicals even offered arguments in favor of returning governing power to native peoples. In the *Halfpenny Marvel*'s "Field, Fortress, and Flood" (1897), for example, Frank Grimshaw, a "good-looking English lad," allies himself with Cuban rebels fighting for freedom from the Spanish empire.[180] Having pledged his friendship to the leader of the Cuban rebellion, Frank battles side-by-side with Cubans "of negro blood," claiming "nothing in the world would make me prouder or more happy than to fight, and, if needs be, die for the freedom of Cuba."[181] While pitting his young hero against the evils of the Spanish empire allowed Harmsworth, in this instance, to avoid critiquing British imperialism directly, Frank's assertion that he is "the defender of the oppressed" pointedly does not limit him to focusing on subjugation within the Spanish empire. Instead, his vow to fight "tyranny in every way in his power" can—and, at the end of the story, does—remain relevant as he heads off to seek justice in British landscapes.[182]

As a result of the extensive connections between these two groups, boys' demands for autonomy and growth became, in many ways, a cry for independence for native peoples. Although boys' magazines still included "pervasive racism," often deeming native peoples "savage wretches" with, at best, "a thin veneer of modern civilization," magazines' sympathy towards boys' campaigns for independence amplified the demands of natives also "wishing to be free."[183] In fact, the rousing speech offered by a fictional Indian rebel in "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India"—"It is a creed to be instilled into the minds of our children: Hate the oppressor, kill the conqueror"—became, for boys' journals, a kind of governing principle.[184] By

[180] Fletcher, "Field, Fortress, and Flood," 1.
[181] Ibid., 2.
[182] Ibid., 2, 3.
[183] Springhall, "Healthy papers for manly boys," 116; Stevens, "Alone in the Pirates' Lair," December 4, 1866, 19; "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," July 17, 1891, 74, and May 22, 1891, 354.
[184] "Left-Handed Jack on the Plains of India," June 12, 1891, 403.

depicting a seizure of authority as the only pathway towards growth, boys' magazines suggested that subject peoples must push back against oppression in order to foster their own development. As a result, the triumphs of boy heroes over adult authority in foreign locations reflected support, however sublimated, for a breakdown of imperial control.

It is not clear how much of this anti-imperial sentiment was a conscious editorial decision. Although there were instances in which publishers disagreed with imperial policy—the most notable being the *Boy's Own Paper*'s refusal to support the Boer War[185]—most publishers and editors do seem to have championed the British empire overall. Addressing the assumed psychology of their adolescent readership, however, likely forced editors to grapple with depictions of authority generally, requiring them to consider the legitimacy of existing power systems and the positive effects of rebellion. Especially given the existing ideas connecting boys with subject peoples, it would have been difficult for editors to depict boys' mutinies in foreign territories without raising suggestions of native revolt. Writers' and editors' decisions to embrace this connection—and thereby implicitly support subject peoples' demands for independence—was almost certainly not an editorial goal, but a byproduct of magazines' attempts to support the needs of their young readers without jeopardizing domestic stability.

As a result, depictions of empire in boys' magazines became increasingly complex. Periodicals simultaneously encouraged young readers to support the empire and to question its injustices, to grow into men who would expand imperial control and to see the growth process itself as a rebellion against imperial authority. If, as Jenny Holt has argued, "adolescence is the place where the values of citizenship are learned," then boys' periodicals were teaching boys to value not just their position as British citizens, but also the lives of all British subjects.[186]

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[185] Dunae, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire," 115.
[186] Holt, *Public School Literature*, 1.

Especially since many boys received their first ideas about foreign peoples from boys' journals, these conflicting representations of British imperialism would likely have had a significant impact on readers' early understanding of conquest and colonialism.[187] In the fiction of boys' periodicals, adolescent readers discovered not just narratives about adventure and exploration, but also the opportunity to vicariously experience disobedience, revolution, and freedom—both for themselves and for others.

[187] Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*, 138.

"To Girls in Their 'Teens'":[1]
Victorian Girls' Periodicals and the Challenge of Adolescent Autonomy

Early in 1885, a girl named Louisa wrote to the *Girl's Own Paper* to ask "at what age you are at liberty to do exactly as you like."[2] Her desire for freedom was echoed by other teenagers writing to girls' magazines during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Fourteen-year-old Ruth likewise claimed the right to "exercise her own judgment"; Miriam, to be "independent and self-reliant"; Annie and May, to be understood to "know our own minds."[3] A young reader using the pseudonym "Stick in the Mud" put it most bluntly: "I will do anything, however hard, to have my own way."[4]

Adult editors responded to these voices with consistent and definitive dismissals. Louisa was told she was "utterly incompetent . . . to be her own guide and mistress."[5] Ruth was "absolutely and legally subject to [her father's] will in all things."[6] Miriam was warned that "it is not advisable to seek to be independent and self-reliant," and Annie and May were mocked for their desire for independence.[7] "Take what you are given, and be thankful," the editors commanded "Stick in the Mud," adding, "It does not do your good feeling nor sense any credit to say, 'I will do anything, however hard, to have my own way.' You should have said 'to please my parents.'"[8]

At the same time, however, editors recognized that they needed to please their young readers, who, as Sally Mitchell explains, preferred texts "that [met] their psychological needs and

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[1] Stables, "To Girls in Their 'Teens,'" 107.
[2] "Answers," February 21, 1885, 336.
[3] "Answers," April 4, 1885, 431; Corkran, "Chat," 756; "Gossip," August 20, 1864, 240.
[4] "Answers," August 9, 1890, 720.
[5] "Answers," February 21, 1885, 336.
[6] "Answers," April 4, 1885, 431.
[7] Corkran, "Chat," 756.
[8] "Answers," August 9, 1890, 720.

[provided] emotional satisfaction."[9] Thus, even as editors reproved girls for willfulness in their correspondence columns, they used the imaginative portion of their magazines—serialized fiction—to validate young readers' arguments, employing each story's plot and characters to endorse the idea of adolescent freedom from adult control. In contrast to nonfiction articles, which advocated duty and submission, serialized stories routinely depicted adolescents as superior to adults and encouraged them to defy parental demands.

This contradictory presentation of autonomy not only became a defining feature of the genre, but ultimately placed girls' magazines themselves in a dual position like that of their adolescent readers, who were viewed as hybrid creatures, simultaneously young and old. As I will show, publishing controversial stories thus became a manifestation of adolescent rebellion, pushing back against social controls just as adolescents wished to do. The success of these serialized stories represented a victory for the young, as adolescent publications achieved the kind of freedom that young people desired for themselves.

Girls' Periodicals and the Contradictions of Victorian Adolescence

Like boys' periodicals, girls' periodicals were a product of the interest in young people that exploded during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although the first girls' magazine, the *Young Ladies' Magazine of Theology, History, Philosophy, and General Knowledge*, appeared in 1838, it was "premature" in speaking to a young adult audience and quickly folded.[10] It was not until the middle of the century that girls' periodicals began to find success, beginning in 1851 with Charlotte Yonge's *Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the English Church*. The success of Yonge's religious periodical paved the way for secular magazines for girls, produced by publishers aiming to capitalize on the new

[9] Mitchell, *New Girl*, 5.
[10] Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, 118; Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 7.

adolescent market.[11] By the end of the century, girls' magazines represented a significant subsection of all periodical offerings: Christabel Coleridge pointed to at least "thirty monthlies and weeklies" addressed to "young ladies, girls, gentlewomen, and young gentlewomen," which appeared regularly in 1894.[12]

Almost all girls' periodicals featured various types of content, including essays, articles, and correspondence, most of which focused on fashion, housekeeping, medical advice, and, as the century progressed, professional opportunities. Fiction, however, formed the centerpiece of almost all of these magazines, often taking up over half of the pages in each issue.[13] While stories in boys' periodicals offered tales of travel and swashbuckling adventure, those for girls focused primarily on domestic narratives. Girls' periodicals included stories about girls' duties at home, their friendships at school, and the budding romances they experienced while visiting friends. The same group of authors—including Rosa Nouchette Carey, Evelyn Everett Green, E. Nesbit, L. T. Meade, and Isabella Fyvie Mayo—produced fiction for multiple periodicals, which arguably exacerbated the stories' similarities in content and tone.[14]

Despite the relatively limited scope of their subject matter, girls' periodicals proved immensely popular. The editor of the *Girl's Own Paper*, for example, claimed to receive "over 1,000 [letters] weekly" during its first year of publication, and its circulation soon approached 250,000, which, contemporary critic Edward Salmon argued, was "equalled by no other English illustrated magazine published in this country."[15] *The English Girls' Journal and Ladies' Magazine*, too, bragged about its "extraordinary circulation," and competitions in the *Girl's*

[11] Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 7-8.
[12] Coleridge, "We. By Us," 454.
[13] Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 10.
[14] Ibid., 10.
[15] "Answers," January 1, 1881, 223; Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 10; Salmon, "What Girls Read," 520.

Realm drew thousands of submissions.[16] Partly, this was the result of girls' magazines' cost: because they were significantly less expensive than novels, these periodicals were accessible to young people and often formed a significant portion of girls' reading material.[17] However, the ever-increasing demand for girls' magazines also pointed to the appeal of their content to young readers, many of whom saw their demographic's interests and concerns reflected in the periodicals' pages.

