THE LION AND THE UNICORN
A CRITICAL APPROACH TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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By

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Myth and Reality: A Look at Children’s Literature

When discussing children’s literature, most readers recall their favorite fairy tales, nursery rhymes, comic books, or some childhood series they used to read. Rarely do they consider the contextual significance of the material beyond the traditional and often familiar messages of the good and/or bad consequences within the stories.

In the modern era, however, adults have seriously questioned the appropriateness of children’s literature, and at the same time they reflected on the biases of a given era. Academic specialists in children’s literature look at the material from different perspectives and consider such elements as race, class, and gender. Educational concerns and scholarly opinions tend to affirm one main issue, that criticism is the most important process for creating good literature. Publishers themselves have often felt a need to critique material written for children because of public concerns about the underlying messages found in children’s stories. Messages that concern issues such as racism and sexism often tend to feed social prejudices. These messages have increasingly drawn the concern and the attention of not only scholars, but parents, educators, and lawmakers. Thus critical analysis in the field of children’s literature has literally shaped the way in which new material is presented today.

It was not until the seventeenth century that the attitudes about childhood and the need to protect children from exposure to various dangers even became an issue. According to Anne Scott MacLeod, author of American Childhood Essays on Children’s Literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: “Ancient and medieval cultures
made few efforts to protect children from contact with violence, sex, coarse humor, vulgarity, and brutality of various kinds” (MacLeod 175). However, the consistent rise of the middle-class, changes in labor laws, the availability of public education, and the never ending push for literacy gradually brought about changes in the type of literature that was and is considered appropriate for young minds.

The way gender roles, racism, and violence are portrayed in children’s stories has long been a concern for critics in the field of children’s literature. Today, children have access to television, video games, and web sites that may expose them to even more pressing, real-life, and serious issues such as abduction, death, divorce, drugs, murder, and violence, presenting critics with more urgent concerns than ever before. While critics in this field often express contradictory ideas, education and information are the overwhelming common denominators in almost all of the material produced for children.

Who actually decides what is appropriate for children to read has yet to be clearly defined. There are so many themes that could be presented and ways to present them that critics often differ about the concepts that they feel are important. For example, Margery Fisher, an authority in children’s literature, considers children’s classics to be a viable and interesting part of the literary world, and that they will always remain an important part of the field for generations to come. Jack Zipes, editor of The Lion and the Unicorn and an advocate for change within the literature, feels that the more popular works today tend to present conflicting information, often idealizing life’s conflicts. He says that remnants of the old literary styles are still present in many modernized versions of children’s stories. British critic and author of numerous studies on children’s literature, Peter Hunt tends to evaluate differences in the literature. He feels that children’s literature should reflect the
differences between what is written for young readers and what could be or should be considered adult literature. Hunt is certainly not alone in this approach.

The critical journal has quite literally changed the content and focus of children's literature in such a way that it deserves not only analysis, but recognition. This study is designed to focus on the way in which the academic journal The Lion and the Unicorn critically approaches children's books, magazines, and periodicals. The Lion and the Unicorn was created in 1976 by two professors at Brooklyn College in New York, Roni Natov and Geraldine DeLuca, who recognized the need for a critical, yet scholarly, approach to children's literature. From its inception, The Lion and the Unicorn has evaluated and addressed many of the educational concerns of scholars in the field. This study will present some of the history of children's books, magazines, and periodicals past and present, and will examine some of the innovative, socio-historical ways this journal approaches the critique of that literature today.

While teaching children's literature at Brooklyn College in the 1970s, Roni Natov and Geraldine DeLuca noticed that there was only one really good critical journal available on children's literature and that was Children's Literature: The Great Excluded (Appendix B, 87). Published by Temple University Press at that time, this journal was similar to a miscellany; it did not actually critique children's literature as much as it merely introduced new literature to educators and librarians. Its title was changed, however, and today it is simply called Children's Literature and is published annually by Yale University Press (Appendix B, 87).

At that time, Natov and DeLuca, along with many other scholars, were aggressively involved with a movement in the field of children's literature that really began
to take shape around 1972. Francelia Butler, a professor at the University of Connecticut, was one of the key figures of that movement. Professor Butler started an organization called the Children’s Literary Association of America, the main purpose of which was to get children’s literature taught within the universities, not simply in the Schools of Education but also in other departments such as English and Journalism.

Natov and DeLuca’s journal came out of the impetus of that movement, although it took a different approach to the literature. They were looking for more innovative, daring, and challenging ways to look at children’s literature rather than through the traditionally positivist types of writing that was available for children at the time. They wanted to promote literature that was socially and politically relevant and to present the historical aspect of that literature within the pages of The Lion and the Unicorn. They were very concerned with the socio-historical context of children’s literature.

These professors decided that there was a need for a journal that would take a more socio-historical look at children’s literature in the contemporary market. According to Natov, “we wanted to do something that kind of went into more depth. To design each issue around a particular theme or genre” (Appendix B, 87). As a result, they put up a thousand dollars each and started their own critical journal which they titled The Lion and the Unicorn.

DeLuca jokingly suggested the name for the journal in their attempts to create an appropriate title. Professor Natov thought it was the perfect title, however, because as she says, “it encompasses a real and mythical creator. You know, the creators are real and mythical, and I thought, well that’s children’s literature—realism and fantasy” (Appendix B, 89). The Lion and the Unicorn is, after all, the title of the seventh chapter in Lewis
Carroll’s *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, where the lion and the unicorn battle to see which of them will win the King’s crown. The beasts’ battle is in all respects futile because the King has no intention of giving up his official symbol of royalty. In theory this title could also represent the battle between the creator and the critic in children’s literature, battling to win control over the material each on their own terms.

The initial articles were solicited from people Natov and DeLuca knew in the field of children’s literature such as Jack Zipes, Francelia Butler, and Ruth Anne Thompson. Besides articles and reviews, each issue of the journal contains interviews with people involved in some aspect of the field of children’s literature. For example, the first issue contains an interview with Arnold Lobell, the author of *Frog and Toad*, while another issue has an interview with the *New York Times*’ book reviewer George Woods; other issues contain interviews with editors, illustrators, scholars, and translators.

In the beginning, Brooklyn College was supportive of Natov and DeLuca’s efforts to produce the journal by providing them with postage and a mail box, although the college never allowed any release time for them to work on it. For several years the college even paid for publication. Around 1981 or 1982 the college held a conference with the Institut fuer Kinder-und Jugend Literatur of Germany, through the efforts of Jack Zipes a professor at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and other scholars in the field. According to Professor Zipes, “some of the best and leading critics from Germany came over and shared their ideas and gave papers” (Appendix A, 73). The conference turned out to be a wonderful opportunity to learn from German scholars working and studying at the Institute for Children’s and Youth Literature in Frankfurt am Main. The following summer a group of writers and editors from *The Lion and the Unicorn* went to
Frankfurt to attend a conference there. These conferences were the beginning of what 
The Lion and the Unicorn has tried to develop in the magazine’s new and unique approach to children’s literature.

In 1985 the college administrators decided that they would no longer provide funds for the journal. For the next few years, Natov and DeLuca continued to spend countless hours transcribing taped interviews, reading article submissions, and arranging the publication and distribution of the journal, all on their own time. Luckily, and thanks to the help and expertise of Anita Stein, a secretary in the English department at Brooklyn College, they were relieved of the accounting and billing end of the business. Over the years Natov and DeLuca soon began to feel the effects of such dedication, and found it harder and harder to get the journal out in a timely manner; often missing their deadlines. In order for them to keep the journal alive they were forced to look elsewhere for support. They decided it was time to seek help and guidance, so they contacted Professor Jack Zipes.

Professor Zipes, an active member of the Children’s Literature Association of America, is an experienced scholar and publisher who has written several articles for The Lion and the Unicorn, and had edited another magazine called the New Journal Critique. When Natov and DeLuca approached Zipes for help in finding a publisher interested in taking over the journal, he was more than willing. Two publishers were, in fact, interested in the journal, Duke University Press and Johns Hopkins University Press. According to Natov, “Johns Hopkins was more serious about it. They liked it a lot. They thought they could do very well with it, and they have” (Appendix B, 88). Johns Hopkins was literally
a lifesaver for the journal at that time because both Natov and DeLuca could no longer find the time or the energy to continue putting it out on a regular basis.

They also asked Professor Zipes if he would be interested in taking over as editor. Initially he was hesitant, but after careful consideration he agreed to do it, provided he could convince Professor Louisa Smith, a colleague he knew through the Children’s Literature Association, to work with him. Zipes reasons for picking Smith were, in his words, “I liked her a lot. I trusted her” (Appendix A, 76).

When Zipes contacted Professor Louisa Smith at Mankato State University in Minneapolis, he found her to be a willing partner, excited about the prospect of working on this project with him. Zipes explained to her that although he traveled a great deal he would do his share, but he asked if she could find a way to get the publication and support work done. Smith agreed and, according to Zipes, she has done a great job over the years.

Professor Zipes was an active member on the board of *The Lion and the Unicorn* even before he accepted the position of co-editor. He has also written several articles for the journal, his first one can be found in the 1979-80 winter issue titled “Who’s Afraid of the Brothers Grimm?” In this article, he compares the original manuscripts of some of the Grimms’ fairy tales with alterations that were made to them over time as social, educational, and economic conditions changed. He also explains how these changes affected the way in which fairy tales influenced children’s perception of themselves and their families within the context of society.

