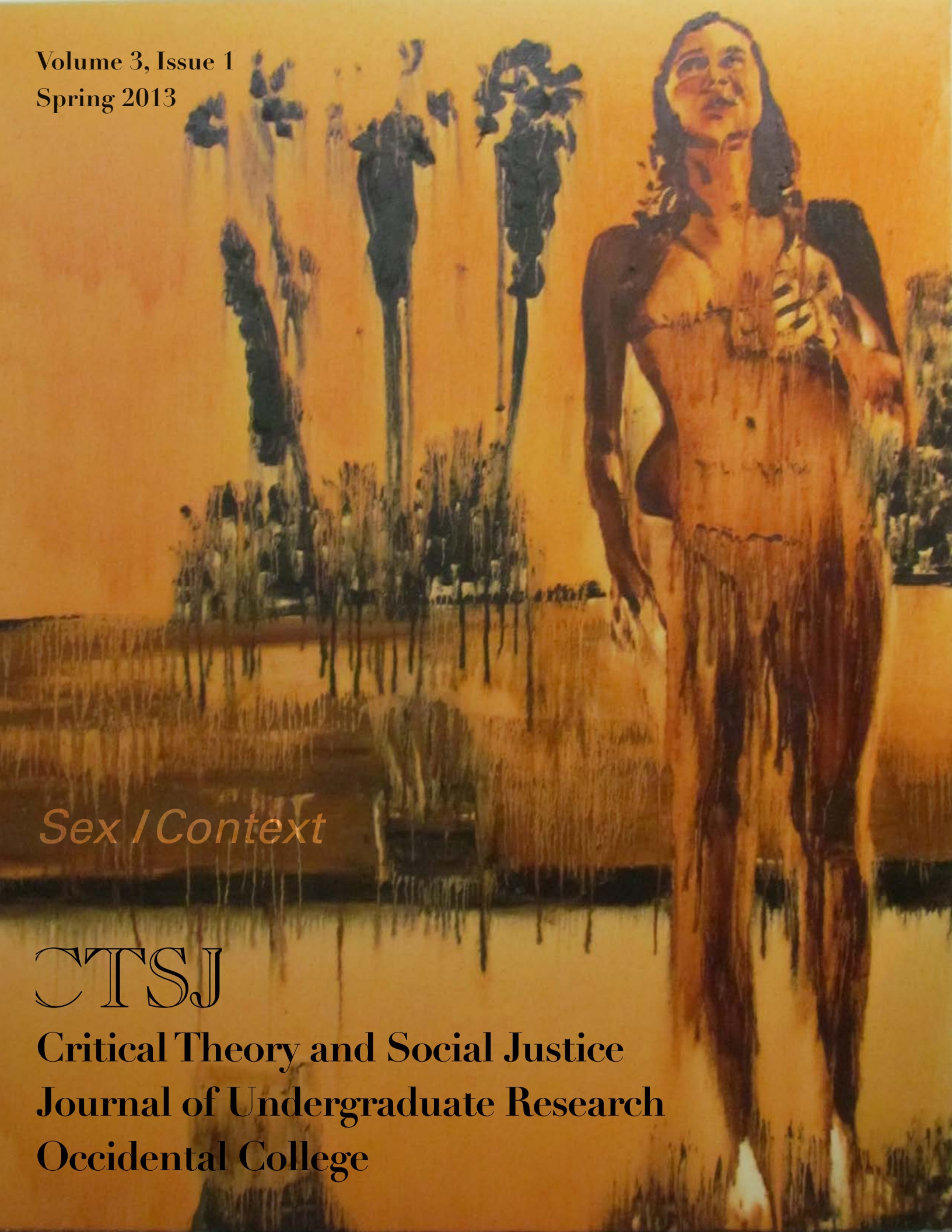


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Orphaning Queerness

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Abstract: In “*The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century*,” Kathryn Bond Stockton identifies two often “braided” versions of queer children in literature: the ghostly “gay” child and the “grown” homosexual. These two versions become interdependent because the queer child can only be birthed retrospectively by a queer adult who, through reflection, discerns a queer narrative for a past self. But a cultural anxiety surrounding the existence of childhood sexuality (an anxiety Michel Foucault identifies as pivoting on “the assumption that this sexuality exist[s]”) prevents queer children from ever existing in their own time.

Can, then, ghostly gay children become fully fleshed in the time of childhood? Using Stockton’s model for queer versions of children in literature and drawing on recent scholarship regarding childhood sexuality, I argue that the relationship between queer children and queer adults, which both revitalizes and diminishes queerness, makes itself known in novels featuring orphaned girls, including *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Secret Garden*, and *Harriet the Spy*. Queer adults see themselves mirrored in queer orphans; this mirroring allows them to awaken the child to consciousness and recognize her queerness in her own time. But this queerness is short-lived—orphans are made aware of their alterity for the purpose of straightening themselves. Queer orphans are thus forced to orphan their own queerness—because this abandonment is a means for adults to also achieve normativity. The texts I examine demonstrate that queerness is not an end in literature; rather, it acts as a means to becoming straight for unfinished adults. The child represents the possibility of an un-queer future.

Keywords: children’s literature, queer theory; *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Secret Garden*, *Harriet the Spy*

Orphaning Queerness

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While Western culture might have a hard time accepting that queer identities and children can exist in the same sphere, literature is one place where the two can live harmoniously—at least for a time. Kathryn Bond Stockton identifies two versions of a queer child in literature that are often entwined: “the ghostly ‘gay’ child and the ‘grown’ homosexual.”¹ These two versions become interdependent, since the “gay” child cannot be born until recognized into life by his or her grown-up self. The child ostensibly lacks the consciousness necessary to recognize his or her own queerness, an absence bolstered by a cultural anxiety surrounding the acknowledgment (self or otherwise) of children as sexual beings. A queer child can only be “born ... retrospectively”² by a queer adult when the adult can discern a queer narrative of the past. But by the time this happens, childhood has ended; queer children, therefore, cannot exist *in their own time*. They can only exist as specters, attached to and haunting the adult version of themselves.