This connection with adolescent readers was no accident. From the beginning, girls' magazines explicitly targeted an adolescent and young adult audience. In her introductory letter to the *Monthly Packet*, editor Charlotte Yonge stated, "It has been said that every one forms their own character between the ages of fifteen and five-and-twenty, and this Magazine is meant to be in some degree a help to those who are thus forming it."[18] The editor of the *English Girls' Journal*, too, claimed that his magazine was a "work designed for Britain's daughters" and anticipated that "little girls will longingly look forward to the day when, too big for the nursery, they may read for themselves [this] Journal."[19] Articles offered fashion advice and ideas for home work to "my dear little friend[s] in your teens," while prize competitions restricted entrants to those under "the age of nineteen" or "over 16 and under 21."[20] Girls responded to these calls: the magazines' selections of amateur contributions were filled with the works of girls aged fifteen to nineteen. The majority of letters submitted to correspondence columns, which allowed readers to ask about subjects ranging from skin conditions to familial dramas, came from

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[16] "Gossip," June 4, 1864, 64.
[17] Moruzi, *Constucting Girlhood*, 10.
[18] Yonge, "Introductory Letter," i.
[19] "Gossip," July 23, 1864, 176, and June 18, 1864, 96.
[20] Caulfield, "Honour Thy Father," November 29, 1884, 139; Meade, "Mystery of Greystones," 354; "Prize Essay," 799; "New Competitions," 1181; "Prize Competition," January 3, 1880, 15; January 10, 1880, 32; and January 24, 1880, 63.

teenaged girls. Correspondence and exchange columns, in which readers could advertise for pen pals, included overtures from teenaged readers almost exclusively.[21]

It is worth noting, however, that these adolescent readers were not necessarily female. Despite their status as "girls' periodicals," magazines regularly acknowledged their male readers, bragging about their "many male subscribers" or noting that they had had "the honour of a contribution from a boy."[22] The *Monthly Packet* argued that its pages "may be pleasant reading for boys of the same age [as girl readers]."[23] The *Girl's Own Paper* even set up a separate prize competition for them.[24] Articles offered advice for teen boys, and male characters regularly peopled the serialized stories. Readership, then, was limited not by gender, but by generation.

In many ways, the anticipated audience for most girls' magazines aligned with that of advice manuals and novels for young people, which focused primarily on teenage and young adult readers of the middle class.[25] Sarah Stickney Ellis's *Daughters of England*, for example, aimed to speak to "young women . . . having just completed their education" and anticipated that its readership would be "limited to [those in] the middle ranks of society."[26] Matilda Marian Pullan's *Maternal Counsels to a Daughter*, too, directed its advice to "a young lady … on her

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[21] Some critics, most notably Richard Altick, have questioned the legitimacy of correspondence in Victorian magazines, wondering if the questions addressed in each periodical were submitted by readers or "concocted in the editorial office" (*English Common Reader*, 360). In this article, I build upon the work of Kristine Moruzi, Kirsten Drotner, Cynthia Ellen Patton, and Beth Rodgers, who have shown that the correspondence in girls' periodicals was often authentic and was intended to "encourage girls' identification with the magazine and promote the purchase of subsequent numbers to read the responses to their queries" (Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 14). See also Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, 156; Patton, "Not a limitless possession," 115–18; Rodgers, "Competing Girlhoods," 279–91.

[22] "Gossip," June 18, 1864, 96; Corkran, "Chat," 648.

[23] Yonge, "Introductory Letter," iv.

[24] "Our Knitting Competition," 478.

[25] There were a number of halfpenny weeklies aimed explicitly at working-class girls, including *Forget-Me-Not* (1891-1918), the *Girls' Best Friend* (1898-1899), and the *Girls' Friend* (1899-1931). As Sally Mitchell notes, however, these periodicals did not exist for much of the nineteenth century, since they were not commercially viable until compulsory education laws had produced a significant number of literate young people in the working class (*New Girl*, 30, 92).

[26] Ellis, *Daughters of England*, 12, vi.

leaving school" who aimed to "become in course of time a wife and a mother."[27] The audience for girls' periodicals, which generally included middle-class readers whose ages ranged from early teens to mid-twenties, overlapped with this group and was subject to the same pressures and concerns.[28]

Like advice manuals and novels, girls' periodicals therefore consciously aimed to direct girls toward socially appropriate—and therefore often conservative—paths. Despite the increasing educational and personal opportunities available to their young audience throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, editors consistently promised "to guide and guard" readers, to "print only such verses or papers as shall be written in correct taste," and to include works only by writers who "labour to provide food for young minds to digest and improve upon."[29] Charles Peters, the editor of the *Girl's Own Paper*, opened his periodical by promising that it would "help to train [readers] in moral and domestic virtues, preparing them for the responsibilities of womanhood and for a heavenly home"; Charlotte Yonge pledged that hers would "help you to perceive how to bring your religious principles to bear upon your daily life."[30] These goals were the result not just of editors' senses of social responsibility, but also of their desire to appeal to parents, who exercised significant control over their children's reading habits. The *Girls' Realm* advertised directly to mothers, while the *English Girls' Journal and Ladies' Magazine* pointedly acknowledged that it relied upon mothers and fathers to give "our book . . . its welcome entrée" into their homes.[31]

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[27] Pullan, *Maternal Counsels to a Daughter*, 1.
[28] Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature*, 7; Mitchell, *New Girl*, 11.
[29] Peters, "Your Valentine from the Editor," 320; "The Girl's Own," 299; and "Gossip," July 23, 1864, 176.
[30] Peters, "Your Valentine from the Editor," 320; Yonge, "Introductory Letter," ii.
[31] "Every Mother Should See the New Number," 6; "Gossip," July 23, 1864, 176.

As part of their mission to guide readers towards approved modes of behavior, editors repeatedly took a stand against youthful rebellion. Countless articles and essays reminded readers that "You are too young to know your own mind, or take care of yourself," and so should offer "filial confidence to your mother" and "be guided by your father's opinion."[32] Adolescents must kowtow, too, to governesses and teachers, for "your duty is to submit to the authority and guidance of those under whom you are placed."[33] Editors and authors justified this stance with a combination of religion, law, and pragmatism. They argued that readers owed a "dutiful submission to the unequivocal command, 'Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord,'" that readers were still "infant[s] in the eye of the law," and also that "it is right that such power should rest with parents, or we should have many more sad cases resulting from youthful infatuations and perversity."[34] Even editor Alice Corkran, who frequently advocated for the "modern girl," made clear that she could not countenance "ungirlish" behavior or dangerous desires for independence from parental control.[35]

However, unlike adolescent novels, girls' periodicals viewed young readers not just as an audience in need of guidance, but also as a group of potential purchasers. While novels were usually purchased for young people by adult authority figures, girls' periodicals, which typically ranged in price from 1*d.* to 6*d.*, were directly accessible to young people, who frequently paid for issues with either their pin money or their wages.[36] Although parents might oversee their children's reading material, authors and editors recognized that girls themselves—not their parents—were the primary arbiters of each magazine's commercial success.

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[32] "Answers," May 31, 1890, 560; "Answers," September 27, 1890, 827; "Answers," February 17, 1900, 319.
[33] "Answers," December 20, 1884, 191.
[34] Caulfield, "Honour Thy Father," October 11, 1884, 23; "Answers," December 20, 1884, 191; "Gossip," October 1, 1864, 336.
[35] Corkran, "Chat," 216, 324, 756.
[36] Moruzi, "Children's Periodicals," 295; Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 116.

For this reason, editors consciously aimed to make their periodicals appealing to their youthful audience. They made concerted efforts to discover young readers' preferences. Corkran, for instance, asked her readers to "write to me," as it "helps me to know you, and what subjects you want written about."[37] Other editors promised that "we are always glad of receiving any hints or suggestions from our subscribers, whether old or new, and do our best to avail ourselves of them."[38] The results of such research soon became clear. Young readers wanted to discuss their autonomy. Even at midcentury, they longed to "forsake" onerous home duties, viewing themselves not as an "adjunct to [their] parents," but as "a separate individual, with strong, independent interests."[39] In the decades that followed, they reveled in their position as "modern girls," "brimming over with hopes and aims" and insisting that they were "old enough to know [their] own mind[s]."[40] In fact, as editors discovered, young readers demanded a "complete independence in thought, word, and act: these they regard as their new and inalienable right."[41] In some cases, this push for freedom was tied to the growing women's rights movement, as girls campaigned for "new opportunities" and "new hopes never before known" to women.[42] In many more instances, though, readers demanded independence for their entire generation to be "free to choose their own course in life."[43]

The articles and essays published in girls' magazines that emphasized youthful obedience and duty could not accommodate young people's desires for freedom. Authors and editors therefore turned to another type of writing that appeared regularly in girls' periodicals: lengthy serialized fiction. Serials ran anywhere from a few months to a few years and appeared in every

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[37] Corkran, "Chat," 216, 739.
[38] "Gossip," June 18, 1864, 96.
[39] "Gossip," November 26, 1864, 480; Watson, "Girls as Daughters," 47.
[40] Corkran, "Chat," 432; "Answers," January 31, 1885, 288.
[41] Caulfield, "Daughter of the House," 628.
[42] Corkran, "Chat," 739.
[43] Caulfield, "Duties of Wives," 262.

girls' magazine; in fact, most magazines ran several of them simultaneously.[44] These stories, which were generally narratives about school or romance, formed each magazine's imaginative locus. Their length allowed authors to develop adolescent characters in great depth and allowed readers to grow invested in their narrative outcomes. These lengthy fiction serials have received little scrutiny from modern scholars, yet they were immensely popular with contemporary teenaged readers, who regularly wrote to express their approbation, to ask follow-up questions, or to beg for sequels. Readers campaigned for additional published versions of stories they had particularly enjoyed and frequently adopted characters' names as their own pseudonyms.[45] Editors, recognizing the popularity of such works, advertised upcoming fictional narratives to attract new readers and to maintain loyal followers.

These serialized stories, as I will show, became editors' tools to appeal to adolescent readers, promoting the independence of youth and arguing against the conservative ideas expressed in the magazines' nonfiction. This fiction highlighted the freedom of adolescent characters, allowing young readers to experience vicariously both distance from and disobedience towards adults. Stories pushed back against adult authority by establishing youth, especially modern adolescent youth, as superior to adulthood. They fought against the insistence on obedience and duty by allowing adolescent characters to disobey their parents' demands, to trick their teachers, to follow their own impulses, and to be rewarded for their bad behavior. These fictional celebrations of disobedience and disrespect not only undermined nonfiction

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[44] *The Girl's Own Paper* pointedly advertised lengthy "serial" stories, separating them from the much shorter "complete" stories, which ran for only a week or a month. See "This Monthly Part Commences a New Volume," i.
[45] For examples of these types of reader outreach, see "Notices to Correspondents," April 1854, 320; Jackson, "Simpsons and We," 1079; "Gossip," November 5, 1864, 416; "Answers," May 15, 1880, 319; March 7, 1885, 368; May 23, 1885, 543; and August 22, 1885, 751.

articles advocating for duty and restraint, but also helped legitimize the idea of adolescent rebellion itself as a recognized part of the growth process.