In 1985 Johns Hopkins University Press contracted with Natov and DeLuca to take over the journal with Jack Zipes and Louisa Smith as its editors. By the time Zipes
and Smith became involved with *The Lion and the Unicorn*, Johns Hopkins Press had a reputation for being extremely professional; it is considered one of the best publishers in the United States. This professionalism has helped to make Zipes’ and Smith’s job less stressful than what Natov and DeLuca had experienced. It has also given *The Lion and the Unicorn* the kind of prestige and notoriety its founders had always hoped it would gain. Today, Smith and Zipes work closely with members of Johns Hopkins staff to produce a quality journal.

Professor Smith receives all of the manuscripts, and together she and Zipes review them. They both decide whether to reject or accept them according to how they relate to the specific material around which each issue is designed. Contributors to *The Lion and the Unicorn* often included historical analysis of material relevant to children in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For example, they may analyze the way in which families, women, race, culture, or society in general are portrayed within the literature compared to the reality of life at that time. They further relate those issues historically to the world today.

Natov and DeLuca remain involved with the journal, although they play a less significant role in its production. From time to time, they will take on the role of guest editors and are still active members of the editorial board. For them, *The Lion and the Unicorn* is the accomplishment of many years of hard work and dedication, and it continues to be a valuable contribution to the literary community.

Before I trace the history of *The Lion and the Unicorn* any farther, I would like to present some of the history of children’s books, magazines, and periodicals. Doing so should provide insight into how this literature has changed over the years. Some of the
most popular literature of the time will be presented in this study, along with the changing views of childhood over the course and breadth of the literature.
Children’s Books: A History and Background

In this chapter, I will look at how children’s books, when first introduced on this continent, were used, and see why and how children’s literature has changed over time. This information may answer some questions about the need to critique and evaluate the literature children read.

Era of Didactic and Elementary Education Books: 1620-1865

Originally, books that were included in the cargo and various belongings of settlers who first set foot on this continent were brought over with very specific purposes in mind. The Puritans of New England, for example, brought books that were highly spiritual and that conveyed very strict moral themes for the adults as well as the children of the colonies. One of these was a book written by John Cotton, the grandfather of Cotton Mather, who immigrated to New England in 1633. Mather’s reputation as a preacher had preceded him, for he had already transcribed a book entitled Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes in 1646. The title, of course, referred to the Boston in Lincolnshire, England. This book was widely read because of its moral messages for children of all ages.

James Janeway, an English minister, published another very popular moralistic children’s book in 1671, entitled A Token for Children: Being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives, and Joyous Deaths of Several Young Children. This book provided children with examples of the types of ideal behavior that they should exhibit and the moral conduct they should practice in order for them to “stand any chance of winning a place in Heaven” (Quayle 24). Janeway “warned his young readers, they
must live lives of religious ecstasy before dying joyfully with their Savior’s name on their lips” (24).

Cotton Mather, following his grandfather’s literary and religious career, published his book titled The Family Well-Ordered around 1699. Later, he republished Janeway’s Token in an Americanized version under the title of, A Token for the Children of New England of Some Examples of Children in Whom the Fear of God was Remarkably Budding Before They Died in Several Parts of New England, Preserved and Published for the Encouragement of Piety in Other Children. Clearly, most of the early literature for children in the New England colonies was didactic in nature, and much of it was confined to religious books and other material meant for moral instruction.

Benjamin Harris’ New England Primer of 1690 and the New American Spelling Book of 1785 were probably the earliest truly educational books for children published in the New World. They were still religious in content, but they also included the alphabet with capitals and small letters along with syllables.

Children in Virginia and the Carolinas led different lives from those of New England colonies. Because they had more economic and cultural ties to England, than the residents of Boston and the other New England colonies, these children most likely read much of the same material as children in the mother country were reading at that time. Southern children also would have read books that came from England’s publishers reflecting the most popular literature of the times. The main reason for this was that access to printing presses was extremely limited, if available at all, and the “royal permission required to have works printed” was difficult to obtain (Murray 3). Great Britain remained the economic center that governed the colonies, as well as the authority
controlling the licensure of printed material until about 1638 (3). It was very difficult to acquire any of the materials necessary to publish even a newspaper, let alone books or periodicals.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony eventually secured licensure and the permission to open a print shop used specifically for the general business of the colonies, and/or the printing of legal material. It was not long before other print shops were established in Pennsylvania and New York, and eventually in Williamsburg, Virginia. The printing of books, however, was so time consuming that merchants and colonists found it easier to order books directly from the more established publishing houses of London.

The American Revolution in 1776 and the establishment of self-government following it were the concerns of printers for a long time. New books and magazines were not being published and supplies of this kind of reading material began to dwindle. Reading material from Great Britain also became scarce, and America's leadership soon began to realize that education would be of key importance in defending the colonies against the political forces in Europe. These circumstances prompted American authors to meet the challenges of educating and informing this new nation and its youth. They produced a variety of instructional materials patterned after British works and intended to stimulate interest in the education of America's youth.

Hugh Gaine, a New York publisher, revised and reissued the chapbooks by British authors, like Daniel DeFoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), producing an abridged version in 1774. Chapbooks were small pamphlets containing ballads, tales, or religious tracts often sold by peddlers. They were especially popular with children because they recounted the adventures of heroes and heroines, imaginary and real, of long ago tickling their young
imaginations like comic books do for today’s youth (Quayle 32). Almost none of the chapbooks of those early times have survived due to the cheap quality of the materials used to produce them, not to mention the considerable amount of use they received.

Isaiah Thomas was the first, however, to publish a large number of books for American children. He had acquired a collection of chapbooks from London written by John Newbery in 1779, which he promptly republished for sale in the colonies (Tebbel, vol. I, 69). Thomas was not above cashing in on another author’s success, because he often reissued material by British authors such as John Newbery’s Goody Two-Shoes, 1765 and Mother Goose, 1768. He was also highly successful in publishing a number of textbooks like the New American Spelling Book in 1785. A great deal of Gaine’s and Thomas’ success stemmed from the inclusion of illustrations in their children’s books by well-known British illustrators such as Thomas Bewick, thus making them very attractive and desirable (191).

The Second Great Awakening, a new religious movement, began to sweep the nation in the 1800s. Along with this movement came a renewed interest in providing children with “suitable” reading material (Murray 24). The American Sunday-School Union, the American Temperance Society, and the American Tract Society in the late 1820s and early 1830s answered that call by publishing thousands of tracts (religious pamphlets) specifically designed to convert settlers and also idealize their life’s work.

According to Alice M. Jordan, the Union set up high literary standards for writers which “profoundly influenced the development of reading habits” (Tebbel, vol. I, 531). The Union literally took the first real steps toward developing standards of content for children’s literature. They required the works they published to be religious and moral in
nature, to be age specific and adaptive for children, to have a style and content that met high literary standards, and to be characteristic of the American way of life.

During this time illiteracy was so widespread that many American reformers soon realized that the educational interests of their children needed to be a political issue, as well as a public and private concern. Differing views began to shape political agendas and controversies over what children should be taught, and even how they should be taught soon took root. Religious material and moral issues were the main focus of the New England colonies well into the 1800s. Civic leaders, ministers, and parents remained the controlling figures of reading material for these children.

Frontier children, however, and children in other parts of the country “went more or less upon their own way” in terms of their reading material (Meigs 118). Because of their close economic and commercial connections with England, colonists in the Carolinas, Virginia, and those in the South were still reading material published in the mother land prior to the Revolution (118). These books consisted of adventure stories, stories of monarchs, travel logs, almanacs, and Bibles, all of which could be found in almost every farmhouse in the Northern and Southern settlements. Favorites for this generation of youngsters seemed to be adventure stories, such as The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe; of York Mariner by Daniel Defoe first published in 1719, and the Travels into Several Remote Regions of the World, by Lemuel Gulliver written by Jonathan Swift in 1726. These stories were widely sold around the country in the late 1700s. Formal education was sparse or non-existent in many parts of this country at that time; therefore, children learned to read whatever material was available to them.
Benjamin Rush, a revolutionary leader, and President George Washington passionately supported the need to educate the citizenry in order to insure community cohesion and America’s survival as a nation. Universal education was the key. Even John Adams urged all states to establish a system of public education where every district would have a school. Thomas Jefferson reiterated these sentiments when he noted, “without education, citizens would be ripe for demagogy and tyranny” (Murray 26).

After 1820, the nation experienced a tremendous growth in population, technology, and westward expansion. The economy was booming, bringing about changes in the social and political arenas; however, not all of these changes were positive. The influx of immigrants from different cultures, with a variety of educational backgrounds and job skills, soon found life in the land of opportunity a disappointment; definitely not what they had hoped to find. The work was hard, the living conditions harsh, and food and shelter was scarce or crowded. These new immigrants to a strange land often had difficulty communicating their needs or understanding the laws, and thus were vulnerable. It was not long before political concerns about impoverished and poorly skilled individuals became a societal problem. The need to educate and train workers and the children put a tremendous strain on this young nation. Before long this crisis led to political, social, and economical unrest, which lead to the publication and importation of various kinds of books designed not only to entertain, but educate all Americans, old and young alike.
Rise of Popular Fiction Series—Increased Entertainment: mid 1800s-1930

Children's literature generally reflects the characteristic family issues of that time period. It also provides insights into the various social problems within the community, such as issues of race, class, gender, and poverty. These and many other concerns are often found in one form or another in stories about the era, whether or not it was the intention of the author to express them. For example, in the antebellum era when Jacksonian Society was in turmoil, books for children tended to reflect the authors' desires and expectations for the youth of this nation; thus stories were generally didactic, unimaginative, and monotonous. Very few authors would willingly depart from the conventional point of view, with morality being the main focus in almost every text. In fact, "[c]hildren's fiction before 1860 was written entirely as an adjunct to such moral education" (MacLeod 90). Stories were designed to provide children of all ages with models of how to live virtuous lives.