But is it possible for the ghostly gay child to become fully fleshed in the time of childhood? In other words, can we ever have a queer child who *knows* that he or she is *presently* queer, or is it only a retrospective awareness that can birth the queer child? In this paper, I extend Stockton’s argument by proposing that children’s literature featuring orphaned (or essentially orphaned) girls is a genre that both imagines and allows spaces for fictional children to be queer in the time of childhood. However, within such texts, children’s queerness is short-lived—orphans are made aware of their queerness for the purpose of abandoning it. A queer adult in the orphan’s life is responsible for her queer awakening and subsequent abandonment of it. Queerness exists across generations: the queer adult sees him or herself reflected in the queer child and makes the child aware of her own alterity for the purpose of figuratively orphaning it. Queer orphans in children’s literature are thus forced to orphan their queerness because this abandonment is a means for *adults* to achieve normativity, or more specifically, a

1 Kathryn Bond Stockton, “Growing Sideways, or Versions of the Queer Child: The Ghost, the Homosexual, the Freudian, the Innocent, and the Interval of Animal,” *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, eds. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) 310.

2 Stockton, “Growing Sideways,” 287.



heteronormative end. The child must be straightened during childhood so that she can grow into a straight adult. This straightening serves a redemptory function for the queer adult, who becomes un-queered through successfully parenting a straight child, who is thus poised to reproduce heterosexuality.

My project is situated within and beyond recent scholarship on queer children and orphans.³ In *Foundlings*, Christopher Nealon examines “metaphorical” orphanhood in literature.⁴ Instead of focusing on orphan figures, he looks to narratives that disavow the social and political orders that maintain heteronormative requirements of marriage, families, and genealogies. On a literal plane, an investigation of queer orphans in children’s literature introduces us to figures who oppose heteronormativity from the outset, as they are initially extricated from kinship structures and enact inappropriate gendered behaviors. But across the course of the narrative, the orphan moves from opposing the system to becoming enfolded into the system by the text’s conclusion, and this move is enabled by a metaphorical orphaning of her own queerness. While metaphorical orphaning works in the service of the queer in Nealon’s text, it has a destructive aim when employed by queer orphans. Metaphorical orphaning places the literal orphan in an un-queer time and place.

Whereas Stockton talks about children in literature more generally and Michael Moon has done some work in the field on queer orphaned boys,⁵ I am interested in the gendered fates made available to orphaned girls in children’s literature. By drawing on recent theories about the figure of the child in queer studies, I demonstrate how queerness is not an end in

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- 3 Exciting work has been done on the figure of the child in adult literature, such as *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children* (2004), a collection of essays that has greatly informed my approach to orphans in children’s literature. Lee Edelman’s *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham, Duke Univ. Press, 2004), which will be discussed later in this paper, reminds us of the figure of Little Orphan Annie, who “gather[s] her limitless fund of pluck to ‘stick out [her] chin/ And grin/ And say: ‘Tomorrow! You’re always a day/ Away’” (18). For Edelman, the orphan’s continual deferral to the future—“tomorrow”—is actually a perpetual deferral because “for queers ... there can be no future at all ... the future, as Annie’s hymn ... understands, is ‘always / A day/ Away’” (30). He urges us to “[f]uck the social order and the Child in whose name we’re collectively terrorized; fuck Annie” (29); Edelman’s invocation of the orphan within his polemic suggests that the orphan may be a figure to whom special attention should be paid for understanding how present oppression is justified under the aegis of protecting “the Child” of the future.
 - 4 Christopher Nealon, “The Invert, the Foundling, and the ‘Member of the Tribe,’” *Foundlings: Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion Before Stonewall* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2001) 11.
 - 5 See Michael Moon, “‘The Gentle Boy from the Dangerous Classes’: Pederasty, Domesticity, and Capitalism in Horatio Alger,” *Representations* 19 (1987): 87-110.

children's literature; rather, it acts as a means to becoming straight for adults whose queerness renders them somehow unfinished. To illustrate these projects of abandoning and straightening, I examine a range of twentieth-century children's texts: Lucy M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908),⁶ which features the orphaned Anne and her adoptive parent, Marilla; Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911),⁷ which features the orphaned Mary and her reclusive guardian, Craven; and Louise Fitzhugh's *Harriet the Spy* (1964),⁸ which features the essentially orphaned Harriet and her nanny, Ole Golly.

In their 2011 introduction to *Over the Rainbow: Queer Children's and Young Adult Literature*, editors Michelle Ann Abate and Kenneth Kidd remark on the focus in queer studies on the child but the field's limited engagement with children's literature.⁹ By bridging these two fields in this examination of queer orphans, I hope to contribute to an intersection that has been neglected, possibly because it makes us uncomfortable. When Freud published *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* at the turn of the twentieth century, his theorizing on the existence of childhood sexuality was shocking because he shattered a phantasmic cultural ideal of childhood purity and innocence.¹⁰ More than one hundred years later, discourse on childhood sexuality continues to unnerve us—we follow the “dominant narrative [that] children ... are (and should stay) innocent of sexual desires and intentions.”¹¹ According to James Kincaid, this cultural tendency to be disturbed by the possibility of childhood sexuality is paradoxical: while we deny the existence of the erotic child and mourn the child who is eroticized by a transgressive adult before her time, we “manufacture” these same erotic children.¹² In fact, we insist on continually producing these erotic children again and again in the public sphere because they

6 Lucy Maud Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables* (1908; New York: Penguin Group, 2008).

7 Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden* (1911; New York: Penguin Group, 2008).

8 Louise Fitzhugh, *Harriet the Spy* (1964; New York: Random House, 1992).

9 Michelle Ann Abate and Kenneth Kidd, eds., “Introduction,” *Over the Rainbow: Queer Children's and Young Adult Literature* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2011).

10 Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*; trans. James Strachey, Rev. ed. (Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books, 2011).

11 Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley, eds., *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) ix.

12 James R. Kincaid, “Producing Erotic Children,” *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, eds. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) 9.



“make meanings for us. They tell adults what ‘the child’ is, and also what ‘the erotic’ is.”¹³ The simultaneous need for and denial of the sexuality of children helps frame some of the complications surrounding an investigation of queer children in literature.

While there are many influences that determine how and when sexuality and gendered ways of being, both acceptable and unacceptable, are packaged and presented to children, I am specifically interested in how literature contributes to foundational (mis)understandings of gender and sexuality. Literature is one site for developing conceptualizations of gender and sexuality, and when that literature is aimed at children, the potential for conceptual development is amplified. Stockton posits that “the silences surrounding the queerness of children happen to be broken ... by fictional forms,”¹⁴ suggesting that literature is one space where we *can* encounter the queer child, forbidden in real life. What happens when this “silence” is “broken” in fictional forms aimed *at* children? Who are the queer children in children’s literature? What gendered fates are being made available to fictional queer children? Can (and does) queerness survive in these texts? What might the implications of queerness (and its fate) have on young readers? While this paper only investigates what occurs in the texts themselves, my analysis has implications for how children’s literature represents and resolves queerness. We must first understand these representations and resolutions in order to then understand how they might impact the ways in which young audiences understand queerness and alternative forms of gendered identification. The message that these texts send is clear: queerness is not an acceptable conclusion for children, be they real or fictional.