In fact, the use of fiction to undermine conservative articles became a defining feature of the middle-class girls' periodical. Despite myriad changes in views on girlhood and in the periodical genre itself during the second half of the nineteenth century, girls' magazines throughout these decades consistently published fiction that depicted the charms of willful disobedience.[46] Religious magazines ran serialized stories insisting that "girls ought to be happy and free, not like slaves," even as their editorials demanded girls embrace "subjection" to their parents.[47] Secular periodicals similarly contrasted fictional depictions of virtuous young characters disobeying misguided parental orders with articles insisting on parents' "right to guard and guide you."[48] Even proto-feminist fin de siècle periodicals that consciously aimed to expand girls' social, academic, and financial opportunities preserved a dialogue between repressive articles and rebellious stories.[49] I argue that the persistence of subversive fiction across such a wide range of texts and over so many decades indicates its generic importance. Although the particular discussions about and possibilities for girls changed from periodical to periodical, each magazine included lengthy serialized fiction that pushed against the behavioral constraints touted in its nonfiction content.

In making this case, I differ from previous scholarly criticism, which tends to view girls' periodicals as largely conservative. Critics argue that girls' magazines were "concerned with minimising the anxieties generated by new political ideas, developments in education, career

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[46] For more on changes in girlhood and in periodical culture, see Mitchell, *New Girl*, 3, 9, 104, 172; Sturrock, "Establishing Identity," 275; Moruzi, "Children's Periodicals," 294–98, 301–2.
[47] "Loyal Mind," 11; Soulsby, "False Ideas," 381.
[48] Laurence, "Three Maidens," July 2, 1864, 124–25; "Gossip," October 1, 1864, 336.
[49] *The Girl's Realm*, for example, ran an article discouraging girls from rebelling against their parents in the same issue that featured a story about a heroine with a "strong will of her own" and a "voice in the determination of her own fate." See Corkran, "Chat," 540; Mann, "Out in Life's Rain," 493, 501.

structures and increased mobility for young women" and that "any sign of youthful presumption was relentlessly put down."[50] In some cases, these arguments occur because critics fail to differentiate between periodical fiction and novels, confusing two types of texts that had very different goals for their audiences.[51] In other instances, scholars identify a conservative agenda in girls' periodicals because they conflate the magazines' fiction and nonfiction, focusing primarily on traditionalist articles and reviewing fictional scenes only when they arguably underscore nonfiction arguments. Some critical works, however—including those by Kimberley Reynolds, Terri Doughty, and Kristine Moruzi and Michelle J. Smith—focus specifically on fiction in Victorian girls' periodicals as a source of "conservative and regressive" writing that reinforced the "traditional feminine ideal."[52] Kirsten Drotner, for example, claims that stories in girls' magazines integrated "moral messages . . . into [their] plot structures," while Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig argue that they served as a "medium for the reinforcement of social prohibitions and expectations."[53] All of these analyses, though, are based primarily on the study of short, complete stories, rather than the lengthy serialized narratives that allowed more room for imaginative development and subversive characterization.[54] In addition, these scholars tend to focus on representations of women's rights and opportunities in the contents of juvenile magazines.[55] My argument, in contrast, focuses on the generational concerns of youth, which, as Sally Mitchell has noted, "suggested new ways of being, new modes of behavior, and new

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[50] Reynolds, *Girls Only?,* 146; Cadogan and Craig, *You're a Brick, Angela!,* 74.
[51] Judith Rowbotham, for instance, considers a handful of periodical stories alongside a host of novels, which leads her to misinterpret their position on girls' "selfish desire for independence." See Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 21.
[52] Reynolds, *Girls Only?*, 112; Doughty, *Selections*, 77; Moruzi and Smith, "Learning What Real Work … Means," 429.
[53] Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, 158; Cadogan and Craig, *You're a Brick, Angela!*, 9, 74.
[54] For a more detailed discussion of the limitations of complete stories, please see the end of this section.
[55] Cadogan and Craig, *You're a Brick, Angela!*, 55.

attitudes that were not yet acceptable for adult[s]."[56] Fiction in periodicals was not generally invested in enlarging the opportunities available to women (although that did sometimes occur, especially at the end of the century).[57] Instead, it promoted the idea of adolescence as a developmental space in which one should throw off—forcibly, if necessary—the strictures of childhood in order to cultivate an independent self.

In order to prove this argument, I will analyze the use of subversive serialized stories in four very different girls' periodicals over the second half of the nineteenth century: the *Monthly Packet,* the *English Girls' Journal and Ladies' Magazine*, the *Girl's Own Paper*, and the *Girl's Realm*.[58] The first of these, Charlotte Yonge's long-running *Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the English Church* (1851–98) was among the very earliest magazines aimed at older teen readers.[59] A High Church, conservative sixpenny monthly, it conveyed Yonge's Tractarian values primarily to middle- and upper-middle-class girls.[60] (As Jane Sturrock notes, the magazine was the product of a "team of regular contributors of fiction and . . . well-informed writers of non-fiction," but every issue "bore the unmistakable stamp of its founding editor and her beliefs."[61]) The magazine achieved a only small circulation of 1,500–2,000 copies

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[56] Mitchell, *New Girl,* 3. Like Mitchell, I assert that fiction represents the primary site of girls' "subversive emotions," exposing girls' "desires and dreams" about "[having] power over their lives, choices, and experiences" (26, 99). Mitchell, however, restricts her study to the last two decades of the nineteenth century, focusing on the ways literature encapsulated girls' new "conscious [awareness] of their own culture" and their concrete demands for professional, academic, and marital opportunities (3). My study extends beyond this time period, considering periodical fiction from the latter half of the nineteenth century more generally. In these earlier decades, I find similar—albeit less coherent—campaigns for adolescent independence, often manifested as unfocused yearnings for personal freedom, rather than as specific demands for jobs or education. Although lacking a defined sense of girls' culture, these early texts still offer evidence of the "new ideas," "daring material," and "discord with adult expectations" that Mitchell reserves for the end of the century (18, 21, 3).

[57] See especially Kristine Moruzi's article "Feminine Bravery" and chapter seven of her book *Constructing Girlhood*, both of which focus on "female characters [in the *Girl's Realm*] that were sometimes able to move beyond the constraints of the nineteenth-century feminine ideal" (*Constructing Girlhood*, 191).

[58] Although several of these periodicals ran well into the twentieth century, I will consider only those issues that appeared during the nineteenth century.

[59] *The Monthly Packet* was rebranded as the *Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Members of the English Church* after 1866, but it still targeted the same adolescent audience.

[60] Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, 118; Mitchell, *New Girl*, 25.

[61] Sturrock, "Establishing Identity," 275.

per issue, but the longevity of its half-century run meant that it remained influential, especially among religious young readers.[62]

In contrast, the short-lived *English Girls' Journal and Ladies' Magazine* (1863–65) was entirely secular and had strictly commercial aims.[63] Published by Edward Harrison and later by William Emmet, the fashion-focused penny weekly targeted middle-class readers, aiming to appeal to girls with romantic narratives, sartorial guides, music, and household notes.[64] Although the magazine was not a financial success and, as a result, soon folded, it set the tone for a host of similar periodicals, including *Young Ladies of Great Britain* (1869-71), the *Young Englishwoman* (1864-77), and the *Young Ladies' Journal* (1864-1920).[65]

The *Girl's Own Paper* (1880–1956), produced several decades later, merged religious and commercial approaches, aiming to deliver both virtuous principles and financial success. The penny weekly, which was produced by the Religious Tract Society, struck this balance by omitting overt religious instruction and focusing instead on entertaining texts that appealed to young people and claimed to reinforce approved social values.[66] The result was immensely successful. The *Girl's Own Paper* reached a circulation of 250,000 copies per issue, rivaling the RTS's other major publication, the *Boy's Own Paper*, in popularity.[67] In fact, in an 1888 poll of one thousand girls aged eleven to nineteen, almost one third of the participants listed the *Girl's Own Paper* as their favorite reading material.[68] The magazine was most popular among middle-

[62] Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 10.
[63] Ibid., 8.
[64] Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, 118–19.
[65] Ibid., 119.
[66] Ibid., 116; Mitchell, *New Girl*, 29.
[67] Moruzi, "Children's Periodicals," 294.
[68] Mitchell, *New Girl*, 29.

and lower-middle-class girls, although editor Charles Peters argued that it was also appropriate for working-class girls, and there is some evidence that servants did read it.[69]

Finally, the *Girl's Realm* (1898–1915) was a sixpenny monthly that focused more overtly on the world of the "modern girl" and was "significantly less constrained by nineteenth-century ideas of femininity."[70] Edited by Alice Corkran, the secular magazine aimed to appeal to its middle- and upper-middle-class readers by highlighting girls' bravery, heroism, and athleticism, positioning itself as more relevant to fin de siècle young women than "unexceptionable" magazines like the *Girl's Own Paper*.[71] Although there are no records of sales figures for the magazine, its relative longevity suggests that it appealed to a reasonably significant number of readers at the turn of the century.[72]

Taken together, these magazines serve as a representative sample of contemporary girls' periodicals. Their publication dates range across the second half of the nineteenth century, providing insight into the many types of fiction and articles produced over several decades. Some (the *Monthly Packet* and the *Girl's Own Paper*) aimed to advance explicit religious agendas, while others (the *English Girls' Journal* and the *Girl's Realm*) were secular products with solely commercial goals. Even their circulations varied, ranging from the expansive readership of the *Girl's Own Paper* to the more exclusive audience of the *Monthly Packet*. Yet despite their differences, all of these periodicals offered essays and articles arguing that young readers should respect and obey adults, and they all juxtaposed this nonfiction content with lengthy fiction serials that promoted youthful autonomy. The range of disparities between these

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[69] Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, 115-16, 121; Mitchell, *New Girl*, 27.
[70] Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 165; Moruzi, "Children's Periodicals," 300; Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, 121; Mitchell, *New Girl*, 26.
[71] Mitchell, *New Girl*, 26, 111; Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood,* 163, 165.
[72] Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 204.

periodicals in terms of publication history, readership, and popularity thus highlights the importance of this particular commonality.