Samuel Griswold Goodrich, in 1827, began to produce series stories intended to present some geographical and historical information to children. His Peter Parley series was largely popular because of the interesting facts and information he provided. Goodrich's bias toward factual information, especially with regard to geography and history, often crept into his text; however, that did not distort the reality of his ability to present such data in a simplistic way. The Parley series started with Peter Parley's Tales of America in 1827 and by 1850 Goodrich had written one hundred and seventy volumes and had sold approximately five million copies. Goodrich's books included Peter Parley's Tales About Europe, Peter Parley's Tales About Asia, and Peter Parley's Tales About
Africa in 1835, and Peter Parley’s Tales about the Sun, Moon and Stars in 1837, as well as many, many others.

Series books became extremely popular and sold well in England and America; authors found it to be quite a lucrative market for all kinds of adventure stories. Jacob Abbott began the Rollo series in 1834. Abbott, a Congregational clergyman and teacher in Massachusetts, wrote instructional books in this series, such as Rollo Learning to Talk and Rollo Learning to Read. He went on to produce other series books such as the Jonas Books from 1839 to 1842, the Lucy Books in 1842, and Marco Paul’s Travels and Adventures in Pursuit of Knowledge in 1843.

Around 1850, an endless stream of series books appeared depicting the American family, their lives and relationships. Authors tried to convey what it was like to grow up in an America family, which often included extended family members—aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Prior to this, fictional works for children written by American authors were limited. Before this time books had generally been dull, colorless, and lacked any significant details about America life.

The Civil War, with its ensuing social disruptions, compelled authors of all genres of literature to re-evaluate their purpose. The “new realism” found in post-bellum literature influenced the authors of children’s literature as well; most of them began to produce material for children with new and exciting themes. The orphan or single parented child was one of the most popular innovations, an example of which would be Katy in Sarah Chauncy Woolsey’s (Susan Coolidge) What Katy Did series. Woolsey’s stories portrayed events that eventually lead to the maturity of Dr. Carr’s tomboyish,
motherless, eldest daughter. For example, while confined to her bed due to an accident, Katy assumes the mothering role and organizes the household's domestic duties.

Some of the more common themes were those of class and race division. The idea was that if a person were poor, no matter how honest and good they were, they would never achieve upper class respectability. *Elsie Dinsmore* (1867) by Martha Farquharson Finley contains a good example of this idea because the black servants on the plantation are literally Elsie's only friends. However, their language and speech were so different from that of the white owners that they would always remain beneath her socially. *Ragged Dick* (1868) by Horatio Alger is another story that reflects this idea. The protagonist Dick is an orphan working as a bootblack, who saves his earnings to better his lot in life. Although he is honest and generous, he is never considered by the upper class to be anything more than a poor, uneducated street boy.

Another key theme seemed to be the idea that through illness or injury there would be either some moral reform or a "religious conversion" (Murray 60). For example, there is Kate Douglas Wiggin's 1887 story *The Birds' Christmas Carol* in which Carol Bird demonstrates the pleasure of giving to others, while at the same time accepting her own illness and limitations. In a similar vein, Martha Finley's *Elsie Dinsmore* series followed Elsie's life from childhood until she became a grandmother. The stories describe her religious conversion and beliefs, her self-image, and some personal family discourses.

Many of the authors of post-bellum children's fiction used pseudonyms or pen names for various reasons; some of them often used several different pen names. Women authors, in particular, used pen names to remain anonymous or to hide their gender. Other authors wrote for several different markets or even different publishers, thus choosing
specific pen names that identified themselves with those markets or publishers. Rebecca Clarke, better known as Sophie May, was identified in 1863 as the author of a whole series of books for very young children titled *Little Prudy*. She later produced numerous other titles under the same name, such as her *Dottie Dimples* Series and *Flaxie Frizzle* Series written between 1867 and 1884.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, using the pen name Mrs. Herbert Ward, wrote the *Gypsy Breynton* series beginning in 1866. Then there was the *Little Peppers* series introduced in 1878 by Margaret Sidney, best known as Harriet Mulford Stone Lothrop, which dealt with life in a large rather poor family. And, of course, there was the most unforgettable series of all that depicts life in the March Family by Louisa May Alcott, starting with *Little Women* in 1868 through *Jo’s Boys* in 1886.

The elements of literary criticism of children’s books actually began to emerge long before the Civil War. Books of fantasy, romance, war, piracy, and murder were considered bad and poisonous to young minds. Children were forbidden to read adventure stories like *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver’s Travels*, *Last of the Mohicans*, and *Tom Sawyer* because they were considered adult fiction. In fact, in the 1800s *Huckleberry Finn* was pulled from library shelves because it was considered ‘trashy and vicious’ (Tebbel, vol. II, 600). Around that same time, Louisa May Alcott’s books were being “classified as adult fiction” (600-601).

The wilderness expansion, personal hardships, industrialization, and urban development were curiously absent in most of the early stories because many authors’ attitudes about such subjects were often suspect and hostile. They felt that cities were corrupt and dangerous places, whereas the countryside provided a healthier, more
righteous place for children to grow up. Horatio Alger’s stories about the lives of young boys facing the daily challenges of survival on the streets of New York portray citizens as harsh and uncaring, with only a few exceptions. As a Unitarian minister, Alger attempted to show how diligence, hard work, and honesty would help young men achieve success. These characteristics can be seen in his first bestseller *Ragged Dick: or, Street Life in New York with the Boot-blacks* published in 1868.

Authors frequently focused on portraying American family life while trying to instill the cultural and religious norms of the times into the hearts and minds of America’s youth. Yet Goodrich and Abbott also encouraged American children to take an interest in the world of nature and far away places. Books for boys would most often depict adventures, rewards for honesty, and the importance of hard work, while books for girls still stressed the importance of a good family life, domestic tranquillity, and motherhood.

Between 1865 and 1919, literature most often contained stories about the realistic lives of individuals or families. However, in the late nineteenth century children’s fiction writers produced imaginative stories completely devoid of blatant morality. They began to focus on the more entertaining aspects of literature for youth. An example of this trend is found in Rev. C. L. Dodgson’s classic *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* written in 1865 under the pseudonym of Lewis Carroll. The actual story of Alice stemmed from Dodgson’s sexual fantasies about Alice Liddell, “the daughter of Dean Liddell of Christ Church” (Quayle 81). It seems Dodgson truly enjoyed entertaining the three little daughters of Liddell, not only pursuing their company but also “photographing them in various poses” (Quayle 81). The Alice stories came out of tales that Dodgson used to tell the Liddell children while taking them on boat rides and picnics to Godstow (Carroll xxx).
The actual written version came about through ten-year-old Alice Liddell's pleading with Dodgson to write out the adventures for her, so that she would always be able to read them over and over again (Meigs 195).

In 1872 he wrote another version of the story titled *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*. Both of these hugely popular stories contained the illustrations of satirist and cartoonist Sir John Tenniel, when originally published in London by MacMillan and Company and later in New York by Appleton & Company. Though the Alice books were works of British Literature, they were extremely influential in the lives of both to American children and American authors of children's books.

In Dodgson's first story, young Alice finds herself in a strange world once she has fallen down a rabbit's hole. The rabbit mistakes her for a maid, but Alice is not the least bit concerned with domesticity, she is seeking knowledge. She is trying to make sense of who she is and what her place is in the world, not just this strange world but the adult world in which she actually lives. Like her dream, Alice's real world is of full of rules and limitations, especially for females that seem to be unpredictable and difficult to understand. Thus Alice’s adventure is actually one of self-identity. According to Haughton, Alice’s “adventures test her sense of identity to the full” (Carroll xli).

In the second story, *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice has changed, she is older yet she is still dealing with the question of self-identity. However, now she finds herself in a cold, more cruel world full of political battles (xliv). Her attempts to make sense of this strange world make her anxious and sad. The rose garden in this story seems to symbolize Alice’s perception of adulthood with its bossiness, domineering style, and irrational rules.
Wonderland depicts Alice facing the travesties of the society in which she lives with its monarchy, rules of law, educational system, grammar lessons, and social etiquette. The Looking-Glass on the other hand seems representative more of a preoccupation with the passing of time, the process of aging, the realities of violence, and the finality of death (xlvi).

In addition to high brow literature such as Carroll’s works, post-war America was also inundated with cheap children’s books. Vast reproductions of old stories and translations of material from Europe were flooding the market, forcing publishers to compete for meager profits. The most positive thing about this influx of books, however, was that those who were considered to be the best authors were actually forced to become better. The result of such stiff competition produced many classics, such as The Story of a Bad Boy by Thomas Bailey Aldrich in 1869; The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Samuel Clemens (pen name Mark Twain) in 1876 and his Huckleberry Finn in 1885; and, of course, the unforgettable Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1883.

Life changed dramatically for young Americans after the Civil War. Families no longer needed to depend upon the labor of their children to survive, allowing for more time spent on their education than ever before. The efforts of Horace Mann in the 1830s, along with laws implemented by the National Child Labor Committee, helped limit the number of hours per week children could work (Murray 82). Minimum age limits were also set for juvenile employees and evening work for children was outlawed (83).