An orphan is a particularly apt figure for carrying out these projects. The figure of the orphan is often adrift in a world of possible gender identifications. The texts attempt to transform these possibilities into impossibilities; they both demonstrate and manage an anxiety over how girls can find their way to normative adulthood without parents. We can trace this anxiety historically. In the nineteenth century, the sentimental novel worked as an “instrument of social control” over its intended female audience.¹⁵ One aim of these texts was to foster correct girlhood in young females so they would grow up to become true women. In texts such as

13 Kincaid, 9.

14 Kathryn Bond Stockton, *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2009) 2.

15 Shirley Samuels, “The Family, the State, and the Novel in the Early Republic,” *Romances of the Republic: Women, the Family, and Violence in the Literature of the Early American Nation* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996) 17.

Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie*, parents were the characters responsible for facilitating gender formation in young girls.

At the turn of the century, however, a notable shift occurred with the proliferation of orphans in literature. While this new genre fit into "a literary-historical continuum with women's sentimental novels of the midcentury,"¹⁶ the orphan novel brought with it some additional aims. The proliferation of the orphan novel corresponded with the creation of child labor laws, a historical moment that was legally redefining the child's function in society. Literature served as a site to further work out the status of the child. Claudia Nelson explains that at that time children's value to the adults around them became "emotional rather than practical."¹⁷ Children were valuable only to the extent to which they could serve some purpose to the adults around them. Indeed, Nelson claims that the child's new function was to "heal the adult world."¹⁸ This healing role defined the orphan of early twentieth-century literature. The female orphan's identity was incomplete and her purpose devoid unless she was tied to an adult. And so the relationship between the orphan and the adults in her life was vital for both orphan and adult: the orphan could not be useful without an adult to whom to be of use, and the adult could not be healed without the orphaned child.

Melanie Kimball touches on the orphan's ability to be a space of self-(re)fashioning for the adult. Kimball claims that orphans "represent the possibility for humans to reinvent themselves."¹⁹ While Kimball describes orphans as "clean slate[s]"²⁰ onto which adults can project their desires, Stockton would argue that no child is a clean slate. Stockton posits that if you "scratch a child, you will find a queer,"²¹ alluding to the queerness always-already in children, regardless of adults' ability to either see or acknowledge that queerness. These orphaned girls are not "clean slates" but rather slates that need to be cleansed. Being orphaned, by definition, means having no normative model to follow. The orphan is thus already queer by the time she

16 Joe Sutliff Sanders, "Spinning Sympathy: Orphan Girl Novels and the Sentimental Tradition," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 33.1 (2008): 41.

17 Claudia Nelson, "Drying the Orphan's Tear: Changing Representations of the Dependent Child in America, 1870-1930," *Children's Literature* 29 (2001): 54.

18 Nelson 53.

19 Melanie Kimball, "From Folktales to Fiction: Orphan Characters in Children's Literature," *Library Trends* 47.3 (1999): 559.

20 Kimball 559.

21 Stockton, "Growing Sideways," 278.



arrives in the adults' lives. However, the orphan is still a fitting site for the adults to "reinvent themselves." Because of her queer nature, the orphan can reflect back the adult's queerness. The queer adults can see their own queerness reproduced before their eyes, but this queerness now exists outside of themselves. The adults can guide the child away from queerness, and so the child potentially enables the adults to finally escape their own queerness. This interdependence reiterates Stockton's argument for the inextricable link between adults and children: ghostly gay children cannot be conceived without adults who remember them, and adults must remember the gay child to form a coherent narrative of their own subjectivity that makes sense of present queerness. By contrast, adults find but then reform themselves through the healing power of the queer orphaned child.

Before continuing, I should define what exactly I mean by the term *queer* in this argument. Stockton thinks that we can understand all children as queer, at least from the perspective of adults, because they are "not-yet-straight."²² In other words, because children are not permitted (or admitted) to be sexual beings, they can have no sexuality, despite a cultural desire to see these nonsexual children grow up to be heterosexual adults. However, this argument for why all children can be seen as queer is incomplete because not all queer children grow up to become queer adults. Furthermore, different representations of queer register varying levels of anxiety in adults. For example, Judith Halberstam explains how adults will tolerate and even encourage tomboyism in girls if it appears to be in the service of gaining "greater freedoms and mobilities enjoyed by boys ... [and] remains comfortably linked to a stable sense of girl identity."²³ But not all forms of tomboyism are acceptable: "tomboyism is punished ... where and when it appears to be the sign of extreme male identification and where and when it threatens to extend beyond childhood and into adolescence."²⁴ This distinction between encouraged tomboyism and "punished" tomboyism indicates how gendered identification and sexuality can become bound for girls: in the former instance, the girl's tomboyism supports a female gender identity, but if it becomes somehow excessive, adults perceive tomboyism as indicative of an alternative gender identification and/or queer sexuality. Tomboyism among female-bodied children exemplifies how queerness takes different forms among children, and

22 Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 7.

23 Judith Halberstam, "Oh Bondage Up Yours! Female Masculinity and the Tomboy," *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, eds. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) 193.

24 Halberstam 193.



adults respond differently when queerness is perceived to be predictive of a queer future. So while Stockton's definition might explain how all children are in a sense queer, we need more ways to describe queerness because it manifests among children in multiple forms and each manifestation elicits distinct responses from adults.

I view orphaned girls as queer for further reasons. First, they have no normative heterosexual or gender model to follow; they have a gap during childhood when correct gendered behavior and embodiment is not cultivated by a parent, thus aggravating the problem Stockton identifies in all children's not-yet-straightness. Moreover, the orphan is also queer because of her sexual alterity. Her queerness becomes apparent only when and because adults become anxious about it. This anxiety occurs first around her appearance and the behaviors that make her unlike a girl. She diverges from standards considered appropriate for her gender, displayed by tomboyism, general unattractiveness (according to feminine mores), and even cross-dressing. The implications of these differences, highlighted as they are by knowing adults, project onto the orphans a prematurely sexual nature.