It is worth noting that, despite some efforts to broaden their readership, almost all of these periodicals catered to the middle class. I have elected to concentrate on middle-class periodicals in part because they best represent the changing attitudes toward adolescence that occurred throughout the nineteenth century. Not only did adolescence emerge as a middle-class concept, but shifts in the general opinion about youth were most contentious within middle-class households, since these were usually committed to traditional ideas of familial and domestic relationships.[73] My focus is also a matter of practicality: middle-class girls' magazines are far more accessible than working-class periodicals, since they are the best-preserved and most available in library collections.[74] Studying middle-class periodicals thus provides a relatively clear and broad—albeit still partial—view of the position and influence of the nineteenth century's emerging adolescent audience.

When studying the fiction in these magazines, I have also deliberately emphasized lengthy serialized stories, each of which ran for several months or years in their respective periodicals, over so-called "complete stories," which ran for a week to a month and usually spanned less than twelve pages total. As I noted before, previous scholarship on girls' periodicals has focused almost exclusively on complete stories, which, because they span fewer issues, are often more accessible than longer fictional works. However, complete stories did not engage readers or editors in the same way that longer works did. Their brevity prevented them from inspiring long-term reader investment, and they were almost never advertised or mentioned by correspondents. Since my argument centers on readers' engagement with fiction, I have therefore

[73] Ibid., 16.
[74] Ibid., 17.

restricted my focus to the more popular serialized works. As a result, I am able to study not just the development of girls' periodical fiction, but also the ways these stories spoke to adolescent readers by "giving shape to formless longings" that were desperate to emerge.

Superiority and Deportment

The idea of adult superiority presented one major point of contradiction in girls' periodicals. The nonfiction included in each magazine insisted on the supremacy and priority of adults over adolescents. Authors offered "paper[s] on the relation which all of you bear to those who are grown up, and on the respect … which the young owe to the old."[75] They complained that young people were no longer "kept in your proper place," that they lacked "respectfulness to elders," and that it was clear "how little [adolescents'] own self-respect has done to substitute the guiding and restraining influence of their mothers."[76] "One would think," contributor Lily Watson griped, "the Fifth Commandment ran: 'Criticise thy father and thy mother' instead of 'Honour thy father and thy mother,'" for adolescents "have been touched by the modern spirit in the way of regarding themselves as the chief object of consideration."[77]

Young people, however, insisted on the strength of their own generation, and fought back against the idea of inherent adult primacy. "The wheel of time cannot go backwards, and they who will not move with it are merely left behind," twenty-one-year-old Lady Sybil Cuffe argued in her prize essay on "The Girl of To-Day."[78] Young Susie, in her letter to the editor of the *Girl's Realm*, put it more directly: "I think I am a modern girl. At any rate, I like 'do's much better than 'don'ts.' I can't imagine anything more awful than being a girl of the time of Jane Austen's

[75] Mason, "How the Young Should Treat the Old," 51.
[76] Ibid.; Soulsby, "Minor Moralities," 497; Caulfield, "Some Types of Girlhood," 4.
[77] Watson, "Girls as Daughters," 47.
[78] Cuffe, "Girl of To-Day," 909.

novels, who is always fainting or crying, and not able to do anything jolly."[79] A girl writing under the pseudonym "Collingwood" agreed that "the girl of yesterday" was "somewhat of 'a bread-and-butter miss.'"[80] Essayist Sophia Caulfield, reading over the letters from correspondents in the *Girl's Own Paper*'s, grumbled that, "judging from questions" sent in by "girls in their teens," "the modern mother seems to be regarded as some antiquated piece of crockery, too cracked to be of any service, and therefore hidden away in a corner-cupboard.[81]

Serialized fiction in girls' magazines appealed to these teen readers by pushing back against adult supremacy and establishing modern youth as superior to outdated adulthood. The stories dismissed adult authority figures as "old-fashioned," full of "dry experience" and "prejudiced preciseness."[82] *The English Girls' Journal* ran stories such as "The Three Maidens" (1864) and "The Trials of a Young Governess" (1864), which depicted "crusty old bachelors or sharp visaged old maids" as being "peculiar in their manners," "[hating] all who [are] still youthful and attractive," and attempting to "revenge themselves on the world in general for their own grief and disappointments."[83] The *Monthly Packet*'s "Disobedient Cecil" (1876), too, described the adult guardian of the story's heroine as "bad temper[ed]," "rather foolish," and "the most tiresome of men," ruling his ward with "a rod of iron, or of any other metal equally strong, but that may be imagined to be made up of worry and violence."[84] Miss Gascoigne, the "monotonous aunt" depicted in the *Girl's Own Paper*'s "The Mountain Path" (1884), even admits that "it's natural enough" that young people "ain't satisfied with an old woman's ways."[85]

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[79] Corkran, "Chat," 432.
[80] Corkran, "Chat," 928.
[81] Caulfield, "Honour Thy Father," October 11, 1884, 22.
[82] Carey, "Life's Trivial Round," October 7, 1899, 3; Yonge, "Daisy Chain," January 1855, 38.
[83] Laurence, "Three Maidens," May 14, 1864, 2; "Trials of a Young Governess," July 9, 1864, 130.
[84] "Disobedient Cecil," July 1874, 62, and May 1876, 449.
[85] Watson, "Mountain Path," October 11, 1884, 29, and November 1, 1884, 66.

In addition to depicting the defects of adults, stories repeatedly highlighted the superiority of youth, reminding readers of the many "virtues" of the "modern girl."[86] "Agatha's Vocation" (1888), a *Monthly Packet* story that appeared near the end of Yonge's tenure as sole editor, included praise for the "real girl," for whom "what she says [is what] she means."[87] One might apply that sentiment to twenty-one-year-old Peggy, the titular heroine of the *Girl's Own Paper*'s "More about Peggy" (1899), who tells her thirty-year-old friend, "The world advances so rapidly with every decade, that you of the last generation have necessarily enjoyed fewer opportunities than myself and my contemporaries, and are therefore a trifle behind the times."[88] Indeed, the old maids and maiden aunts of these stories are often put right by the young girls in their care on subjects ranging from fashion to hospitality. Hope, for example, the "girl of the present" at the center of the *Girl's Own Paper*'s "Life's Trivial Round" (1899), must correct her aunt's outdated notions and high-strung feelings, even teaching her aunt how to behave in the presence of her father's new wife.[89] Adult characters inevitably concede that "the young are wiser in their generation" and "it is [adults'] own fault, if, when we are getting old, the world seems a poorer place to us."[90] Such statements could not fail to please adolescent readers, who wrote in to express their "great approval."[91]

Girls' magazines also emphasized their support of the modern girl by repeatedly engaging with and defending against Eliza Lynn Linton's *Saturday Review* article, "The Girl of the Period." Originally published in 1868, Linton's article offered a scathing critique of the

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[86] Carey, "Life's Trivial Round," October 7, 1899, 3.
[87] Lyster, "Agatha's Vocation," 43.
[88] de Horne Vaizey, "More about Peggy," October 28, 1899, 53. In making this statement, Peggy resembles contemporary teen readers, who also dismissed adult criticism by insisting that the "wheel of time cannot go backwards, and they who will not move with it are merely left behind" (Cuffe, "Girl of To-Day," 909).
[89] Carey, "Life's Trivial Round," October 7, 1899, 3, and December 30, 1899, 199.
[90] Carey, "Life's Trivial Round," November 25, 1899, 126.
[91] "Answers," October 18, 1884, 48.

modern "girl of the period," who—in contrast to the "fair young English girl of the past"—was full of "bold talk, and fastness," a "love of pleasure and indifference to duty," and "dissatisfaction with the monotony of ordinary life."[92] The modern girl, Linton claimed, imitated the demimonde through her extravagant fashion choices, her use of slang, and her inability to please men. These signs of "loud and rampant modernization" caused her to "act against nature and her own interests."[93] All readers could do was "wait patiently until the national madness has passed, and our women have come back again to the old English ideal, once the most beautiful, the most modest, and the most essentially womanly in the world."[94]

Although both contemporary and modern critics debated the motives behind and sincerity of Linton's article, her work caused an immediate and lasting sensation.[95] The *Saturday Review* issue containing it quickly sold out, and it was soon republished in a widely circulated pamphlet. The "girl of the period" became a contemporary catchphrase, appearing for many years in the mouths of social critics and in the titles of almanacs, magazines, plays, novels, and poems.[96] It was especially popular in girls' magazines throughout the latter half of the century. For decades, articles in youth periodicals referred to "'the modern girl,' or 'the society girl,' or 'the *fin-de-siècle* girl,' or the 'girl of the period.'"[97] Young correspondents, defending the "girl of to-day" and complaining about "the fashion for people of all sorts and conditions to busy themselves about us and our position," regularly identified themselves as "girl[s] of the period" or "one of the 'modern girls.'"[98] When Alice Corkran, editor of the *Girl's Realm*, introduced her monthly

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[92] Linton, "The Girl of the Period," 340.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] For more on the debate about Linton's motives, see Anderson, *Woman Against Women in Victorian England*, 120, 134-35; Van Thal, *Eliza Lynn Linton*, 76; and Broomfield, "Much More Than an Antifeminist," 267.
[96] Anderson, *Woman Against Women*, 120.
[97] Schofield, "On the Perfecting of the Modern Girl," 662.
[98] Corkran, "Chat," 927, 756; "The Girls of To-Day," 131; Arachne, "Two Girls' Views," 482.

column in 1898, she called it the "Chat with the Girl of the Period," deliberately "recall[ing] an attack made by a woman of brilliant talents on the girls of more than a quarter-of-a-century ago."[99]

As might be expected, nonfiction in girls' periodicals—although sometimes claiming to defend girls against "the special ire of these elderly critics"—generally agreed with Linton's complaints about the modern girl.[100] In contrast to "the girl of yesterday," with "her womanliness, her unselfishness, her grace, her neatness, her more careful use of the ever-beautiful mother-tongue," authors grumbled that "young maidens now-a-days" were "always rushing about in turban hats, wearing red petticoats, travelling alone in railways, [and] walking alone in streets."[101] The "girl of to-day" must also be "strongly reproved for the manner in which she treats the English language, cutting, snipping its words, and for her free use of slang."[102] Her unfeminine characteristics and "occasionally (too) emancipated manners" risked "destroy[ing] the peace of spirit that is the essential charm of woman" and making her unattractive to men.[103] "It is useless to shut one's eyes to all this, and pretend that everything is the same as it was in the days of our grandmothers," authors sighed.[104] The "refined," "domestic," and "graceful" girl of the past was gone.[105]