Leisure time soon equated to exciting new markets for books and entertainment. Children’s fiction now reflected realistic characters with faults that occasionally “lapsed from grace” (MacLeod 102). These characters were, however, always “quick to repent
and eager to reform” (102). Authors pointed out that this ability to reform and repent came not from being the perfectly pious child by nature, but through the guidance and loving care of parents. These stories pointed out the results of disobedience, careless behavior, and selfish pride, and also stressed the benefits of being good and charitable. They generally included some very effective parenting skills as well.

Authors who embraced the philosophy of Rousseau and Locke wrote stories portraying ways that parents could minimize deprivation and punishment in favor of allowing their children to “learn from the consequences of their” behavioral decisions (102). They stressed that discipline should be a combination of love and firmness equally distributed.

Jacob Abbott was one author who often stressed in his books the consequences of being too severe. One of his Franconia tales, for example, shows how the careless and unruly behavior of a young boy can be attributed to the “sternness and severity” of his father (MacLeod 105). The reason for this Abbott concluded was that the young boy’s father never gave him “any kind and friendly instruction;” therefore he lacked the knowledge of appropriate behavior (105).

Another popular genre, the animal story had been favorites among very young children for many years, and their numbers increased in this progressive era. Some of the more popular ones included Ernest Thompson Seton’s Wild Animals I Have Known in 1898, which contained some 200 of his own drawings. This era also saw the introduction of the internationally famous story, The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter. Miss Potter first printed this story privately in London in 1901 through Strangeways & Sons, primarily because no American publisher was willing to buy the printing rights. Before
long publisher Fredrick Warne & Company of New York discovered it to be a very lucrative venture and agreed to publish it. Another British author Anna Sewall’s famous Black Beauty, published in 1877, also proved to be extremely popular for many years.

Beatrix Potter was without a doubt the most prolific writer of animal stories for children. She produced a new tale almost every year until her death. Peter Rabbit was just the beginning of her long series which included The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin in 1903, The Tale of Benjamin Bunny in 1904, The Tale of Two Bad Mice in 1904, and The Pie and The Patty-Pan in 1905, all written while her publisher and husband Norman Warne was alive. After Warne’s died of leukemia in 1905 she continued to write, bringing to life the creatures and the surrounding landscape of her refuge at Hill Top Farm in the Lake District of Westmorland.

Other much loved classics include the works of British authors such as Kenneth Grahame’s The Wind in The Willows in 1908 and Alan Alexander Milne, who created that ever lovable bear Winnie-the-Pooh in 1926. And in 1940 American author Theodore Geisel, better know as Doctor Seuss, wrote his first stories starting with Horton Hatches the Eggs in 1940, The Cat in the Hat in 1957, and Horton Hears a Who in 1958.

Fantasy tales for children took on new meaning and renewed interest as America entered the twentieth century. One author in particular created possibly the most endearing and timeless fantasies of the era, and that was L. Frank Baum. The Wonderful Wizard of Oz written in 1900, illustrated by W.W. Denslow, and published by George M. Hill of Chicago, made not only literary history but theatrical and motion picture history as well. This fairy tale along with thirteen of its sequels, with titles such as Dot and Tot of
Merryland in 1901, The New Wizard of Oz in 1902, and The Marvellous Land of Oz in 1904, sold well over a billion copies.

Baum’s characters were always lively, fanciful, and childlike individuals who found themselves in strange and unusual situations. His books were extremely colorful providing a marvelous dreamlike quality to stories that always ended happily. However, many of the Oz stories that Baum wrote did not survive. For example, his Dot and Tot and The New Wizard stories are not included in Oziana Library Collections (Wright). Besides the original story some of Baum’s more popular stories included The Marvelous Land of Oz 1904, where readers are introduced to new characters and follow their adventures through Emerald City, like the young boy Tip and his two companions Jack Pumpkinhead and Sawhorse. Then there was Ozma of Oz in which Dorothy Gale the main character is blown overboard into the ocean and washes up on the shores of Ev a fairyland where she meets the Princess Ozma, a mechanical man named Tiktok, and the Oz Army. Baum’s last Oz story was published posthumously in 1920 and that was Glinda of Oz, in which the good witch Glinda sends Dorothy and Ozma out on a peacekeeping mission (Wright).

After L. Frank Baum’s death in 1919 the mantle was passed on to the next “Royal Historian of Oz,” Ruth Plumly Thompson, who wrote nineteen more Oz books between 1921 and 1939 (Wright). Baum’s work remains current even today through the efforts of Ozian scholars who have published many of his stories on the worldwide web via the Piglet Press, and author W.R. Wright and others. Adults, as well as children, have enjoyed these fantastic escapes from reality for more than a century.

By the later part of the nineteenth and into the early part of the twentieth century, children were beginning to decide for themselves what to read. Parents were allowing
their children more freedom in deciding what they liked and wanted to read. Literary journals encouraged consumers to read more in this advanced age of technology with its subsequently increased amount of leisure time. Children had more autonomy and were given more personal independence. It was also around this same time that critics really began to scrutinize children’s literature more closely. Educators, school librarians, and parents felt the need to redefine “literature by age and difficulty, and to separate it from adult fiction” (Murray 96). Many professional organizations were influential in deciding what material was purchased for schools and public libraries, and with the help of doctors, lawyers, lobbyists, and teachers new literary standards and guidelines were established.

The National Education Association of 1857 and the American Library Association of 1876 began the process of setting standards for children’s books. However, it was not until 1906 that Anne Carroll Moore, following the guidelines of Caroline M. Hewin, actually set up the New York Public Library’s first children’s reading room. And she was the first author to start writing extensive critical reviews about children’s books, which were published in The Bookman around 1918. She also wrote a weekly column for the New York Herald Tribune entitled “The Three Owls,” in which she critiqued books for things such as ‘originality, beauty, spontaneous appeal, and an imaginative approach’ (Murray 96).

The Development of Publishing Houses and Critical Schools 1930-1970

Twentieth century attitudes about appropriate fiction for children had changed. Children were becoming more aware of the events and circumstances that shaped their world and their surroundings. Television, mass communication, the media, and the vast
array of available literature were greatly influencing the kind of material children chose, or even sought to read. Book clubs would sell material in classrooms, fan clubs sprang up across the country for series book characters like Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys, and advertisements showing the latest books covered billboards and television screens.

Book lists such as The Winnetka Graded Book List were developed to disseminate information on book titles that were appropriate for children of all ages. However, by 1912 the list for suggested purchases of the children’s section of the public libraries contained little in the way of classics, and almost no adult titles. A poll taken in 1926 by the Carnegie Corporation revealed that the reading habits of fifth, sixth, and seventh graders was significantly influenced by what the Stratemeyer Syndicate was producing. This company published a wide variety of tremendously popular inexpensive books. A vast majority of students found the stories extremely interesting and lively, but educators considered them useless trash.

Edward Stratemeyer started his syndicate in 1910. At the height of its popularity, it produced well over 5 million copies of stories by various pseudonymous authors. After his death in 1930, the company shifted to the management of his daughter Harriet Adams and her partner Andrew E. Svenson. Titles of the syndicated series included Laura Lee Hope’s Blythe Girls and Bobbsey Twins series; Arthur M. Dixon’s Rover Boys series; Victor Appleton’s Tom Swift series; and Carolyn Keene’s Nancy Drew series.

Mildred Wirt Benson, a young writer/reporter and graduate from the University of Iowa in 1927, was the author of the original Nancy Drew series. In an interview with Benson at a press conference during the Nancy Drew Conference in Iowa City on April 17, 1993, she said that it was Stratemeyer’s idea to give her the pseudonym of Carolyn
Keene. The main characters, Nancy Drew and her friends George Fayne and Bess, according to Benson "were written into the plot before [she] got them" (Romalov 88). The series, launched just prior to Stratemeyer’s death in 1930, was the most popular of his surviving works. Stratemeyer died shortly after the first story, Secret of the Old Clock, was published and after he had contracted Benson for three more stories. Later Benson refused to write for the syndicate for a period of about two years because of a dispute over her salary in 1932. During that time Walter Karig continued the series writing the ninth, tenth, and eleventh stories under the pseudonym of Carolyn Keene, until Benson resumed her commitment to the series in 1934. Benson wrote the first eight stories of the series and stories twelve through twenty-five from 1934 until 1953 when she produced her last story, The Clue of the Velvet Mask.

In addition to writing the Nancy Drew stories Benson was also writing the Ruth Fielding series around that same time, from 1927 to 1933. While writing Nancy Drew, she wrote many other series under different pen names, such as Penny Nichols under the pseudonym of Joan Clark, Doris Force as Julia K. Duncan, Honey Bunch as Helen Louise Thorndyke, and her personal favorite was the Penny Parker series as Mildred Wirt Benson. It was Benson who also wrote of the Boy Scout Explorers books under the guise of Don Palmer. While these books where interesting and exciting, they also contained material that parents increasingly found offensive and degrading; things that they did not what their children to feel were acceptable such as the racism, sexism, and socialism. These books did in a variety of ways reflect the cultural climate of the time, even though parents became increasingly upset over the predictable formulaic nature of the series novels.
The twentieth century brought an even closer examination of children’s books. Adult attitudes, personal beliefs, social standards, and political convictions continued to be reflected in material written for young Americans. Publishers, writers, scholars, parents, and others involved with children’s literature implicitly endorsed a code of ethics that virtually remained unbroken by authors and publishers for years, in which certain subjects were absolutely taboo. Taboos included such things as violence and death. While these subjects were not entirely absent from children’s stories, the graphic details or depictions of a child, or someone close to that child as the object of violence or death, was forbidden. Authorities in children’s literature as well as parents felt that children needed to be protected against real violence and actual death, because exposing them to such realities was considered too emotionally harmful.