To understand how the texts introduce the girls' queerness, I give a brief portrait of each orphan. The orphan in *The Secret Garden* is Mary, who must move from India to her estranged uncle Craven's home at Misselthwaite after her parents' death. Before their death, she is already a quasi-orphan. Her parents had "not wanted a little girl at all," and they "handed her over to the care of an Ayah," or nurse.²⁵ This arrangement leaves Mary "tyrannical ... selfish ... [and] angry"²⁶—all traits that do not a good little girl make. When a cholera epidemic kills all of the adults in her village, she "was forgotten by everyone" because "everyone was too panic stricken to think of a little girl no one was fond of."²⁷ The neglect that Mary experiences from her parents because she is a girl ironically transforms her into a figure unlike a girl, and being unlike a girl contributes to others forgetting her—perhaps if they were fond of her, she would have been rescued. Mary's gender places her in this initial space of being neglected and suspends her in a space where that neglect can be repeated because correct girlhood is not instilled in her. These traits that mark her as being unlike a girl are also visible. Our first description of Mary tells us

25 Burnett 1.

26 Burnett 1.

27 Burnett 5–6



she is “the most disagreeable-looking child ever seen,”²⁸ an illustration reiterated throughout the early text: she is an “odd little black figure”²⁹ with “the most unattractive ways.”³⁰

Like Mary, the heroine of *Anne of Green Gables* is initially not wanted because she is a girl. Marilla, an elderly woman who lives with her brother, intends to adopt a boy to help with farm work. When Anne arrives at Green Gables, it is “barely noted [she] was a girl.”³¹ When it is indeed “noted,” Marilla can only view her as a “freckled witch.”³² Anne is not only not a boy capable of farm work, she acts entirely unlike a girl for she has “never been taught what is right.”³³ Because Anne lacks visible “girlness,” Marilla does not know what to do with such an “odd child”³⁴ who is a “perfect heathen.”³⁵

That both texts remark on the girls’ “oddness” may not be a coincidence. Terry Castle suggests that “a subterranean ‘lesbian’ meaning may be present in *odd* and its derivatives ... the word inevitably crops up whenever female-female desire is hinted at—especially in fiction.”³⁶ The “oddness” recognized in these children may be hinting at a recognition of their nascent sexuality.

While Fitzhugh does not use the word “odd” to describe Harriet, there are anxieties surrounding her queerness. Harriet is the only nontraditional orphan I examine, but her parents’ essential absence from her upbringing makes her a de facto orphan. Though she comes more than fifty years after Mary and Anne, Harriet illustrates how patterns we see in these traditional orphan texts still exist in later forms of the orphan novel. Living on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, Harriet is raised largely by her nanny, Ole Golly. While Ole Golly helps Harriet to “see the world,”³⁷ her parents are notably clueless when it comes to knowing any-

28 Burnett 1.

29 Burnett 25.

30 Burnett 46.

31 Montgomery 14.

32 Montgomery 20.

33 Montgomery 91.

34 Montgomery 46.

35 Montgomery 73.

36 Terry Castle, “A Polemical Introduction,” *The Apparitional Lesbian* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1993) 9-10.

37 Fitzhugh 9.



thing about Harriet, a cluelessness to which Harriet is attuned: “she never got the feeling with Ole Golly that she did with her parents that they never heard anything,”³⁸ and her mother often appears “absent-minded”³⁹ and “didn’t seem to be listening”⁴⁰ when she speaks. Similarly, her father requests “quiet time”⁴¹ when Harriet is in his presence. Thus, Harriet is like an orphan in the sense that her parental figures are unavailable to her. Harriet spends her time after school spying on various people in her neighborhood and recording her observations in a notebook. Her queerness is first demonstrated through her spy clothing. Critics such as Kathleen Horning argue that the spy-wear epitomizes Harriet’s “cross-dressing”⁴² and is instrumental in understanding Harriet, since it best displays her alterity. When spying, Harriet dresses in boys’ clothing and her father’s glasses and goes as far as retrieving from the garbage articles of clothing essential to her outfit. When her mother asks her to spend less time spying and take up dance classes, Harriet’s initial refusal causes her family to realize that she “has to find out she’s a girl.”⁴³

In these books, this anxiety surrounding each child’s appearance and behavior is not just accompanied by but, in fact, originates in an anxiety around her gender identification—an identification that adults in her life perceive to be indicative of her sexuality. While there is no explicit reference to sexuality in any of these texts, that does not mean that this anxiety is not about her sexuality. Using the example of secondary schools, Michel Foucault explains that “the rules of organization ... [reveal that] the question of sex was a constant preoccupation”;⁴⁴ without ever naming that “preoccupation,” rules and monitoring can all “refer ... to the sexuality of children.”⁴⁵ While Foucault’s example focuses on sexual activity in boys’ institutions, similar worries about sexual activity and its relation to gender identity emerge in relation to educational institutions for women. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz finds that while the late-nineteenth

38 Fitzhugh 86.

39 Fitzhugh 102.

40 Fitzhugh 101.

41 Fitzhugh 138.

42 Kathleen T. Horning, “On Spies and Purple Socks and Such,” *The Horn Book Magazine* 81.1 (2005): 49.

43 Fitzhugh 91.

44 Michel Foucault, “The Repressive Hypothesis,” *The History of Sexuality—Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 26.

45 Foucault, “The Repressive Hypothesis,” 27.



century saw the establishment of universities for women, one aim of these institutions was to educate women to properly internalize and enact appropriate gender identifications. She explains that “college authorities experienced acute anxiety about the adoption of male attire and made elaborate rules to limit it.”⁴⁶ Whereas institutions contended that “the adoption of masculine attire or attributes [did not] involve more than social role playing,” there is evidence that “[gendered] role-playing had an erotic side.”⁴⁷ This link between gender identification and sexuality among females thus necessitated (from the perspective of the institution) policing of gender identity to ensure that it did not lead to some undesired “erotics.” Desire itself became something regulated: rules governing how freshmen could interact with seniors were designed to create “dominant-subordinate relationships ... for the purpose of enhancing ... distance” between the two.⁴⁸ Freshmen were viewed as most vulnerable to developing what were deemed inappropriate sexual desires, and thus they needed to be most carefully monitored. Like the secondary schools for boys, the “rules” for gender expression and regulation of desire in women’s colleges also reveal that “the question of sex was a constant preoccupation.”