The serialized stories in girls' magazines, however, pushed back against Linton's assertions. Some accomplished this by suggesting that girls did not act in the unfeminine ways that Linton had identified. Girls of the present were still "womanly wom[e]n," able to act with

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[99] Corkran, "Chat," 216.
[100] Schofield, "On the Perfecting of the Modern Girl," 662.
[101] Corkran, "Chat," 927; "Correspondence. Too Much of Everything," 559.
[102] Corkran, "Chat," 927.
[103] Schofield, "On the Perfecting of the Modern Girl," 662; Corkran, "Chat," 965.
[104] Watson, "Girls as Daughters," 46.
[105] Linton, "The Girl of the Period," 339.

grace and poise.[106] In opposition to Linton's assertions about girls' extravagant fashion, fiction depicted girls dressing simply and tastefully, even—as in "Disobedient Cecil"—giving up their dress allowances to charity.[107] Some stories, too, suggested that *parents* were the ones to insist upon elaborate attire, much to their children's distress.[108] Fiction depicted adolescents speaking perfectly, their parents complaining about slang and linguistic "abbreviation" only as a way of venting their spleen against innocent youth.[109] Far from being unable to please men, fictional heroines attracted many suitors, and each girl inevitably chose the best one to marry. Such stories, taking their cue from readers' arguments that "the 'girl of the period' . . . [means] nothing very definite or very real," posited that modern girls were not unlike the "generous, capable, and modest" girls of the past and should not be subject to complaint.[110]

Other stories took a more radical approach, defending girls against Linton's argument by reframing the "bold," "fast" behavior she described in a positive way. "More About Peggy" highlights the joys of elaborate fashion and "a taste of luxury," as the heroine's best friend finds "rhapsodic . . . pleasure" in the present of a new dress with white silk flowers.[111] Helen Edison's use of slang in "That Aggravating School Girl" endears her to friends and teachers alike, inspiring "wonderful laughter" and "faithful friendship[s]" from the former and "gift[s] of chocolate" from the latter.[112] In "Disobedient Cecil," the behavior of "fast" girls wins them generous, handsome husbands who, charmed with their beauty and spirit, dote upon them.[113] A few stories even suggested that girls need not focus on pleasing men at all; marriage, they

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[106] Carey, "My Lady Frivol," 356.
[107] "Disobedient Cecil," January 1875, 32.
[108] Thorne, "Aldyth's Inheritance," June 21, 1890, 596-97.
[109] "Disobedient Cecil," August 1874, 163.
[110] Cuffe, "The Girl of Today," 908; Linton, "The Girl of the Period," 339.
[111] de Horne Vaizey, "More About Peggy," November 18, 1899, 103.
[112] Stebbing, "That Aggravating School Girl," October 16, 1880, 45-46.
[113] "Disobedient Cecil," October 1874, 364.

pointed out, was for the future, and girls' immediate goal should be to cultivate fulfilling, loving female friendships.[114] In these stories, girls stood forth as "breezy, plucky, quick to enjoy, and ready to stand by [their] sex."[115]

As a result of this reframing, fun in girls' periodicals came to seem both the invention and the prerogative of modern youth. In contrast to "the young girls of olden times, who cared to sit at home and sew," the modern girl was "weary of this ideal of ladyhood. She is a creature of the open air; she wants to be stirring."[116] Serialized stories highlighted this contrast by juxtaposing staid, solemn adults with cheerful, lively girls, describing the latter's "prime virtue" as "a laudable love of fun."[117] Fictional girls giggled in their rooms and played pranks on adults, finding "great fun" in their youthful escapes.[118] Nineteen-year-old Rufa, the protagonist of "Cousin Mona," revels in her "sill[iness]" when she escapes her aunt's house to romp with the dog.[119] The seventeen-year-old heroine of "Zara," too, proves to be "the only thing in the house that ha[s] any fun in it," repeatedly delighting those around her with her singing, spirit, and "fits of laughter."[120] Alice Corkran ably summed up this perspective when she commented on the great "deal of fun the girls lost who were not born during the latter half of the nineteenth century."[121] The modern girl was superior to the old-fashioned woman not just because she had her youth, but because she could enjoy it.

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[114] Doudney, "When We Were Girls Together," August 22, 1885, 748.
[115] Corkran, "Chat," 216.
[116] "Correspondence. Too Much of Everything," 559; Corkran, "Chat," 216.
[117] Stebbing, "That Aggravating School Girl," October 2, 1880, 11.
[118] Yonge, "The Trial," July 1862, 60.
[119] Carey, "Cousin Mona," 654.
[120] "Zara," 289.
[121] Corkran, "Chat," 1272.

(Dis)obedience

Magazines displayed contradictory views even more pointedly on the topic of teenage obedience. Once again, the articles and essays in each periodical stressed young people's duty to honor the wishes and commands of their parents, arguing that "A long life is the blessing promised to those who 'honour their father and mother,' and we firmly believe that a blessing will not fall on the willfully disobedient."[122] Young readers' "plain duty" was "to submit meekly to [their] parents," for "the great lesson which girls of this generation require to learn is that of submission and obedience" and "a 'young lady of eighteen' even now returned from school, is just as much bound to submit to a parent's wishes as when she was in the nursery."[123]

As might be expected, however, young readers wanted nothing more than to throw off the yoke of parental control. Adolescents pointedly expressed their "dissention from the views expressed" in articles on honoring one's parents.[124] They insisted on their right to act "even in opposition to [the opinions] of their elders," pointing to situations in which "disobedience is more a virtue than obedience."[125] They sent in letters about their "quarrels" with parents and grandparents, arguing that they were "old enough to know [their] own mind[s]."[126] Essayist Sophia Caulfield once again summarized the situation:

> When reading the "Answers to Correspondents," which appear in this paper, it must be patent to everyone that the opinions and wishes of the present day parents are altogether outside of the consideration of a large proportion of young people or weigh but little in "Young England's" estimation.[127]

[122] "Answers," October 23, 1880, 63.
[123] M. O. C., "Letters to a Young Friend," 195; Soulsby, "Minor Moralities," 498; "Answers," March 28, 1885, 416.
[124] "Answers," April 4, 1885, 431.
[125] Caulfield, "Daughter of the House," 628; "Gossip," July 2, 1864, 128.
[126] Corkran, "Chat," 833; "Answers," January 31, 1885, 288.
[127] Caulfield, "Honour Thy Father," October 11, 1884, 22.

Even she acknowledged, though, that "girl readers will think that, in common fairness, their side of the question should likewise be represented,"[128] for they have "elastic spirits and fret under restraint."[129]

In order to appeal to these "fretting" readers, the fiction in girls' periodicals provided emphatic and repeated examples of adolescents disobeying their parents. In some cases, the stories show this disobedience arising because of mistakes on the part of the adolescent character's parents. Stephen Tarrant, for instance, the "long-legged, awkward-looking boy of thirteen" who appears in the first serialized story in the *Girl's Realm* (1898), finds that his parents refuse to allow him an education.[130] Although he acknowledges that "his [father] had every right to do what he would with his own [children]," he also cannot allow his parents to "put [their] foot—such a heavy, ignorant foot!—upon the plan" to advance his prospects, so he frequently runs away to study with the local rector.[131] The narrative ultimately supports Stephen's argument: he learns to read, marries the rector's daughter, and, having acquired a superior job, actually supports the stepmother he disobeyed. The same goes for young Adolphus Merton, one of the heroes of the *English Girls' Journal*'s "The Three Maidens" (1864), whose parents, "consider[ing] it their son's duty to marry for money, and not for love," insist that he jilt a young lady believed to have lost her fortune.[132] Later, however, he comes to regret this "cruel act to which I allowed myself to be persuaded," and so disguises himself to woo her and win her back.[133] He, too, is rewarded for his disobedience: he wins a wife who, he discovers, has not lost her fortune at all. The heroine of "Aldyth's Inheritance" (1890) in the *Girl's Own Paper* also

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[128] Ibid.
[129] Mason, "How the Young Should Treat the Old," 51.
[130] Mann, "Out in Life's Rain," 73.
[131] Ibid., 193.
[132] Laurence, "Three Maidens," May 21, 1864, 19.
[133] Ibid., July 2, 1864, 125.

recognizes the importance of disobedience when her mother insists that she "be guided by practical considerations" and marry a man she does not love.[134] Again, the narrative endorses Aldyth's disobedience, as she chooses to marry another, better man, and her mother is exposed as a devious social climber.