Adult problems of various kinds were also notably absent in children’s books, such as “[d]ivorce, mental breakdown, alcoholism, rape, drug [abuse], suicide, prostitution, and sexual deviance” (MacLeod 180). These were all considered inappropriate subjects for children’s books. Despite this, prior to 1960 the actual censoring of children’s books was rare for several specific reasons. The main reason was that the production and purchase of literary material for children was in the hands of a relatively small community of adults who shared similar points of view. Another very important reason was the fact that the field of children’s literature was unfamiliar to most non-professionals, particularly those who had never read much in the field, nor had dealt with it from an educational prospective.

Around the 1905s, there was a period when teenage romance novels such as Going Steady (1950), Fifteen (1956), and Sister of the Bride (1963), all written by Beverly
Cleary, became popular. While these books all focused on nuclear families, they did not do much to give girls a sense of their potential outside the home or the fact that they could find success and happiness without a man in their lives. After 1960, the influence of the civil rights movement, the women’s liberation movement, the Vietnam War, along with changing family structures, authors were inspired to write literature that became the battleground for social reform. These social issues inevitably prompted parents, educators, and political activists to more closely examine the messages conveyed within the pages of children’s books. Admittedly the conclusion was that most of the literature contained a great deal of racism and sexism, and lacked social responsibility. The aftermath of this shift sparked political demands for librarians and administrators to censor books that depicted certain behavior. Thus, many classics were removed from library shelves because their underlying messages were often deemed inappropriate for children.

Today, series books can still be found on bookstore shelves baring such titles as the Cabbage Patch Kids, The Baby-sitters Club, and the Animorphs science fiction stories. There are the fantasy series such as the Prydain Chronicles by Lloyd Alexander (1964-1968) and The Dark is Rising sequence by Susan Cooper (1965-1977), and more recently, the Harry Potter series which has garnered much media attention. This series by Scottish author Joanne (J.K.) Rowling has excited and ignited the imaginations of children around the world. In 1997, Rowling a single mother published the first of the series that has literally captivated audiences of adults, as well as children, with the adventures of a child who overcomes a dysfunctional home and discovers that he is, in fact, a wizard with magical powers. Adults, who also read the series, recognize its literary merit and enjoy the formulaic style that makes it appealing to young readers.
Emphasis on Social Issues, African American Children’s books: past and present

African American authors, as well as a few white authors, have written many wonderful stories about the African American experience for children. These stories present unique and interesting views of cultures that in the past were marginalized from mainstream publishing. Some of the more popular classics written by white authors attempting to portray the lives of slaves or stereotypical black children have been around since the 1800s. For example, in 1852 a series of stories was written about “a noble, high-minded, devoutly Christian slave” who was beaten to death by his master; it was printed in the National Era, an American magazine (Quayle 167). The complete story, written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, was titled Uncle Tom’s Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly.

Stowe’s original attempts to get her story published in Boston failed, so she looked to Europe where it became an immediate success and an extremely profitable venture for Clarke & Company of London. Clarke rushed out the first copies without illustrations to be sure of beating out any competition. John P. Jewett & Company of Boston eventually gained publication rights and, in America alone, sold more than 300,000 copies by the end of the first year. Stowe’s outsider’s view, however, was not intended to be read by black children, most of whom were forbidden access to any kind of reading material by the slave codes of that time.

Helen Bannerman, another white female writer, wrote a series of stories in 1898 about the lives of black children for America’s youth. Her first tale, The Story of Little Black Sambo, was about a little Black boy who encountered four tigers while playing in the jungle. She wrote the story while traveling by ox-cart from Kodai to Madras (177). Later she sold the story outright, complete with colorful illustrations, to Grant Richards of
London for five pounds (Quayle 177). The huge success of this book with its tremendous sales, over twenty thousand copies by October of 1900, did not prompt Richards to ever pay her any royalties. However, despite this misfortune Bannerman continued to write and produce many stories about black children, which were profitably published by James Nisbet & Company of London and Frederick A. Stokes Company in New York.

Although Bannerman's books were very popular most educators and critics, regardless of racial and ethnic background, have for many years objected to her depiction of Africans, especially black children in her stories.

Many African American authors have also produced many excellent stories for children. In 1887 Mrs. A. E. Johnson, founder of the magazine The Joy, wrote the story Clarence and Corinne, or God's Way which was published by a white administer of the American Baptist Publication Society. That same year Mary V. Cook presented a critical "paper entitled 'Is Juvenile Literature Demanded on the Part of Colored Children?'" [at the] National Press Convention in Louisville" (Johnson 2). But prior to 1900 literature for and about black children was difficult to find.

W.E.B. DuBois and Jessie Redmond Fauset founded and published the Brownies' Book, a periodical for African American children, in 1919. Through this venture DuBois hoped to educate members of the Black community, especially the children. However, it was not until the 1920s, during the Harlem Renaissance, that Black writers and their literature actually gained recognition. Many African American children's stories were published after that period, but change in this genre was very slow.

Dramatic changes actually began to take shape through the efforts of Ernestine Rose around 1920. Rose was a white librarian with experience in developing library
services for various minorities. She was chosen to be administrator of the third floor project at the 135th Street Branch of New York City’s Public Library that would house African American art, literature, artifacts, etchings, rare manuscripts, and autobiographies for the black citizens of Harlem to enjoy (Tolson 3). At first it was difficult for her to acquire enough material, especially for children, to stock the shelves because very few publishers would give black writers the opportunity to publish their children’s books. However, after the 1930s with the help of the African American community and a committee formed in 1925 known as the “Citizens’ Committee,” all that changed (3).

African-American educators, scholars, and parents petitioned for their right to have relevant material published for black children throughout the United States.

Augusta Baker worked as a librarian at the 135th Street Branch during that time. She undertook the task of creating a book list of children’s literature that reflected the history and culture of African Americans. She also devoted her time to introducing the children of Harlem to African American writers, poets, actors, politicians, and blacks in all walks of life (5).

The fact that there were so few books for African American children that realistically presented stories about blacks and their heritage remained the biggest obstacle for Black communities everywhere. James Weldon and Arthur Schomburg responded to this need by forming a guild, designed to encourage black writers and aid them in getting their work published (5). This guild was known as “The James Weldon Johnson Literary Guild” (Tolson 5). The guild worked closely with the children’s section of the library giving it money to purchase books that were unbiased and realistic depictions of blacks all
over the world. It helped establish specific guidelines for the way in which writers and illustrators could depict African-Americans in the literature.

Around that same time, an African-American librarian in Chicago by the name of Charlemae Rollins was experiencing similar problems with locating literature for black children in her area (7). It was only through an aggressive letter writing campaign, that she undertook, and her book *We Build Together* that she was able to effect any changes within the Chicago Library system for blacks (7). Before long almost every library in the country contained relevant literature for African American children that related to their lives and their heritage, that they could read, listen to, and enjoy with pride.

Some of the more popular tales were Langston Hughes’ *The Dream Keeper* published in 1932, a collection of poems for the young, and a collaborative work he wrote with Arna Bontemps that same year entitled *Popo and Fifina: Children of Haiti*, depicting the everyday lives of Haitian children. Arna Bontemps wrote a number of other children’s stories such as *You Can’t Pet a Possum* in 1934, the story of a young black boy who tries to convince his grand-mother to let him have a stray dog for his pet. He also wrote *Sad-Faced Boy* in 1937, which traced the adventures of three young Alabama boys from the time they caught a freight train bound for New York through their misadventures in Harlem.

During the 1950s and 1960s publishers became more sensitive to stereotyping of all kinds. For instance, Bannerman’s use of the word “Sambo” and the events depicted in the story itself were severely criticized by educators because it stereotyped black children as ignorant and foolish. Therefore, the book was pulled from the shelves of many libraries. It did, however, remain on the recommended children’s books list as a classic
until the early 1970s, at which time activists again criticized it as being offensive to the Black community, and it was dropped. During the Black Arts movement many African American scholars began to question the wisdom of white authors writing stories about black characters; they found some of these authors’ treatment of the subject of black life to be offensive. It was not long before African American authors began a push for literature that was specifically intended for black children. As critic Dianne Johnson noted in *Telling Tales*, “I am interested in literature written by African Americans that seeks to represent, interpret, and envision the lives, real and imagined, of African American people” (Johnson 3).

Some of the female African-American writers of this period included such names as Mildred Taylor, author of the 1976 story entitled *Roll of Thunder; Hear My Cry*, which depicts the strength and integrity of a black, rural, southern family in the 1930s. And then there was Virginia Hamilton, whose mystery novels set in rural Southern communities drew parallels between the contemporary and historical black culture. Both of these authors were recipients of numerous awards and accolades for their works. Eleanora Tate, another Black female author, wrote the 1987 mystery *The Secret of Gumbo Grove*, which took the history of a Black community as its point of exploration.