Furthermore, Foucault asserts that “adults ... have to take charge, in a continuous way ... [of children’s] sexual potential”⁴⁹—and such policing pivots “on the assumption that this sexuality exist[s]”⁵⁰ and thus needs to be “taken charge of” in the first place. So adult policing of appearance and behaviors in the orphaned girls is actually a policing of feared gender identification that could indicate feared sexuality. The housekeeper that Craven puts in charge of Mary realizes that she “ought to have a woman look[ing] after her,”⁵¹ recognizing that her lack of a normative model for womanhood has resulted in aberrant gender behavior. Similarly, Marilla works to “manage”⁵² Anne and make her “try to be a very good girl,”⁵³ suggesting that Anne

46 Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges from Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1985) 163.

47 Horowitz 163.

48 Horowitz 167.

49 Michel Foucault, “The Deployment of Sexuality,” *The History of Sexuality—Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 104.

50 Foucault, “The Repressive Hypothesis,” 27.

51 Burnett 79.

52 Montgomery 67.

53 Montgomery 95.



cannot be left unmanaged for fear that she would remain a very bad girl. After Harriet's many outbursts of rage, her nanny and usually absent parents remind her to "be a good girl"⁵⁴ and funnel her anger, an emotion uncharacteristic of proper femininity, into appropriate gender behavior. The disciplining of each child becomes a disciplining of her gender, suggesting a fear of the implications of incorrect gender identity.

Unlike Stockton's ghostly gay child, these orphans are made aware of their queerness by adults in the time of childhood. They are often portrayed as shocked by the revelation, suggesting a deviance based in ignorance more than defiance. Mary, the "dark" child, "did not know she was disagreeable"⁵⁵ and is shocked upon learning that she is, "for she had never heard the truth about herself in her life ... she felt uncomfortable."⁵⁶ Learning this "truth" makes Mary "uncomfortable," setting her on a path to become comfortable by becoming more agreeable, and thus behaving as a proper girl. Similarly, Marilla tells Anne that she must "behave as a good little girl," and when this command makes Anne realize that she is *not* a good little girl, she replies saying, "I'll try to do and be anything you want."⁵⁷ Anne recognizes that she does not conform to some sort of gender expectation, and her girlhood becomes a constant work in progress to "do and be" the appropriate girl Marilla wants her to be. She realizes her "besetting sin is ... forgetting [her] duties"⁵⁸ that are in accordance with feminine expectations, and she is sorry she is "not a model little girl."⁵⁹ The project of cultivating correct girlhood in Anne becomes an obsessive and all-consuming one of which Anne is constantly aware. In *Harriet the Spy*, when Ole Golly introduces Harriet to a relative, Harriet's outspokenness and mannerisms make her "feel very ugly all of a sudden ... she felt like something in a zoo."⁶⁰ Harriet begins to see herself as something other than a girl,⁶¹ thus recognizing that something about her gen-

54 Fitzhugh 103.

55 Burnett 14.

56 Burnett 46.

57 Montgomery 66.

58 Montgomery 287.

59 Montgomery 279.

60 Fitzhugh 15-16.

61 That which marks the girl as queer often also works to racialize and/or animalize her. Mary is a "black" figure and Harriet is like "something in a zoo," descriptions reiterated throughout the texts. Although further examination of this feature of her queerness is beyond the scope of this paper, noticing how alternative gendered identities become linked with "othering" the girl in terms of race helps us see that there are multiple



dered identify is off. When the adults awaken these children to their own queerness, these girls are made queer *in their own time*.

This queerness, however, is terminal—orphans are made aware of their queerness for the purpose of abandoning it. This project of abandonment is, paradoxically, facilitated by queer adults in the child’s life. Queer adults see themselves in the queer child; each adult in the child’s life who is responsible for gender cultivation exhibits some form of sexual alterity, usually distinguished by his or her inability to reproduce. This reading builds on other critiques of queer children. In his examination of *The Turn of the Screw*, Eric Savoy reveals how the relationship between the governess and the queer Miles is one in which Miles becomes “a recalcitrant subject of the governess’s persistent analysis.”⁶² The governess, “invest[ed] in heteronormative models of childhood,”⁶³ is “anxious to normalize things”⁶⁴ for Miles. Savoy interprets this anxiety and intense investment as indicative of the governess’s own “traumatic”⁶⁵ history (despite no explicit reference to any trauma in this history), one that she “attempt[s] to come to terms with”⁶⁶ through Miles. Thus, the governess’s own queerness becomes salient because of the child. The governess can only come to terms with her own queerness through the child, again reiterating the necessity of the relationship between the queer adult and the queer child in order for the adult to be healed. The child mirrors her queerness, and her attempts to “normalize” the child may be attempts to normalize herself.

This model for cross-generational queer mirroring can be seen in each orphan’s relationship with her queer mentor. Mary must live with new guardian, Craven, a widower and

dimensions to the girls’ queerness. Straightening the girl may also be linked with whitening the girl. This observation has been theorized in the field; José Muñoz critiques Edelman by noting that the future and its children are “always already white.” Present society does not work for all children—children of color are notably absent from this group of children being fought for and protected. Thus, “the future is only the stuff of some kids. Racialized kids [and] queer kids are not the sovereign princes of futurity.” Queerness, especially when linked with a non-white race, threatens the dominant order that attempts to preserve a straight white future. José E. Muñoz, “Cruising the Toilet,” *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 2009) 95.

62 Eric Savoy, “Theory *A Tergo* in *The Turn of the Screw*,” *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, eds. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) 256.

63 Savoy 253.

64 Savoy 258.

65 Savoy 267.

66 Savoy 267.



recluse whom Mary “never thought of [as] being married.”⁶⁷ After his wife died, Craven was “made ... queerer than ever”⁶⁸ and “had forgotten and deserted his home and his duties,”⁶⁹ leaving his crippled son Colin essentially fatherless. He refuses to see anyone “but Pitcher ... an old fellow ... [who] took care of him when he was a child,”⁷⁰ suggesting that Craven has reverted to a homosocial space that precedes his role as a heterosexual, reproductive male. By not fulfilling the role of husband or father, he remains suspended in some backward time, occupying a queer space.

Marilla also occupies a queer space, marked by her presumed sterility. She “never brought up a child ... [and it] seem[ed] a sort of duty”⁷¹ to her that she should, suggesting that she has yet to complete a reproductive duty. Marilla’s femaleness is left incomplete because of her failure to have a child. Similarly, Harriet presumes her nanny Ole Golly occupies an orphan position, and she is disturbed to learn otherwise. When she meets Ole Golly’s mother, Harriet marvels, saying, “This is incredible; could Ole Golly have a family? How could Ole Golly have a mother and father?”⁷² Ole Golly is divorced from kinship structures in Harriet’s mind, and she is indeed unable to participate in normative kinship structures while working as Harriet’s nanny. When Harriet’s parents dismiss Ole Golly from her nannying duties in a moment of poor judgment, the nanny immediately reveals that she is engaged to a man; the engagement, which represents a new form of heteronormativity participation for her, was thus not possible while she was a nanny to Harriet. As Ole Golly leaves, Harriet asks if she is “going to have a lot of children,”⁷³ a question to which Ole Golly does not directly respond, indicating an inability to articulate whether she can yet participate *most* fully in heteronormativity.