In other cases, adolescents flout reasonable parental demands and still find themselves rewarded, even celebrated, by the very parents they have disobeyed. As early as mid-century, the *Monthly Packet* included "My Three Aunts" (1857), a story in which a girl disobeys her parents and teachers by running away from school but arrives home to find that her mother is dying and that her "own misconduct" has "[proved] the answer to my mother's prayers; bringing comfort to her, and to me unspeakable mercy and blessing."[135] Several decades later, the *Girl's Own Paper* ran "A Sister's Love" (1880), a story in which the heroine secretly begins working to help her brother pay his school fees and feels "quite justified" in hiding this from her parents, for "if [they] had known [they] would not have allowed [her]" to work.[136] When she reveals her earnings to her parents, they agree that they would have forbidden her labors, but, far from chastising her, they actually praise her disobedience; her mother lauds her "purpose and strength of character," while her father claims, "What she has done shall be laid up in this family as a memorial of her."[137] Similarly, the adolescent Simpsons and Everills—the children of the two single-parent families at the center of the *Girl's Realm*'s "The Simpsons and We" (1900)—repeatedly embarrass their parents by fighting and pulling pranks, but these tricks ultimately bring their parents together. Major Simpson proposes to Mrs. Everill with the excuse that his children need a mother, she accepts on the condition that he not punish any of them, and

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[134] Thorne, "Aldyth's Inheritance," June 28, 1890, 623.
[135] "My Three Aunts," 392.
[136] "Sister's Love," 102.
[137] Ibid.

ultimately the Major "kissed us—girls *and boys*—instead," celebrating the success of their tricks instead of reproving them.[138]

Even disobedience that achieves no helpful purpose finds its reward, as in the *Girl's Own Paper*'s "Life's Trivial Round" (1899), in which the adolescent characters mock, tease, and disregard their aunt, showing her "rank rebellion and insubordination."[139] The other adults in their lives consistently support them in this defiance of her, laughing "like . . . schoolboys" at their pranks and "encouraging [them] in [their] impertinence."[140] In fact, obedience itself is often represented as dangerous. "My Lady Frivol" (1899), which ran in the *Girl's Realm*, juxtaposes the "stunted" growth and "weary [drooping]" figures of girls who submit to their parents' "legalised tyranny" with the buoyant good health of those who claim to "owe [adults] no obedience."[141]

The Girl's Own Paper went so far as to repeatedly portray adolescent disobedience as attractive. Nineteen-year-old Adela Gascoigne's criticism of her aunt and determination to have her own way in "The Mountain Path" (1884) make her an "amusing companion" and leave all the men of her acquaintance "pleasingly impressed by her bewitching way."[142] The "insolent" and "haughty" protagonist of "When We Were Girls Together" (1885) beguiles her schoolfellows with the "graceful daring" of her acts of disobedience.[143] The hero of "A Wilful Ward" (1895) even finds that twenty-year-old Kathleen's "very wilfulness charms me more than all . . . excellences," and a friend of the titular heroine in "More about Peggy" (1899) believes her confession of "naughty" carelessness about her father's commands to be "charming."[144]

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[138] Jackson, "Simpsons and We," 1180.
[139] Carey, "Life's Trivial Round," October 14, 1899, 29.
[140] Ibid., 28.
[141] Carey, "My Lady Frivol," 354, 355, 357, 1102.
[142] Watson, "Mountain Path," November 8, 1884, 82, and November 22, 1884, 115.
[143] Doudney, "When We Were Girls Together," June 6, 1885, 562.
[144] Lamb, "Wilful Ward," 719; de Horne Vaizey, "More about Peggy," March 3, 1900, 338.

The publication history of Charlotte Yonge's "The Daisy Chain" offers a particularly striking illustration of the important role of adolescent independence in girls' periodicals. Yonge's original version of this work, a lengthy serialized story that appeared in the *Monthly Packet* from 1853 to 1855, hewed closely to the magazines' pattern of championing youth superiority and disobedience in their fiction. "The Daisy Chain" details the day-to-day life of the May family after the sudden death of their mother, focusing closely on three adolescent characters: Flora, Norman, and Ethel May. Within the *Monthly Packet*'s narrative, seventeen-year-old Flora attempts to manage the household and the family, while sixteen-year-old Norman competes for a high place at school after being put down by an unreasonable and unjust schoolmaster.[145] Ethel, "just fifteen" and full of "high purposes," aims to create a school in Cocksmoor, an impoverished local district, despite lacking funds and, in several instances, adult support.[146] As they undergo these experiences, each character advocates for his or her independence—and is rewarded for it. Flora argues that "her grown-up character [has] begun," that she has a right to be "emancipated from [her governess]," and that she is "not bound to obey [her father to] the very letter," and this behavior ultimately earns her respect at home and in the town at large.[147] Norman receives an apology from his schoolmaster for his unfair punishments, regains his position at the head of the local school, and then further "fulfill[s] [his] aspirations" by earning a scholarship to Oxford.[148] Ethel, in turn, successfully executes her plan to develop a school in Cocksmoor, leading her elders to reflect that her "brave spirit is a reproof to us all."[149] Although some question the propriety of her actions and remind her that the "first thing" for a

[145] Yonge, "Daisy Chain," April 1854, 261, and December 1855, 403-04.
[146] Ibid., July 1853, 26, and January 1854, 30.
[147] Ibid., May 1854, 379; April 1854, 261; and November 1855, 339.
[148] Ibid., October 1855, 280, and December 1855, 432.
[149] Ibid., August 1855, 109.

woman is to be a "useful, steady daughter and sister at home," the narrative's voice of reason, Mr. Wilmot, approves of her ambitions, arguing, "I do believe that a great deal of harm is done by prudent friends, who dread to let young people do anything out of the common way, and so force their aspirations to ferment and turn sour for want of being put to use."[150]

When Yonge republished this serialized fiction as a novel, *The Daisy Chain*, just one year later (1856), she added a second part of several hundred pages that continued the Mays' tale. These new pages significantly changed the narrative's representation of adolescent independence. In the volume edition, Flora's insistence on controlling her own life leads her to marry foolishly and then—having ignored her father's advice about the importance of rest and country air—to watch her child die, leaving her "stricken down in the midst of the prosperity that she had sought."[151] Norman, too, comes to regret the independence that has brought him to Oxford, and ultimately chooses to become a missionary to avoid succumbing to dangerous ambition. The greatest changes appear in Ethel, who gives over much of her work developing Cocksmoor to the adult Dr. Spencer, and agrees that it is her duty to devote her life to her family. "If I cannot do everything," she reminds herself, "omit the self-chosen," for her own desires should be consulted "last of all."[152]

It may be that expanding the scope of Yonge's novel forced her to change her representation of adolescence. As Sarah Bilston has noted, "the conflict at the heart of the Christian didactic novel [is] the tension between an experimental, fascinating, rebellious youth and a stable, compliant adulthood."[153] Yonge's serialized "Daisy Chain," which follows Flora, Norman, and Ethel only for a year during their teens, avoids this conflict by largely omitting

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[150] Ibid., January 1855, 42, 41, and October 1854, 274.
[151] Yonge, *Daisy Chain*, 571.
[152] Ibid., 409.
[153] Bilston, *Awkward Age*, 41.

their transition to adulthood. In contrast, the expanded volume edition tracks each character into his or her twenties, and must, therefore, balance rebellious adolescence with adult stability.

Equally important, however, was the transition from periodical to novel form. As I demonstrated in the first chapter of this dissertation, adolescent novels catered largely to the demands of adults, who were their primary purchasers. Parents and teachers preferred narratives that repressed—or, at least, redirected—the adolescent tendency towards rebellion, which led adolescent novels to take an overtly didactic approach to that subject. Youth periodicals, which were priced for purchase by adolescent readers themselves, were able to prioritize the demands of their young audience. This allowed them to honor readers' requests for depictions of teenage independence, even as they took care not to alienate parents. The formal transition from magazine to novel also changed the context of Yonge's work. Periodicals offered heterogeneous, multi-authored viewpoints, which allowed them to juxtapose rebellious stories with conservative articles that would counterbalance their positive representations of youthful autonomy.[154] Novels, however, struggled to layer "competing moods, emotions, and messages" within a single text, which—given their need to please adult authority figures at all costs—led to a more conservative fictional representation overall.[155]

Yonge herself recognized that the change in character representation in the volume edition of *The Daisy Chain* did not fit with the views and agenda of the *Monthly Packet*. Although she never referenced the issue of adolescent independence directly, she did acknowledge that the novel's new vision of her characters' lives "outran both the original intention and the limits of the periodical in which [the story] was commenced."[156] She added that

[154] Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 11.
[155] Mitchell, *New Girl*, 18.
[156] Yonge, *Daisy Chain*, xi.

the new chapters were "in length, and perhaps in matter . . . beyond the limits" of the *Monthly Packet*—possibly indicating that the new content, which primarily highlighted the damaging consequences of adolescent autonomy and self-governance, would be unwelcome to her magazine's adolescent readers.[157] Tellingly, she referenced the volume edition of *The Daisy Chain* only very briefly in the magazine itself, adding in the "Notices to Correspondents" that the work "has been published in two parts, the second of which may be procured separately."[158] Yonge perhaps recognized that there was no room for the novel's negative vision of adolescent autonomy in a periodical aimed at adolescents and young women.

It should come as no surprise, then, that when Yonge published the sequel to *The Daisy Chain* in the *Monthly Packet* between 1862 and 1864, she made sure that the narrative reverted to adolescent magazines' preferred view of youthful behavior. "The Trial," which picks up where the novel version of *The Daisy Chain* ended, addresses the relationship between the Mays and a neighboring family, the Wards. Although the new story's plot centers on melodramatic moments—including the false conviction of one of the Wards for murder and the family's subsequent struggles in America during the Civil War—Yonge's depictions of domestic disobedience still appear in full force. Once again, she shows young characters within the May family disrespecting adults, while the adolescent Wards repeatedly revolt against their unwise adult guardian.[159] As before, Yonge portrays the "charm of [adolescent] assertion[s] of independence," as the Wards, in particular, find "great fun" in their rebellion.[160] Yonge highlights, too, the dangers of obedience: when they follow their guardian's directions, the Wards face imprisonment, dangerous illness, and even death. The story ends happily with the

[157] Yonge, "Daisy Chain," December 1855, 432.
[158] "Notices to Correspondents," September 1856, 240.
[159] Yonge, "The Trial," November 1863, 466.
[160] Ibid., July 1862, 60.

emancipation of the adolescent Ella Ward, who tells the May family that she finally has access to "all my own property, so I shall be in no one's hands."[161]

By carrying out these independent, disobedient acts, adolescent characters in girls' periodicals effectively negated contemporary claims about the value and necessity of parental guidance. In the face of arguments for a mother's usefulness or a father's right to command, fiction serials showed that adolescents' defiant actions would lead them to successful, socially approved ends, including marrying well, receiving an education, supporting their siblings, and amassing admirers and suitors. Disobedience, in other words, ultimately provided the economically and socially advantageous results that most contemporary middle-class parents desired for their children. By dismissing parental control as nothing more than outdated adult interference, serialized stories conveyed the unimportance of adult sanction. By highlighting the happy results of adolescents' independent behavior, they suggested that youthful self-determination could replace parental supervision as a prerequisite for successful adolescent development. Repeatedly depicting adolescent characters achieving patently desirable outcomes in opposition to parental guidance allowed serialized stories to validate adolescents' demands for independence from parental control. Teens, these stories suggested, did not just desire freedom. They required it.