More recently a black male author, Christopher Paul Curtis, also won awards for his novels. In 2000, Curtis won the Newbery Medal for his book *Bud, Not Buddy* (1999), the story of a young motherless boy who escapes the home of his cruel foster parents in order to search for his real father, a bandleader (Minkel 1). This story was set in Curtis’ hometown of Flint, Michigan, around the time of the Great Depression. His first book, *The Watsons go to Birmingham—1963*, not only won the Newbery Honor Book but also
the Coretta Scott King Honor Book Award in 1996 (Murphy 95). The Watsons was set during the time of the Civil Rights Movement in the South. This family takes a trip to Birmingham with the intention of leaving their adolescent oldest son Byron with Grandma Sands over the summer. The parents hope that Byron will get a glimpse of what the world is really like and mature during his stay. However, they actually witness the 1963 burning of a church in Birmingham in which four young girls are killed. In his books, Curtis does an excellent job of explaining how larger social movements, such as the Great Depression or the Civil Rights Movement, impact young protagonists.

Hispanic, Asian, and Native American contributions of 1980s and 1990s:

The Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC), founded in 1965, paved the way for many minority writers to get historically and culturally relevant literature for children published (Banfield 1). The CIBC was founded because of the strict racial policies imposed upon minorities in Mississippi, which was designed to keep African Americans oppressed, but it also prevented black children from understanding the impact of heritage and culture on their daily lives. Subsequently, many other minorities began to follow the lead of African-Americans by demanding literature for their children that reflected the types of multi-cultural societies in which they lived. For example, stories from Asian writers like Linda Perrin, who wrote Coming to America: Immigrants from the Far East in 1980, and Laurence Yep author of Dragon's Gate soon emerged. In fact Dragon's Gate won Yep a 1994 Newbery Honor Book award.

There are also many Native American writers such as Paul Goble author of Star Boy (1983), a story based on an old Blackfoot Indian legend, and Sharon Creech, who
wrote *Walk Two Moons*, which won her the 1995 Newbery Medal (Gillespie 366). The latter is a sad, yet at times humorous story about Salamanca Tree Hiddle, a young Indian girl who travels across country to Idaho with her grandparents in search of her mother, who did not return home as promised. Later it is revealed that her mother was killed in a bus accident, but nobody had the courage to tell Sal about this unfortunate event.

Many wonderful stories have been written by Hispanic or Latino writers too, like *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros. This story, about a young girl growing up in Chicago, relates her experiences in a new neighborhood, as well as her family life and her friendships. It portrays a Hispanic family’s life in a big city within a small middle class neighborhood.

Julia Alvarez’s story *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* provides an interesting perspective about how life in the United States, and in particular the affluent side of New York City, changed the cultural identities of the four daughters of an immigrant family from the Dominican Republic. The heroine Yolanda narrates the events in their lives that for better or for worse, have turned them into the women they are today.

Two other authors who have produced popular stories about life in the Mexican American culture were Gary Soto with *Buried Onions* and Victor Martinez with *Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida*. *Buried Onions* deals with the life of a young Mexican American living in the San Joaquin Valley and the streets of Fresno, California. This young man tries desperately to avoid the pitfalls of street gangs and drugs as he works toward a better way of life. He wants to escape the poor and hopeless lifestyle in which he was raised. *Parrot in the Oven* is also set in Fresno and deals with the poor and hopeless life of a Mexican American boy. It is a coming of age story where the protagonist Manny, a teenager in a
very dysfunctional family, must try to find a reason to survive despite all of the personal problems he faces. His father is an unemployed drunk, his sister becomes pregnant and has a miscarriage, his grandmother dies, and his mother tries desperately to keep the family together, while Manny decides to join a gang. This book has been awarded several honors for its in-your-face revelations about life in the barrios of the Central Valley. In particular, Martinez won the 1996 National Book Award for Young People’s Literature for this story. At the root of both Soto and Martinez’s work is the idea that poverty and discrimination have combined to create formidable challenges for their protagonists.

Given the rich and varied nature of American children’s literature in the modern era, it is not surprising that literary critics would find the field to be of great interest. In the next chapter, I will trace the history and scope of children’s periodicals, annuals, and critical journals.
History of Children’s Periodicals, Annuals, and Critical Journals

Scholarly journals about children’s literature such as The Lion and the Unicorn are a recent development, building off of the magazines, pamphlets and religious tracts for children that have been in existence since the 1800s. Most early editions were evangelical, containing the traditional pious and moral messages specifically directed to children. Many of the periodicals were short lived due to financial instability and declining subscriberships, but those that did survive changed titles almost as often as they changed authors and editors. Their success depended almost exclusively on the financial security of the publisher and the variety of articles and stories they supplied. Some of the most famous and popular children’s periodicals began as far back as 1788.

Early magazines, annuals, and critical journals

The Juvenile Magazine, started in 1788 by Lucy Peacock, is a good example of one of the earliest magazines available. It contained “folding maps, engraved sheets of music, ... numerous copperplate illustrations,” as well as children’s stories by many of the most well known authors of the time (Quayle 228). It started out as a monthly, but only survived through twelve issues.

In 1825, another magazine specifically for the young child appeared as an annual entitled Blossoms at Christmas and First Flowers of the New Year. Blossoms was the joint venture of publishers J. Poole and Simkin & Marshall of London. Their goal was to achieve the same popularity and notoriety that the religious book A Token for Children had for James Janeway. The magazine contained some unique features, such as a hand-
colored engraved title page and presentation leaf, and “full page copperplate engravings” of famous people and views of cities and towns (Quayle 229). However, it lacked the kind of articles and stories that appealed to children. Some tales were humorous and it even contained bits of educational information like “The origin of dueling,” yet the magazine lost subscribers and it too only survived a year (229).

The Children’s Friend, originally edited by Rev William Carus Wilson, fared better than others of its type; it remained in publication until about 1861. The magazine started out “as a penny monthly” in 1824, but due to the publisher’s inability to acquire a enough subscribers, by the end of the year it became an annual (229). The Children’s Friend, like others before it, contained many of the traditional lessons in piety and religious tales that were so common in children’s literature of that time. The attractiveness of each new issue and material contained within its pages seemed to appeal to subscribers at the time; nevertheless, it soon fell by the wayside as other more interesting magazines emerged.

The Religious Tract Society published a periodical called The Child’s Companion, or Sunday Scholar’s Reward, which was perhaps one of the longest running periodicals for children. First issued in December of 1882, it was published at the end of each year thereafter. The format of The Child’s Companion changed numerous times over the course of its existence, keeping up with changing public attitudes and children’s preferences; thus it managed to survive until 1928 under its new title, The Child’s Companion and Juvenile Instructor. This magazine was the first to display the artist George Baxter’s color printing method at a cost of merely one-cent per copy.

Editor Adam Keys was the first brave soul to challenge the conventions of the time by introducing a magazine for children that was not strictly religious in nature. His
magazine, *The Excitement*, contained “adventure stories and romances solely for the interest and amusement of young people” (Quayle 235). Published in 1830 by Waugh & Innes of Edinburgh, it aroused strong opposition from many of the senior members of the Scottish Kirk because Keys refused to publish any didactic tales. It contained stories that were as exciting and enjoyable as their titles suggested. “‘A Lion Hunt in Africa’; ‘Boiling Springs of Iceland’; ‘Whale Ship destroyed by a Whale’,” are a few examples of such titles (235). Keys was eventually replaced by Rev. Robert Jamieson in 1838, but he continued writing adventure stories for a new publication he started that same year, a magazine called *The New Excitement*.

A magazine edited by Thomas Hood in 1830 was originally intended for adults, but it became extremely popular with the younger generation. Known as *The Comic Annual*, this magazine contained comical tales about characters who ended up in various humorous situations. It contained the type of simple, comical illustrations and story lines that children loved. Hood wrote many of the stories himself and managed to continue publishing the magazine and dispensing humor until 1839.

These magazines, while published in England, were being distributed throughout the United States, as well, though most of them have long been forgotten. However, magazines that replaced them have left indelible marks in American history. One magazine in particular, the *Juvenile Miscellany*, was just such a venture.

Lydia Child, who enlisted contributions from many of the most widely known female authors of the time, started the *Juvenile Miscellany* in 1826. Authors like Lydia Sigourney, Catherine Sedgwick, and Sarah J. Hale were regular contributors to this magazine. She wanted to design a miscellany that would appeal to children of all ages,
boys and girls alike. But Child’s tendency to use the magazine as a forum for her own agenda, advocating reforms of all types, from anti-slavery to helping the poor and underprivileged, was its doom. Subscriptions eventually began to decline so severely that Child felt it best to turn the editorship over to Sarah Josephus Hale. Hale kept the magazine alive until 1836.

Another notable children’s magazine was the *Youth’s Companion*, edited by its founder Nathaniel Willis, a Boston Congregationalist. This magazine first appeared in 1827 and managed to retain its name and readership until 1929. Initially, it contained stories similar to those found in the Religious Tract Society’s magazines, complete with deathbed testimonials and sermons about disobedience, procrastination, and selfishness. In addition, this magazine contained “obituaries of pious children,” along with articles about nature, history, and financial tips for juveniles (Avery 83). Its cost was only two cents a month by subscription for a four-page paper delivered weekly. The magazine’s success was probably due to the fact that its focus reflected what colonial parents expected to find in literature for their children. The readership mainly consisted of upper and middle class children around the ages of 9-16, because it often contained educational material.

Daniel Sharp Ford took over the editorship of the *Youth’s Companion* around 1857 (Avery 82). He implemented many changes in focus and direction making the magazine more family oriented, although children’s stories continued to occupy a major portion of the publication. This magazine survived longer than any other juvenile periodical; it was over 100 years old when its last edition was published in 1929 (82).
Critical reviews of children's literature did not attract the attention of authors or scholars in any significant way before 1865. It was the twentieth-century scholars, however, who truly began to recognize children studies as a viable field of unbiased inquiry. These scholars were less likely to worry about how a book influenced a child's moral growth; they were more interested in what children's texts reflected about the larger culture and its concerns with children and child rearing.