Although this is their last encounter in person, Ole Golly remains in contact with Harriet for a time (during which she does not have children nor does she yet get married), suggesting that Ole Golly is unable to move forward into a non-queer space until she has finished some kind of business with Harriet. She tells Harriet, “I’ll look you up sometime when you’re

67 Burnett 17.

68 Burnett 18.

69 Burnett 323.

70 Burnett 18.

71 Montgomery 67.

72 Fitzhugh 12.

73 Fitzhugh 131.



grown, just to see what you've made of yourself ... I'll be curious."⁷⁴ Ole Golly's use of the term "curious" signals queerness for both Harriet *and* herself. According to Steven Angelides, when children express signs or articulate feelings of sexuality, particularly an alternative sexuality, these feelings are "reduce[d] ... to mere 'curiosity,'"⁷⁵ a move that acknowledges sexuality while also figuring "curiosity" to be something that helps to maintain normative sexuality—curiosity becomes a phase along the way to an appropriate sexual end. But while Ole Golly is "curious" about Harriet, implying an expectation of some future queerness in Harriet, Ole Golly herself is the one who "[wi]ll be curious," perhaps referring to her own aberrant sexuality. Curiosity is not a finished phase for Ole Golly—she remains queer, as she is and will be curious. By linking her curiosity about Harriet to her own state of being curious, Ole Golly attempts to complete the phase of curiousness, and thus enter normativity, through Harriet. These parting words are not Ole Golly's last exchange with Harriet: work still needs to be done to ensure Harriet grows appropriately, and it is only in growing up that either has a chance of no longer being curious.

These queer adults all work to make the girls aware of their alterity for the purpose of correcting it. Queer orphans are thus forced to orphan their queerness—because this abandonment is a means for adults themselves to achieve a normative end. Mary works to become a correct girl who is neither dark nor rageful: she "lost her ugly little sour look ... [and was no longer] the glummiest, ill-natured little thing she used to be."⁷⁶ This work helps her make her crippled cousin into a "real boy,"⁷⁷ a transformation that helps Craven resume his role of father. The final image of *The Secret Garden* is of "the Master of Misselthwaite ... [and] Master Colin."⁷⁸ Critic Phyllis Bixler points out that Mary's absence from the final scene is not a mistake—her duty is fulfilled now that she has reunited father and son. She can "gradually recede into the background ... she is almost forgotten."⁷⁹ The disciplining of Mary's gender helps her reunite the normative family while fading into the background as a pacified girl. Queerness is not a part of her conclusion; it can be "forgotten" now that it has helped contribute to a normative

74 Fitzhugh 131.

75 Steven Angelides, "Feminism, Child Sexual Abuse, and the Erasure of Childhood Sexuality," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10.2 (2004): 161.

76 Burnett 297.

77 Burnett 301.

78 Burnett 341.

79 Phyllis Bixler, "Class and Gender," *The Secret Garden: Nature's Magic* (New York: Twayne, 1996).



end. The girl who remains retains none of her queer qualities because queerness has served its purpose.

Anne of Green Gables concludes with Anne in the role of obedient daughter, thus transforming the sterile, unmarried Marilla into the ultimate mother. Anne follows what Deborah O’Keefe calls the “‘cop-out’ plot pattern ... [Anne is] a young girl [who] starts out lively and active but ends up ladylike and docile.”⁸⁰ Anne refuses an independent future and education: she has “changed the object of [her] ambitions,”⁸¹ a change that means she will stay at home to care for an elderly Marilla. Marilla exclaims that such a change will “give [Marilla] a new life.”⁸² Indeed, Anne’s sacrifice gives them both a “new life,” for it cements them in a normative kinship structure, with Anne taking on daughterly—and thus womanly—duties. Such a sacrifice makes Anne believe “all is right with the world.”⁸³ Their solidified mother-daughter relationship reveals that both are no longer suspended in a queer space: they have been set “right.” This right conclusion in the 1908 installment of *Anne of Green Gables* sets her on the literal straight and narrow path and enables her heterosexual relationship and marriage later in the *Anne* series.

Harriet and Ole Golly are also both transformed into more normative figures by the text’s end. Harriet’s familial and social life unravels after Ole Golly’s departure. Classmates discover the notebook in which she records her private observations, leading to social exclusion that causes her parents to take her to a psychiatrist. For “the first time in her life, [Harriet was] bored with her own mind,”⁸⁴ but this stagnancy is broken when she receives a letter from Ole Golly, who presumably has been updated on Harriet’s devolving situation. Ole Golly tells Harriet, “You have to lie [to others] ... but to yourself you must always tell the truth.”⁸⁵ While Ole Golly is not talking explicitly about Harriet’s queerness, this piece of advice does work to un-queer Harriet. In lying to others, Harriet is able to transform her writing into something socially acceptable: she begins publishing her now tailored observations in a school newspaper. While

80 Deborah O’Keefe, *Good Girl Messages: How Young Girls Were Misled by Their Favorite Books* (New York: Continuum, 2000) 13.

81 Montgomery 420.

82 Montgomery 421.

83 Montgomery 427.

84 Fitzhugh 276.

85 Fitzhugh 278.



there is still arguably a “truth”—perhaps queerness—that can exist in Harriet’s interior world, this truth is compromised so that Harriet can be included in both her school and her family.

Ole Golly, then, does not enforce complete orphaning of queerness—Harriet can remain queer as long as she lies, or effectively stays in the closet. Lying enables the appearance of straightness and ensures that Harriet’s queerness will become invisible, appearing to disappear. While this might be a way for Ole Golly to help Harriet survive in a time when it is unsafe to be queer—published in 1964, Harriet is growing up in New York pre-Stonewall—Ole Golly’s investment in the status of Harriet’s queerness is nonetheless still tied up with her goals for her own queerness. This final piece of advice to Harriet is Ole Golly’s final work as a nanny. She tells Harriet, “You don’t need me now. You’re eleven years old which is old enough to get busy at growing up to be the person you want to be.”⁸⁶ Although Ole Golly encourages Harriet to grow into “the person you want to be,” she has already instructed Harriet on who exactly that person *should* be, poisoning Harriet in a way that will guarantee a specific future for both of them. This person Harriet is made to want to be must “lie.” By ensuring that Harriet can now “get busy at growing up” to be a normative girl (or to resemble a normative girl and not reveal her truth of queerness), Ole Golly can cut ties with Harriet and get married, the ultimate entrance into normativity unavailable to her first as a nanny and then as a woman who had to monitor the trajectory of Harriet’s queerness.