Hybrid Magazines and Adolescent Readers

The intention of girls' periodicals to "[displease] none" by including both conservative nonfiction and rebellious fiction in each issue meant that they offered their readers a welter of contradictory information.[162] Just a few months after completing "Disobedient Cecil," which presented disobedience as attractive and sometimes reasonable, the *Monthly Packet* ran an article

[161] Ibid., April 1864, 409.
[162] "Gossip," June 18, 1864, 96.

arguing that girls should "submit meekly to [their] parents."[163] *The English Girls' Journal*, too, advised readers that a "parent's counsel and restraint are of inestimable benefit to those who from waywardness or artless trust might be wrecked upon the shoals of deceit and guile," only a few weeks after depicting a young man sent astray by his father's misunderstanding of society.[164] The editor of the *Girl's Realm* encouraged readers to keep in mind their "duty" to their families, while including in the very same issue a story about the "charm" of a young girl's "waywardness."[165] *The Girl's Own Paper* ran "Honour Thy Father and Thy Mother," an essay that advised girls to adhere to the wishes of their parents, in the same weekly issue as a story in which a young girl is her father's "thorough mistress" and "manages him capitally" and another in which a girl overrules her father because he "could not answer the logical way" in which she makes her case.[166] It even placed an article on "The Obligations of School Life"—which counseled every girl to be dutiful to her parents and teachers "when she enters her teens"—directly beside a serialized story about schoolgirls who achieve popularity because of their disobedience.[167] These repeated contrasts go beyond what Margaret Beetham calls periodicals' "radical heterogeneity," acknowledging the multiplicity of authorial voices and genres at work in each.[168] Instead, the stark differences between portrayals of youth in fiction and in nonfiction suggest pointedly contrasting demands for representations of adolescent behavior in each type of prose.

Myriad reasons exist that might explain this division between the fiction and nonfiction in girls' periodicals. Including both sides of the debate on teenage autonomy allowed editors to

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[163] "Disobedient Cecil," October 1874, 357, 360, and July 1874, 64; M. O. C., "Letters to a Young Friend," 195.
[164] "Gossip," October 1, 1864, 336; "Trials of a Young Governess," July 16, 1864, 147.
[165] Corkran, "Chat," 540; Mann, "Out in Life's Rain," 497.
[166] Beale, "Seven Years for Rachel," 18; Watson, "Mountain Path," October 11, 1884, 29.
[167] Caulfield, "Obligations of School Life," 746–47.
[168] Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own?*, 12.

placate and titillate simultaneously. As a practical matter, fiction provided a less dangerous outlet for controversial messages that might have proved too radical for some, especially adult readers.[169] It was one thing to depict arguments for adolescent autonomy using imagined scenes and characters meant to "entertain" readers; it was quite another to present these arguments as realistic options in day-to-day life.[170] Authors and editors also acknowledged that—while periodicals might be purchased directly by their young audience—parents could still control much of their children's reading material. Editors admitted that they expected parents to "give an occasional glance at [their magazine's] pages," but they likely assumed that parents were less inclined to read a lengthy serialized story than a short article.[171]

The division, however, also made sense from a more theoretical perspective. Youth, at this time, was considered an age of imaginative potential since "in youth, pictures of the imagination are, as a rule, very vivid and glowing."[172] Young people were expected to ponder the possible avenues of their own self-development and to "speculate on the brilliant future[s]" they might attain.[173] Adolescence as a concept, too, was still an area of research and conjecture, as scientists offered an increasing number of psychological and biological theories to explain young people's development. It made sense, then, that the special needs of adolescent readers should not be depicted in the definitive light of nonfiction but reserved for the imaginative landscape of fiction, which mirrored their own uncertain state.

By representing adolescent interests in fiction and adult interests in nonfiction, girls' periodicals also engaged with the longstanding division between adult and youth interests that

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[169] Mitchell, *New Girl*, 4, 26. Bilston also discusses ways that fiction about adolescents provided a sanctioned space for depictions of rebellious behavior (*Awkward Age*, 9).
[170] "Gossip," July 23, 1864, 176.
[171] Ibid.; "Gossip," June 4, 1864, 64; Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, 166.
[172] "Pictures of the Imagination," 31.
[173] Ibid.

haunts children's and adolescent literature. As Victor Watson has noted, young people's literature "is unique [in that] its writers and intended readers are biologically and socially different from one another" so that every text represents an "encounter between two minds imaginatively facing in opposite directions."[174] By separating adult and youth agendas into separate categories of prose, girls' periodicals pointedly underscored this divide between adults' "almost compulsory need to socialize the child" and young people's "aware[ness] of themselves as moving ahead into a future adult life."[175]

For girls' periodicals, the contradictory ideas expressed in their fiction and nonfiction had the additional effect of placing these periodicals in the same position as their readers. The adolescent, according to the definitions offered in girls' magazines, was "a woman-child, if you know what that is; a sort of hybrid creature."[176] She was at once a "little schoolgirl—a mere infant" and a woman in "prudence and aptitude."[177] By appealing to both adult and youth interests and embracing both conservative and rebellious viewpoints, girls' periodicals embodied this same sense of hybridity. They employed a multiplicity of authorial voices—some clearly adult, some aligning themselves with their youthful readers—within each issue to suggest the same divide between woman and child associated with adolescent readers. Harking back to the "old boys" of boys' stories, authors listed themselves as "old girl[s]" in their bylines, suggesting a conflation of child and adult roles. Editors, too, signed their letters "friend," even as they admitted to filling the position of "parents" for their readers.[178] *The Girl's Own Paper* even went so far as to celebrate its own "coming of age" on its twenty-first anniversary, running a poem

[174] Watson, "By children," 51–52.
[175] Nikolajeva, "Growing up," 118; Watson, "By children," 52.
[176] Carey, "Aunt Diana," 402.
[177] "Answers," May 23, 1885, 543; "Gossip," August 27, 1864, 256.
[178] Carden, "My Life-Work," 779; Corkran, "Chat," 1272.

that read, in part, "A new century's dawning our birthday to greet, / And we shall be twenty-one; / Then no longer an infant, it will be but meet / That we our court-train should put on."[179] The poem's pointed anthropomorphism, imagining the magazine getting dressed to celebrate its birthday, clearly sets up the periodical as an adolescent girl, just like its readers.

Having taken on the position of their readers, girls' periodicals were able to achieve on adolescents' behalf the freedom that youth desired but could not realize. Controversial fiction became, under these circumstances, a physical manifestation of rebellion against adult insistence on "correct taste" and appropriate behavior.[180] By repeatedly and successfully publishing rebellious fiction, girls' periodicals reinforced adolescents' desire for independence, presenting it not just as an inevitable part of the youth experience, but a realizable one, too. By reading, approving of, and sharing this fiction, adolescents were able to push back against adult authority and traditional standards of behavior. Thus, even as the editors of the *Girl's Own Paper* dismissed Stick in the Mud's avowal, "I will do anything, however hard, to have my own way," they implicitly offered an alternative.[181] The solution, they suggested, need not be hard at all—she must simply keep reading.

[179] "Prospectus Puzzle," 260.
[180] "The Girl's Own," 299.
[181] "Answers," August 9, 1890, 720.

The Evolution of Victorian Adolescence

The story that I have traced in this dissertation concerns not just the development of young people's literature, but also the development of young people themselves. As I have demonstrated, texts for adolescents represented contemporary ideas about growth in fictional form, as youthful characters experienced the impulses and carried out the actions that early critics, educational reformers, and psychologists taught society to expect of adolescents. In depicting these characters, authors and publishers attempted to balance conflicting demands, simultaneously guiding adolescents towards socially approved behaviors and catering to young readers' more radical interests. As a rule, they positioned expensive, established texts to meet adults' demands for stability, while allowing cheaper, more ephemeral publications to gratify the desires of young readers. Yet even this distinction is imprecise: expensive novels needed to engage young readers in order to influence their behavior, while halfpenny periodicals acknowledged the power of parents and teachers to censor young people's reading material. As a result, almost all texts for young readers displayed an on-going tension between repression and rebelliousness, as creators struggled to include didacticism, advice, entertainment, and titillation in appropriate measures.

Investigating the demands for and concerns about adolescent literature necessarily begs the question: what effects did these texts actually have upon their young audience? Given the genre's focus on catering to its readers' psychological needs, one would certainly expect it to have a shaping hand in young people's development. At the very least, we might assume that adolescent literature's depictions of young characters' physical and emotional growth informed its readers' expectations of normal youthful development.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that this may have been the case. Contemporary adolescents admitted to looking for information on their own lives in their reading material, and, as adults, often traced back to juvenile fiction's influence "some momentous crisis in life, some weighty determination founded on [these texts'] suggestion; some turning-point in thought or belief which they counselled or confirmed."[1] Young readers confessed to modeling themselves on the characters from adolescent novels and periodical stories, "admir[ing] Tom [Brown] beyond all boys," "quot[ing] [Yonge's characters] conscious and unconsciously," and "alter[ing] habits and speech according to some hero or heroine" in adolescent works.[2] Edith Sichel, writing in 1901, reflected, "What eager girl of the 'seventies' did not mould herself upon Ethel in 'The Daisy Chain,' with her untidy skirts and her visions of reforming Cocksmoor?"[3] These recollections go beyond standard contemporary discussions about young people's "plastic and impressionable" minds, supposed to be "keenly sensitive and responsive to all manner of influences," and allow us to see the conscious ways that readers shaped their behavior in accordance with popular adolescent works.[4]

There is, however, no large-scale data to reinforce these personal accounts about the influence of adolescent novels. While contemporary authors, publishers, and critics believed that texts for young people had a marked effect upon their audience, their ideas drew upon personal experience and expectation, rather than empirical studies of readers' responses.[5] Although some critics, such as Charles Welsh, did conduct surveys of adolescent reading habits, these studies focused on young people's preferences, rather than the ways particular texts had informed their

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[1] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 18; "Novels in Relation to Female Education," 523.
[2] "School and College Life," 133; Cooper, "Charlotte Mary Yonge," 857.
[3] Sichel, "Charlotte Yonge as a Chronicler," 88.
[4] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 215.
[5] Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives*, 5-6.