After the Civil War, children's literature changed dramatically, as did the meaning of childhood itself. The publication of children's magazines literally flourished in the post-bellum era. From 1840 to about 1870, approximately one hundred and thirty new children's magazines appeared; by the 1900s, another one hundred and five had been added to the list. This phenomenon of mass publication coincided with advancing technology and newer, faster modes of transportation. Mass publication closely followed the beginning of America's railway system of 1840, which when finally completed in 1890 greatly improved the distribution of materials across the country. Readership was no longer limited to affluent children. Thanks to this new and improved technology and transportation, cheaper goods were reaching larger and often poorer segments of the population. It was around this time that book reviews began to appear in adult as well as children's magazines.

The advances in technology, such as the introduction of the rotary press, new engraving methods, and the development of rapidly producing paper machines, made it possible to mass-produce all types of printed material. With all of this mass production of reading material renewed interest in literacy suddenly became a national priority, especially for young Americans.
The education of American youth became a united effort; in fact it was mandatory after the Civil War that all communities establish schools. Children under twelve years of age began to spend not only more daily hours in the classroom, but more weeks each year attending school. This increase in the number of mandatory hours of learning was the basis for the increase literacy of children in the United States.

*Our Young Folks*, a magazine first published in 1865, set new standards for children's literature by attracting as well as publishing the works of the most notable authors. Boston publishers Ticknor and Fields, and their editors Lucy Larcom, John Townsend Trowbridge and for a short time Mary Mapes Dodge, attracted authors like Lydia Maria Child, Charles Dickens, Harriet Beacher Stowe, and many others. The company was, unfortunately, financially devastated by the 1872 Boston fire, and the magazine was sold to Scribner along with another children's magazine, the *Riverside*. Later, this magazine merged with a new children's magazine called *St. Nicholas*.

Several periodicals at the time had family appeal, especially among those who were considered "refined and genteel" (Murray 77). Many parents wanted their children to be knowledgeable, well read, and intellectually social. Creativity was encouraged, prompting many adolescent boys and girls to develop and produce their own journals and newspapers.

America now had an elite class of children with a tremendous amount of leisure time on their hands who were able to indulge in the latest reading materials, as well as take advantage of the latest available technology. Out of this new and rapidly growing technology the "Novelty Press" was born in 1867 (77). This unique venture allowed aspiring young Americans the opportunity to cultivate their own literary talents and
creative style by publishing original works. Some of these children even owned printing presses and eventually they formed their own organization of press owners.

Many ideas, debates, and discussions about literature, societal concerns, and financial and management issues were presented within the pages of these new ventures. Young entrepreneurs were not only writing and publishing literature for themselves and other children, they were voicing their political opinions and addressing domestic issues.

While American children were gaining more autonomy than ever before, many adults found this new adolescent independence threatening to the future of the country. Their main concern was the steady stream of tantalizing adventures stories being produced at the time. Stories about hair-raising adventures, wild and dangerous escapes, violent encounters, and adolescent romances seemed to attract the attention of young bourgeois boys and adolescent girls who considered their lives dull and uneventful. The children’s magazines after this period had new appeal because they were designed to “stimulate the imagination” and to “provide a high level of entertainment for children of literary tastes” (Avery 148-149). American juvenile magazines strove toward a “lightness of spirit” and yet there was still a need “to preserve the traditional American values” (147).

In 1867 two very popular children’s periodicals appeared; William Taylor Adams’ Oliver Optic and Horace Scudder’s Riverside Magazine for Young People. Oliver Optic was originally a weekly magazine but changed to a monthly in 1871 when money became tight and subscriptions declined. The most consistent contributor to the Optic was Adams himself, although other famous authors like Elijah Kellogg did contribute to several issues. The magazine featured columns and pictures from the latest books, most of which Adams
had written. Unfortunately, it ceased to exist after the publishers Lee and Shepard went bankrupt in 1875.

The *Riverside Magazine for Young People* was perhaps one of the finest American children’s periodicals of its time with an impressive list of contributors including Jacob Abbott, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary Mapes Dodge, and Hans Christian Anderson. As a matter of fact, a number of Anderson’s stories first appeared in the *Riverside*. While the magazine only lasted until 1873, it signifies a time when the literary critique of children’s books was just beginning to emerge and take root. The magazine’s founder, Horace Scudder, truly believed that the critical evaluation of children’s books was extremely important; thus he became one of the most influential forces in this area. Scudder focused on producing literature that stimulated a child’s interest and imagination rather than that which simply portrayed some moral lesson. His intense focus on the literature soon proved to be too costly for the magazine to ever achieve financial success, because Scudder could only do in-depth reviews of a few books at a time. Other contributors, clamoring for more publication space, soon pushed his column back to later issues and eventually it fell by the wayside, along with the magazine itself. This magazine must certainly be considered a true pioneer in the reviewing and critiquing of all children’s literature.

*St. Nicholas*, a product of Scribner’s in 1873, was a monthly magazine under the editorship of Mary Mapes Dodge and her associate Frank R. Stockton. Dodge and Stockton reviewed well over a hundred new books within the first eight years of its existence. *St. Nicholas* became quite popular throughout its history because it offered a variety of literary features, such as poems, short stories, fables, games, histories, and
biographies. In some of its features and stories, it also broke away from the didactic elements that had been the central theme in most of children’s literature in the past.

Children who subscribe to this magazine could write to the editors expressing their likes and dislikes about it. The St. Nicholas League was a club established in 1899 that became extremely popular among the magazine’s readers. According to the December 1927 issue “[t]he League motto [was] ‘Live to learn and learn to live,’” and “[i]ts emblem [was] the ‘Stars and Stripes’”--- reflecting its dual emphasis on education and patriotism (St. Nicholas 143). The League not only published the works of its members but also sent out awards, silver and gold badges, monthly for these original works. St. Nicholas was distributed nationwide and internationally to countries such as India, China, France, and London. The magazine’s contributors included such notable authors as Louisa May Alcott, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Lewis Stevenson, Susan Coolidge and Howard Pyle. William Faylor Clarke took over the editorship after Dodge’s death in 1905, but by 1930 the magazine’s circulation had begun to dwindle away; publication ceased in 1943. St. Nicholas actually set “the standards by which magazines for children are measured,” even today (Miegs 260). The magazine contained ads for toys, books, and various other products along side of interesting articles on math, science, history, and current events. Games, puzzles, quizzes, and contests could be found in every issue. The editors of St. Nicholas realized that children were a growing consumer class, and they were eager to tap the market.
General and Educational Periodicals---1900-present

From the 1900s on, literally thousands of magazines for children came out, all with a similar focus --- to entertain and to educate. Thus, while childhood in contemporary America had significantly been altered, adults' desires to circumscribe their children's reading material had not changed by the same degree. Boys' Life, edited in 1911 by J. D. Owen for the Boy Scouts of America, was designed to target a generation of young boys age seven to twelve years and to focus on issues relevant to that more specific age group. Child Life came out in 1921 targeting the nine to eleven years under the editorship of Lise Hoffman; it provided book reviews and health-related articles for children. Perhaps its most popular feature was its articles on nature's mysteries. Then, in 1938 Daniel Lee founded Jack & Jill, published by the Children's Better Health Institute for children ages seven to ten years old. It featured articles on fitness and health, as well as games, puzzles, jokes, along with other fun and interesting activities. The stories found in this magazine were designed to present some lesson or consequence for one's behavior; the same is true about the magazine today. For example, the October/November 2000 issue contains a story by Dan Howard titled "The Treat or Treat-ment" about the lessons two brothers learn about respecting others' privacy, and the benefits of regular exercise (Lee 4).

Highlights for Children targeted children as young as two years up to and including twelve year olds. It started in 1946 under the guidance of Kent L. Brown whose motto was 'Fun with a purpose' (Stoll 34). The salient features of this magazine include its thought provoking articles, the hidden pictures page, the picture stories, the craft section, and the subscribers' own pages, where submitted poems, short stories, and art works were published. Four years later, Children's Digest appeared for 8 year olds to preteens by
Layne Cameron to be followed two years later by Humpty Dumpty for ages four to six year olds by Nancy Axelrod, both of which were, and are still published by the Children’s Better Health Institute. They contain healthy recipes, crafts, hidden pictures, poems, as well as the usual games and puzzles found in other children’s magazines. Humpty Dumpty also presented simple plays that could be read to or produced for little children “with little or no theatrical elaboration,” according to Judith Martin, a founder and co-producer of “The Paper Bag Players” (Martin 11). Today, the Children’s Better Health Institute publishes several magazines for children of all ages which include, Children’s Digest, Child Life, Children’s Playmate, Highlights for Children, Humpty Dumpty, Turtle Magazine for Preschoolers, and U.S. Kids.

A few of the more educationally oriented magazines came out in the late 1960s such as Ranger Rick in 1967 by Gerald Bishop, which contained nature stories and some wonderful pictures of wild life and natural scenery. This magazine published by the National Wildlife Federation targeted six to twelve year olds. Sesame Street followed this educational theme when it came out in 1971 edited by Maureen Hunter-Bone for younger children, two to six year olds. It was published through the Children’s Television Workshop and was designed to help children develop skills in tracing, coloring, cut-outs, and other types of art work, as well as containing stories about their colorful television characters featured on the Sesame Street television program.