But why doesn’t the queer adult foster the girls’ own queerness? In facilitating normative growth in the child, the queer adult can grow through the child, seemingly completing his or her own growth into a normative world. The adult’s investment in the child is not for the sake of the child—un-queering the child is crucial for the adults to save themselves. Admittedly, this model plays out to varying degrees in each text, but each queer adult has something to gain by un-queering the child. Queer adults themselves are not complete. Heather Love explains that the queer figure always remains “incomplete: barred from marriage, they can have no happy ending themselves.”⁸⁷ Before the girls come into their lives, the adults have no “happy ending”—Craven is a widower, and Ole Golly and Marilla are spinsters. While there are no explicit references to their reproductive capacities, we come to understand these characters

86 Fitzhugh 278.

87 Heather Love, “Wedding Crashers,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 13.1 (2007): 126.



as sterile, defined by their inability to be in a heterosexual relationship and/or their inability to parent biological children.

Thus, the temporary or permanent adoption of the queer child is a quasi-entrance into normative kinship structures. Love notes that “as gays and lesbians gain more access to institutions like marriage and adoption that promise to make [them] ... real boys and real girls at last,”⁸⁸ this increased “access” creates an illusion of potential inclusivity for these gays and lesbians. Institutions structure kinship in a way that finally seems to make the sexuality—be it ultimately heterosexual, homosexual, or asexual—of queers who want to participate into something “real.” This possibility of being made into something “real” is why queer adults in these texts become so heavily invested in the gendered fates of the orphans. Being put in the position of guardian first operates as a quasi-normalizing of the adult because the child makes them un-sterile. But if the guardian parents a queer child who grows up to be a queer adult, the guardian has failed to successfully enter a normative way of being: the queer child will not be able to biologically reproduce, and both adult and child are still excluded from the most normative of kinship structures.

In fact, the queer child who becomes the queer adult may hold the threat of reproducing more queerness, stemming from that unfounded right-wing panic that if queers cannot biologically reproduce, they will acquire heirs by recruiting them to homosexuality. The child must be un-queered so that she can at the very least not reproduce more queerness. The girl is, quite literally, placed on the straight and narrow path to (re)produce heterosexuality, enfolding both child and adult in a genealogical line with a future.

Lee Edelman explains why the child is seen as this desired figure for a normative future. Queers, according to Edelman, have been continually figured as outsiders because of “reproductive futurism,”⁸⁹ or the system that privileges heteronormativity through projects that hold up the child as an empty vessel for which society works, at least rhetorically. In other words, present actions are for the good of the children in some undefined future. So these queer children give the adults a way to participate in reproductive futurism, thus figuring themselves, even though they are queer, into a system from which they have previously been excluded. The child is an extension of the adult through her queerness: the cross-generational

88 Love, “Wedding Crashers,” 129.

89 Edelman 2.



mirroring allows the child to be a realistic site where the adults can refashion themselves. If they can un-queer the child, the queer adult can somehow become un-queer. Edelman reminds us that “queerness, for contemporary culture at large ... is understood as bringing children and childhood to an end.”⁹⁰ So removing the queerness means a restoration of a child poised for a straight future, thus finding a way to make her queerness figure into this reproductive futurism. This sacrifice of the queer child is a way to preserve the innocent child. Once the child is devoid of sexuality, she can become “a vacancy at the center of [a] story ... under [adult] control.”⁹¹ This “vacant” child ensures that queerness is gone, replaced with normative gender identity, thus preserving heteronormativity and continuing to exclude sexualities that do not participate in the reproduction of that future. If “the sacralization of the Child thus necessitates the sacrifice of the queer,”⁹² then queerness can exist—as long as it is “sacrificed” in the service of a heteronormative agenda and has a timeline.

This concept of erasing queer childhood has been increasingly explored in queer theory. Halberstam explains that the “image of the tomboy is tolerated only within a narrative of blossoming womanhood ... [and must get] remodeled into compliant forms of femininity.”⁹³ Like the queer orphan, the tomboy must reflect a stage that ends. By contrast, Elizabeth Freeman writes that “queers [have been regarded as] as temporally backward, though paradoxically dislocated from any specific historical moment ... [with] no past: no childhood, no origin or precedent in nature, no family traditions or legends, and, crucially, no history as a distinct people.”⁹⁴ In the un-queering model of these orphan narratives, the queer child becomes a way to situate the queer adult in history, not necessarily with an origin, but with the possibility of a genealogy that secures their future. The child gives the adult family, and thus the possibility of family traditions, legends, and history. According to Freeman, while the queer adult does not have a history, he or she can imagine a history for the un-queered child. The child becomes able to help sustain “a fantasy of a preferred past.”⁹⁵ Whereas the adult’s own past involves his or her ghostly gay child self, this newly straightened child may not be subject to the same fu-

90 Edelman 19.

91 Kincaid 4.

92 Edelman 28.

93 Halberstam 194.

94 Elizabeth Freeman, “Introduction,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 13.2-3 (2007): 162.

95 Bruhm and Hurley xiii.



ture hauntings. The child inherits an imagined past, and having that past further assists in the destruction of their queerness because it prevents queer futurity.

Thus, the motive to destroy the queer child becomes shared—queer child and queer mentor collude to orphan queerness. While we can understand why the adult is so deeply invested in the destruction of the queer, it might not be clear why the child does not resist and even participates in this self-destructive project. Queerness is made undesirable to the child, and the careful cultivation of that feeling of undesirability ensures that the child will not maintain her queer ways once she is made aware of them. Each child becomes brutally invested in the orphaning of her own queerness.

Mary's darkness serves to mark her queerness, but when called "black," she could "not ... control her rage and humiliation."⁹⁶ Though she had always dressed in black, she now claims to "hate black things,"⁹⁷ suggesting a self-loathing that drives her to spend the text trying to rid herself of her dark, "savage little"⁹⁸ ways. By the text's end, "she was glad to hear that she might some day look like her [mother]."⁹⁹ All that Mary knows of her mother, the woman who "had not wanted a little girl at all," was that she was a "tall, slim, pretty person and wore such lovely clothes."¹⁰⁰ Mary's disembodied darkness creates space for her to want to embody her dead mother, whose only description remarks upon her appropriately feminine appearance.

