

tory, as well as by those more particularly interested in the mutual interaction of professionalization on the one side, and education on the other.

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**Kirsten Drotner.** *English Children and Their Magazines, 1751-1945.* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1988. Pp. x, 272. \$27.50 U.S.

British children's literature is receiving a great deal of scholarly attention these days. In the last four years, at least six books dealing with various motifs in Victorian-Edwardian juvenile publications have appeared in Britain and the United States. This book by Kirsten Drotner, a Danish cultural sociologist, is the most comprehensive of the new studies. Its breadth, plus its detailed analysis of many significant periodicals for the young, make this a welcome contribution to the study of popular culture and the history of childhood.

In the course of this ambitious study, the author endeavours to meet several objectives. A prime concern is to account for the gradual inclusion of all classes of British children into what Drotner calls "real childhood" (p. 237). Drotner uses this term to refer to a period in time when virtually all children—including the poorest children of the working classes—were

free from the demands of wage labour (thanks to child labour laws) and were exposed to extended periods of formal schooling (because of compulsory education). "Real childhood" also entailed a reasonable amount of leisure time and a small amount of pocket money. Drotner argues that in 1751, when John Newbery launched the pioneering *Lilliputian Magazine*, only children of the privileged classes enjoyed this condition; but by the 1920s, when newsstands were heavy with illustrated weeklies like the *Schoolgirls' Friend* and the *Magnet*, most young Britons could be classified as citizens of the republic of "real childhood."

Drotner's concept of "real childhood" is provocative and far-removed from the rather Whiggish notions of childhood that characterize traditional surveys of children's literature. "Real childhood," as Drotner depicts it, was not an entirely felicitous condition for those experiencing it. She contends that, from the 1850s onwards, children and adolescents were increasingly isolated from the realities and the responsibilities of the adult world. The young were ghettoized, as it were, within a larger society.

Drotner refers to this process of isolation as the "structural paradox of childhood and youth." It was a paradox, she says, that involved "a discontinuity between the juveniles' present situation and their future station, a separation of personal learning and social use" (p. 45). Allegedly, the paradox caused frustrations and anxieties among those who were caught in the limbo of "real childhood." Hence the social and psychological importance of

children's magazines. Drawing on Hans Jauss' reader-reception theory, Drotner argues that adolescent readers used juvenile periodicals as a means of alleviating frustrations and escaping anxieties.

Although Victorian and Edwardian youths were denied access to many elements of the adult world (notably career opportunities and sexual fulfilment), they were not without power. The juvenile reading public increased dramatically in size thanks in part to the 1870 Education Act and by 1900 young Britons constituted an important consumer group. Commercial publishers had to be mindful of readers' fancies and tastes, if they wanted to exploit and succeed in this new market. Thus, according to Drotner, the religious sentimentality that had imbued children's magazines in the early 1800s was replaced by a secular and comparatively rumbustious spirit. As different segments of the juvenile public were subsumed into "real childhood," the commercial press also became more specialized, more focused. Generic serials for "young readers" gave way to magazines targeted specifically for adolescent boys and, at a somewhat later date, adolescent girls.

No one would argue that the tone of the juvenile press changed substantially over the last century. The pious evangelicism of the *Child's Companion* (1824), for example, is absent in robust weeklies like *Chums* (1892). Likewise, Drotner is correct in linking the emergence of age and gender-specific periodicals with the (late) Victorians' discovery of adolescence. Her assertion that the advent of mass

culture helped to obliterate many class distinctions in popular magazines for the young is perceptive, and certainly she is right in stating that British youths were not passive consumers. Nevertheless, Drotner tends to exaggerate the role young readers played in shaping their literature. The fact is, the juvenile press mirrored prevailing attitudes and values; it conveyed and reinforced the concerns and preoccupations of the adult public. In other words, the juvenile press simply packaged and peddled larger social issues to a youthful market.

This is not to say that the juvenile press was a pallid reflection of Fleet Street. Without question, boys' and girls' magazines had a distinctive personality. That personality was evident in the escapist fantasy fiction (featuring space-age superheroes) that was a staple of boys' magazines in the 1930s, and in the intrepid, independently minded female detectives who dominated girls' serials between the wars. And as the author shows in the closing chapters of her book, a distinctive personality—flamboyant and insouciant—is still evident in the articles that appear in modern magazines like *Jackie* (1961) and *Just Seventeen* (1983).

The cataloguing-in-publication data on the verso page of this book contains over half-a-dozen subject headings relating to children, history, and literary criticism. The list might well have included many other headings relating to education, psychology, sociology, and technology, for the scope of Drotner's book is extraordinarily wide. Possibly, however, the author has been too ambitious. In an

effort to cover such a wide terrain and to maintain the momentum of the narrative, she resorts on occasion to sweeping, specious phrases. She glosses over some contentious themes (such as imperialism and xenophobia) and, with a few exceptions, she says little about the authors, editors, and publishers who produced this literature. Her discussion of technological advances in the publishing industry is also rather tenuous and in places misinformed (esparto grass did not replace wood pulp in the manufacture of paper in the 1850s, p. 66). Still, this is a very fine book. None of the more recent studies of children's literature have placed the literature in such a broad context, and few writers have attempted an analysis of the literature from a reader's perspective. What is more, *English Children and Their Magazines* is well illustrated (pictures appear throughout the book and all relate to adjacent sections of the text) and it carries a first-rate bibliography. This book should be of interest to educators, historians, and to other students of childhood and popular culture.

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**Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk, eds. *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity*. Toronto:**

**University of Toronto Press, 1991. Pp. xxii, 510. \$50.00.**

This volume consists of twenty essays by historians, geographers, and social scientists, many with appointments in universities and colleges, all in Canada. Published by a Ukrainian Canadian Centennial Committee affiliated with the Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto (whose holder, Paul R. Magocsi, provides the preface), the essays commemorate the centennial of Ukrainian settlement in Canada. They are designed, in the words of the editors, "to help Canadians to understand what has happened to Canada's Ukrainians between 1891 and 1991" (p. xvii), and within the limits of any book of multi-authored essays, they fulfil the task most admirably.

The book is divided into three equal parts: "To Canada: Immigration and Settlement" (which covers all three immigration waves—pre-first World War, interwar, and post-Second World War); "Among Ourselves: Community Politics and Religion" (which deals primarily with internal organizational developments); and "Of Canada? Ukrainian Canadians and the State" (wherein a central concern of the editors—"the repeated interventions by the Canadian state" (p. xviii) in shaping or negotiating the Ukrainian Canadian identity—is developed most fully). The book is liberally illustrated with two sections of photographs covering the first immigration and developments after 1925 respectively. A brief, *pro forma* foreword by Governor-General