lives.[6] In the end, as critic J. S. Bratton has noted, the "only sufficient evidence upon which general conclusions may be based lies in the books themselves," which offer significant evidence about intention, but not effect.[7]

Despite the lack of data about contemporary readers' responses, however, one can easily trace the legacy of Victorian adolescent writing—and the ideas about young people that it fostered—through the long-term development of adolescent psychology and literature. This is especially true in the case of youthful rebellion, which became increasingly engrained in conceptions of adolescence throughout the following century. In both England and America, discussions about generational conflicts and a desire for autonomy during adolescence appeared frequently in early twentieth-century works by educators and youth workers, as well as sociologists and psychologists, such as Hall, Slaughter, and Freud.[8] These discussions continued and expanded throughout the following years. At mid-century, Erik Erikson argued that it was only to be expected that young people would show a desire for freedom of choice and "an overtly ugly or independent rejection of all parents."[9] During the same period, Robert Havinghurst developed his influential theory of developmental tasks, which argued that teenagers must achieve "emotional independence of parents and other adults" in order to reach adulthood successfully.[10] Even popular texts affirmed this point: in 1945, *The New York Times* published "A Teen-Age Bill of Rights," which chronicled the demands of modern youth for their

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[6] Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is*, 12-13.
[7] Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, 22.
[8] Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 4; Vanden Bossche, "Moving Out: Adolescence," 82. Throughout the twentieth century, the scientific dialogue about adolescence—and adolescent literature itself—became increasingly trans-Atlantic. Modern studies of adolescent development regularly cite both American and British sources, and British bookshelves display young adult works by American novelists alongside those by "homegrown writers." See Hagell et al., *Key Data on Adolescence 2015*, 3; Flood, "Authors voice alarm."
[9] Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, 129, 28.
[10] Havinghurst, *Developmental Tasks and Education*, 55.

"bewildered" parents.[11] Many of the ten claims listed related to the young person's expected "jealous[y] of his independence," including "The right to a 'say' about his own life," "The right to have rules explained, not imposed," and "The right to question ideas."[12] ("Ideas and attitudes," the article reminded readers, "are not necessarily right because they come from an adult."[13])

During the following decades, psychologists, sociologists, and public health experts went even further, treating adolescent rebellion not just as a reasonable expectation, but as an established fact. In 1984, Mihaly Csikszentmihaly and Reed Larson—specialists in behavioral sciences and human development, respectively—stated that a number of socio-cultural factors, including the "unequal authority wielded by parents and children," makes "a certain amount of conflict inevitable" within the family circle and, to a lesser degree, at school.[14] "The main issue," they noted, "is autonomy. . . . If [a young person] wants to feel like a person he must rebel, either by directly confronting his parents, or behind their backs."[15] In 2001, the Harvard School of Public Health released *Raising Teens: A Synthesis of Research and a Foundation for Action*, a report that famously distilled major research findings on adolescent development into "Ten Tasks of Adolescence" that young people must complete in order to develop properly.[16] These tasks differed from Havinghurst's original model, but they still required young people to "Renegotiate relationships with adults in parenting roles," reminding adults that "increased criticism and debate" is an unavoidable part of the adolescent experience.[17]

In the UK, Deborah Christie and Russell Viner's "ABC of adolescence" (2005) listed "Establishment of independence and autonomy" as one of the "primary challenges of

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[11] Cohen, "A Teen-Age Bill of Rights."
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Csikszentmihaly and Larson, *Being Adolescent*, 131-32, 224.
[15] Ibid., 223.
[16] Simpson, *Raising Teens*, 5-6.
[17] Ibid., 6-7.

adolescence."[18] Other expected challenges included "Demanding rights," "Renegotiating rules at home," "Challenging authority," and—in a striking expansion of rebellious instincts beyond the family circle—"Challenging the moral and social structure of society."[19] A decade later, the Association for Young People's Health reiterated that "developing autonomy" was a key feature of adolescence, as "Young people seek more independence and responsibility."[20] Although some recent studies of adolescent health still highlight the unique dangers of rebellion—the UK's 2012 *Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer* listed "rebelliousness" as a risk factor for substance abuse, delinquency, and dropping out of school—most treat it as an established natural phenomenon, "an inevitable and hence universal characteristic" of youthful development.[21]

Depictions of rebellion and autonomy in modern texts for young people—which are generally referred to as young adult literature—also have their roots in the Victorian era. Like nineteenth-century works for teenaged readers, contemporary young adult literature consciously reflects and reinforces the expected needs and desires of its youthful audience. Critics and authors argue that "teenagers need books . . . that are relevant to their interests and to their life needs" and that "young adults must make connections with their reading," which are most accessible when characters "face the same dilemmas as today's teenagers."[22] Primary among these dilemmas: young people's desire to embrace their independence and "show they are different from their parents."[23] For this reason, young adult literature continues to engage with

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[18] Christie and Viner, "ABC of adolescence," 301.
[19] Ibid., 302.
[20] Hagell et al, *Key Data on Adolescence 2015*, 3.
[21] Viner, "Life stage: Adolescence," 5; Csikszentmihaly and Larson, *Being Adolescent*, 132.
[22] Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 70; Cole, *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century*, 41. These statements bear striking parallels to those of Victorian critics who claimed that young readers wanted "a long, full, clear narrative, telling very simply of a simple life which is known and loved because it is known—a life where the same motives which yesterday prompted the young reader to smack her sister or rebel against the governess, are to-day prompting the heroine of this book to do the same thing." See Cooper, "Charlotte Mary Yonge," 854.
[23] Nilsen and Donelson, *Literature for Today's Young Adults,* 1.

teens' desire for autonomy from adult authority figures. In young adult fiction, this manifests in depictions of young characters' struggles against adults or, more frequently, the disappearance of parents and teachers from the narrative to allow teenagers to experience the thrill of independent action.[24] These representations are so common that critic Pam Cole actually lists parental absence and antagonism as a defining characteristic of the young adult genre, alongside such basic tenets as "addresses coming-of-age-issues" and "is marketed to a young adult audience."[25]

Yet even as modern young adult literature embraces its readers' desires for independence, it still experiences a tension between adult preferences and youth demands. While authors and publishers aim to produce texts that are highly popular with young readers—especially since, in recent decades, young people have commanded record amounts of disposable income—they remain aware that "adult gatekeepers," including parents, librarians, and teachers, often control the texts available to adolescents.[26] Parents frequently direct adolescent reading at home, while teachers and librarians select the texts young people encounter at school. Alleen Pace Nilsen and Kenneth L. Donelson also note that teachers and librarians are the primary reviewers of adolescent literature, determining which texts receive a social seal of approval.[27] Keith Gray stated the case bluntly in his 2004 review of the young adult novel, *Boy Kills Man*: "Perhaps the greatest paradox for any young person's novelist is that first you have to please the adults. It's the parents, librarians and teachers who are the gate-keepers, and only when they are happy can you approach your target audience."[28]

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[24] Ibid., 28; Alm, "The Glitter and the Gold," 315.
[25] Cole, *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century*, 49.
[26] Alm, "The Glitter and the Gold," 318; Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 62, 81.
[27] Nilsen and Donelson, *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, 334.
[28] Gray, "Get Shorty."

As in the nineteenth century, these pressures often force authors and publishers to adhere to adults' demands for young adult texts, even when their requirements contrast with the interests of adolescent readers themselves. Adults, Nilsen and Donelson claim, evaluate adolescent texts not just on "literary quality" and expected "reader interest," but also on "what the book is teaching (i.e., its social and political philosophy)."[29] Despite some adult critics' willingness to embrace controversial fiction, many still prefer texts that reinforce the status quo, reflecting traditional ideas of literary merit and demonstrating "a positive approach to life."[30] These demands leave little room for overt adolescent rebellion—at least, not in a form that poses any threat to the established family unit or to society. In this way, adults' discomfort with adolescents' desire for independence has continued to foster a conflict between what parents and educators believe young people should be reading and what young people themselves prefer to read.[31] In fact, in Rosemary Hopper's 2006 survey of English secondary school teachers, some even framed "appeals to teenagers" as a negative literary characteristic when assessing young adult texts.[32]

In keeping with the formal divisions of the Victorian era, established texts tend to prioritize adult expectations, while "rebellious" texts that cater to teenagers' demands are often both less expensive and more transitory. Most awards for young adult fiction, for instance, value literary merit (as defined by panels of critics, teachers, and librarians) over popularity with adolescent readers, thus prioritizing adult preferences for both form and content.[33] In contrast, less valued and less expensive texts, such as genre fiction, often appeal more directly to

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[29] Nilsen and Donelson, *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, 336.
[30] Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 79, 69.
[31] Hopper, "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly," 56.
[32] Ibid., 60.
[33] Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 69; Nilsen and Donelson, *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, 19.

adolescents' desires, since—much like adolescent periodicals in the Victorian era—they are marketed and available to young readers.[34] At the most extreme, fringe publications like zines, fanfiction, and other forms of online writing that exist "outside mainstream production gatekeepers" often consciously aim to provide teenaged readers with a space to explore unsanctioned interests and to subvert expected roles and values.[35] In this way, they, too, capture aspects of Victorian periodical culture, as their transient form and direct availability to young people make them less open to adult supervision.

I do not mean to suggest that adolescent literature has not changed since the nineteenth century. It has, and it will continue to adapt to new ideas and trends in the coming years. It is telling, though, that the tensions and mediations that emerged in the adolescent texts of the Victorian era continue to appear in young adult literature today, as—even after more than a century of scientific and literary development—young readers face similar pressures and expectations. Now, as in the nineteenth century, young people look to adolescent texts for reflections of their "new ideas, . . . new vague longings, new doubtful needs, new hopes, new fears."[36] In each text, however, they see not just themselves, but also the desires, frustrations, and aspirations of previous generations of adolescents.

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[34] Cart, *Young Adult Literature*, 94-5.
[35] Brenner, "Teen Culture and Fan Culture," 35. See also Jamison, *Why Fanfiction is Taking Over the World*, 19 and Fontichiaro, "Writing as Making," 49.
[36] "Novels in Relation to Female Education," 522.

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