Anne becomes "her [own] severest critic,"¹⁰¹ constantly scrutinizing her behavior and correcting it both in and out of Marilla's presence. Marilla misses no opportunity to remind Anne of how she is not an appropriate girl, but Anne "do[es] really want to be good ... like [Marilla] and grow up to be a credit to [Marilla]."¹⁰² Anne's "severe" attention to her queerness works to destroy it, making her "a good deal more of [a] woman"¹⁰³ by the text's conclusion. Anne excruciatingly participates in the orphaning of her queerness, which allows for the cultivation of this "woman."

96 Burnett 29-30.

97 Burnett 32.

98 Burnett 201.

99 Burnett 315.

100 Burnett 3.

101 Montgomery 254.

102 Montgomery 304.

103 Montgomery 324.



Harriet, who usually records her external observations in her journal, writes this introspective note: “WHEN I WAKE UP IN THE MORNING I WISH I WERE DEAD.”¹⁰⁴ This note comes into being after her social ostracization, suggesting that Harriet does not want the self that has led to this ostracization to survive. More specifically, Harriet wants to rid herself of the queer practices that have led to her current social situations and consequent isolation. Each girl successfully internalizes projects of abandonment and refusal of queerness. The adult instills this project in each girl, but she is able to sustain the sacrifice of her queerness even when the adult is not physically present.

But what happens to this queerness? Does queerness ever truly disappear? Only when queerness is disembodied from the child can either adult or child hope for a straight future; however, this does not mean that queerness has been utterly destroyed. One possibility is that queerness does ghost these texts, haunting them but not attached to a body. Terry Castle’s work shows that this conclusion is not a surprising one. Castle argues that in literature and everywhere else, the lesbian “has been ‘ghosted’—or made to seem invisible,”¹⁰⁵ and thus made to appear “expelled from the ‘real’ world of the fiction.”¹⁰⁶ While Castle works toward the “possibility of recovery”¹⁰⁷ of these “expelled” figures, the queer identities in these texts can only be “recovered” for a short time—we recover them in the text only to find that by each conclusion, her queerness has seemingly vanished.

To where might queerness vanish? Drawing on Judith Butler’s work, I posit that the queer child and/or the queer adult may experience a queer melancholia, thus keeping queerness alive by incorporating and sustaining it in the unconscious.¹⁰⁸ However, Butler’s model of melancholy contains queerness within the bounded subject of now-straightened-adult and now-straightened-child. If the project of orphaning queerness is a shared, interactive, collaborative process, it is possible that queer hauntings can extend outside the bounded bodies of queer adult and queer child. Within each of these texts, the queer child, on her journey toward normativity, seems to have queer effects on her community. Mary and Harriet best illustrate

104 Fitzhugh 200.

105 Castle 4.

106 Castle 7.

107 Castle 7.

108 Judith Butler, “Prohibition, Psychoanalysis, and the Production of the Heterosexual Matrix,” *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) 78-79.



what these queer effects might be. While Mary becomes more agreeable, on the journey to becoming a proper girl, she befriends both Dickon, a lower class boy who loves nature, and her crippled cousin, Colin. The stage for their friendship is the garden, where Mary recognizes Dickon's burgeoning friendship with "wild creatures."¹⁰⁹ Colin likewise recognizes Dickon as an "animal-charmer," but also notes that any "boy is an animal."¹¹⁰ In her elucidation of the queer child, Stockton describes "an interval of animal"¹¹¹ where children make animals "a vehicle for [their] strangeness."¹¹² The animal receives the child's "devotion,"¹¹³ but can also become a site for "self-projections,"¹¹⁴ allowing the child to envision himself in some alternate way.¹¹⁵

Harriet's straightening generates gossip, albeit in an acceptable manner published in the school newspaper. This gossip functions as a sideways communication that Eve Sedgwick sees as a valuable queer tool for figuring, discovering, and generating identities.¹¹⁶ Queerness, in a sense, might become diffused, disembodied but incorporated into a community as a whole. So perhaps queer melancholia is not experienced by the individual queer adult and queer child, but by the community, now at least somewhat queered because it has witnessed the unfolding of the dynamic between queer adult and queer child.

Finally, I consider the implications that an investigation of queer orphans holds for the future of queer studies. In "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay," Sedgwick notes that "the scope of institutions whose programmatic undertaking is to prevent the development of gay people is unimaginably large."¹¹⁷ These "programmatic undertaking[s]" target children: it's "always open season on gay kids."¹¹⁸ Anxiety about potential or already existing sexuality fuels extreme, brutal, supposedly preventative measures that police queerness in the time of childhood.

109 Burnett 249.

110 Burnett 271.

111 Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 94.

112 Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 90.

113 Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 90.

114 Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 90.

115 Further investigation of the role animals play in *The Secret Garden* could help illuminate how queerness survives in this text.

116 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1990) 23.

117 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay," *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, eds. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) 145.

118 Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay," 140.



Children's literature functions pedagogically and politically, making it one site where these "programmatically undertakings" can take place—or where they can be resisted. What gendered possibilities are we making available for young readers? How might these texts work for these institutions that police gender and how might they subvert them? Can queerness ever be an available possibility in children's literature, and thus a possible end? Do we *want* to make queerness complete, or is its continual refashioning and thus incompleteness something to be preserved?

This reading urges us to reconsider a genre that until recently has not intersected with queer studies. Through abandoning nostalgia and returning to these texts from a critical standpoint, I hope we can further consider what possibilities (and impossibilities) for queer futures such readings might enable. In *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*, Heather Love advises us to resist the impulse to rescue queer figures from literary history and instead suggests that "dwell[ing] at length on the 'dark side' of modern queer representations"¹¹⁹ could be productive, even if it is not quite "clear how such dark representations from the past will lead toward a brighter future for queers."¹²⁰ This reading does not rescue the queer orphans of children's literature; rather, it acknowledges their inability to be rescued—queer futures are foreclosed by the text's end because of brutal projects of orphaning. But queerness does exist for a time within these texts, and perhaps even exists long enough to become diffused to us, the text's audience. Perhaps we do not need to rescue these orphans after all, but rather we should pay attention to the possibilities that might come out of queer hauntings.

119 Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2009) 4.

120 Love, *Feeling Backward*, 4.

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