Magazines designed specifically for young girls to celebrate their girlhood and that stress the importance of being female have appeared in more recent years. Some of these include such titles as American Girl edited by Sarah Jane Brian in 1992 for ages six to twelves year old, and Girls’ Life in 1994 edited by Karen Bokram for seven to fourteen
year olds. These magazines contain articles on health, fashion, girls’ sports, arts and crafts, and fiction. The editors also publish stories written by many of their young subscribers. A more recent version of these girls’ magazine is Barbie, The Magazine for Girls, which targets the five to twelve year old girls. Polly Chevalier edits Barbie a magazine that reflects the growing influence of consumerism in children’s lives today.

These are just a few of the magazines on the market for children today. Hundreds of others could be mentioned such as Acorn, Babybug, Cricket, Learningland, Monkey Shines, Scholastics, and Junior Scholastic, all designed to encourage reading, art, and language skills for children as young as six months old through the high school years.

Didactic Magazines of the Twentieth-Century

Almost every religious organization publishes a magazine for their young members, such as the Bread Ministries that produces Bread for God’s Children, the Calvinists have the Crusader, and the Southern Baptists have Challenge, designed specifically for the young men of the church. Challenge was started in 1990 by Obie Clayton to encourage, guide, and teach young boys how to live Christian lifestyles. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (CLDS) started publishing their youth magazine in 1971 under the guidance of Richard M. Romney for members twelve to eighteen years old. All of the articles it contains are relevant to the families’ lives and community of the CLDS. My Friend: The Catholic Magazine for Kids is published by the Catholic Church and edited by Sister Kathryn James Hermes with the Daughters of St. Paul’s Order in Boston. This magazine contains spiritual instruction, Bible stories, stories
of saints, and many fun activities, like puzzles, mazes, and crafts. It targets the six to twelve year old age group.

**African-American magazines**

Some of the earliest magazines for black children that have been recorded include Mrs. A. E. Johnson’s “The Joy, an eight page monthly started in 1887” (Johnson 2). It is difficult to say how long this publication survived because no further information has been found about it, except that it was designed to encourage literacy among the black population, especially the children. However, in January 1920 “W.E.B. DuBois, August Granville Dill, and Jessie Fauset edited and published The Brownies’ Book magazine” (Smith 145). This magazine was a much-needed enterprise for the black communities, but even at fifteen cents a copy most families could not afford to subscribe to such a venture; therefore it ceased publication in December 1921.

“Child-Play was published in 1945 by the Negro Story Press in Chicago,” but what happened to it is unknown (Johnson 39). Like so many other magazines it most likely fell by the wayside. It took nearly thirty years before another magazine for African-American children came out called Ebony Jr! in 1973. It was founded by John H. Johnson and was designed to educate black children about African traditions and their heritage. Ebony Jr.’s downfall came in 1985 due to a lack of financial support from sources such as local schools, business, and the community in general.

There have been other magazines since Ebony Jr.’s demise such as Young Sisters and Brothers (YSB) in 1991 founded by Bob Johnson. Johnson wanted to address the specific needs of self-esteem and the concerns of young African-Americans. Black Beat
and Colors are two of the more recent ventures, although Colors is geared toward a more multi-cultural readership; it is published in five different languages and is distributed internationally.

**Scholarly Journals of the 1900s**

Possibly the earliest critical journal to evaluate children's literature was the National Council for the Teaching of English’s publication English Journal in 1912. This journal was meant as a tool for educators to guide them in the selection of reading material for adolescents. Over the years, authors who were published in the English Journal discussed issues such as ways to properly teach poetry to children and ways to inspire the reading interests of children, especially as the levels of reading competency began to decline among American youths.

In 1924 The Horn Book Magazine came out, founded by Bertha Mahony Miller; it was considered one of the most reputable critical review journals of its time (Hunt 491). Initially, The Horn Book was consumer-oriented, its cover displayed the image of three huntsmen blowing their horns while riding prancing horses. This design was created by Randolph Caldecott, and represented Miller’s belief that the magazine should “blow the horn for fine books for boys and girls“(Walsh 2). Around 1950 she began to focus on authors and illustrators in this genre; her focus soon took on a more critical slant.

The Horn Book’s editors have included such luminaries as Jennie Lindquist in 1951, Ruth Hill Viguers in 1958, Peter Heins from 1967 to 1974, Ethel Heins in 1974, Anita Silvey in 1985, and today’s editor Roger Sutton. Some of its contributors include many famous advocates in the field of children’s literature such as Louise Seaman Bechtel,
the first editor of children’s books for Macmillan publishers in 1918, and Alice Jordon, who was in charge of the children’s section at the Boston Public Library for several years. Jordon often wrote articles for the magazine, as did May Massee the editor of Viking magazine, and Anne Carroll Moore and Frances Clarke Sayers, both of whom were directors of the children’s books section at the New York Public Library. The Horn Book has changed its focus and criteria over the years, but its standards remain high in what it considers good children’s literature.

The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books came out in 1945 and is being published by the University of Illinois Press’ Publication Office of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science. This journal is issued on a monthly basis, except for April. The Bulletin’s focuses on reviewing current children’s books; providing summaries along with critiques of the works. It contains a section specifically for books that are determined to be the most distinguished for the year and presents an in-depth look at the newest and trendiest picture books. It also features bibliographies, reviews, and abstracts of professional books and research articles.

Reading Horizons is an international journal that first appeared in 1960. The College of Education publishes this journal at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. Its main focus is the presentation of teaching skills for all levels of reading along with research articles and report findings in the area of language arts. Horizon’s motto is “There is no more crucial or basic skill in all of education than that of reading” (Withee 1). This journal is published quarterly.

Francelia Butler, a professor at the University of Connecticut, founded the Children’s Literature Association of American in the early 1970s. According to Peter
Hunt, Butler "was asked to teach the courses in children’s literature because her male colleagues refused to do so" (Hunt 492). She was determined to make Children’s Literature an integral part of the English Department’s curriculum, eventually winning legitimate status for this field of study through its recognition by the Modern Language Association.

Butler published the first issue of the Children’s Literature journal herself with the help of a local minister. It soon gained recognition as an extremely professional academic journal; Yale University is publishing it to this day. The editors of Children’s Literature only accept articles that have been thoroughly researched and offer some significant contributions to the field and study of children’s literature.

In 1974 a quarterly newsletter was added to the Children’s Literature Association’s publications called Children’s Literature Quarterly Newsletter; a title it carried until 1980 when it became simply Children’s Literature Quarterly. The journal itself seems to have a less academic flair about it. Since 1983 it has changed editorship and its place of publication on an average of about every five years. Its founder, Francelia Butler, retired from the University of Connecticut in 1992 and died in 1998, yet her work has been carried on by a number of new scholars in the rapidly growing field of children’s literature.

Another critical journal, The Five Owls, edited by Holly Ramsey came out in 1986. Ramsey was a graphic designer and lover of children’s books. When she was stricken in 1979 with Multiple Sclerosis early in her career, she dreamt about designing a magazine that would allow her to contribute to the community while she was confined to her home. The journal’s name was inspired by Anne Carroll Moore’s “The Three Owls” column that
she wrote for The New York Time from 1924 to 1930. According to Dan Dailey, Ramsey’s husband, Moore noticed the three owl iron weathervane on the roof of the library and decided to call her column “The Three Owls” signifying “the author, the illustrator, and the critic” (Dailey 4). Ramsey’s additional two owls on her magazine’s title represent the inclusion of the designer and the editor.

The Five Owls is published bimonthly and includes articles, book reviews, and interviews designed to help shape the way children’s books are written. Ramsey’s husband carries on her dedication to the cause of providing good literature, as a legacy to her since her death in September of 1993 after a two-year battle with ovarian cancer.

One final journal should be mentioned and that is The New Advocate, originally published as The Advocate from 1981 to 1986 and reborn again in 1988 under this new title. This journal is a quarterly with a multicultural orientation dealing with all kinds of children’s literature from poetry and folk tales to fiction, non-fiction, and picture books. Its publisher is Christopher Gordon of Boston who also commercially publishes textbooks and educational aides.

During my research into the history of children’s literature, I have come to realize that there is a vast amount of material to choose from for children, parents, and educators, as well as scholars. However, my focus will be on The Lion and the Unicorn, because this journal is by far one of the best aids for scholars and educators to use in order to gain an understanding of children’s literary material. A closer look at The Lion and the Unicorn will demonstrate some of the socio-historical relevance of the literature.
Looking Beyond the Literature

From the very beginning, The Lion and the Unicorn has provided educators and scholars with a unique perspective and an interesting look into children's literature. The goal of its founders, as well as that of its current editors and publisher was to encourage and promote criticism and critical analysis of the literature produced not just for children of today, but also of children's literature that has been around for centuries. What does that literature tell us about the lives and times of children centuries ago? In what way has that literature changed over time? What do these changes mean to children of today, and how are they reflected? In order to answer these questions, I will start with a review of how The Lion and the Unicorn came into existence and then examine some of its unique features.

When thirty-three year old Roni Natov and twenty-nine year old Geraldine DeLuca were teaching courses in children's literature at Brooklyn College in New York, in the late 1970s, they discovered that there was a need for a journal that dealt with children's literature on a scholarly level. They decided to work together to develop and produce a journal that would critique children's literature specifically from a socio-historical perspective. At the time there was really only one critical journal of children's literature, Children's Literature the Great Excluded, published by Temple University Press. When Yale University Press took over the journal, it became the Children's Literature magazine and was published under the auspices of the Modern Language Association. The journal in and of itself was actually more of a miscellany than a critical journal.
Natov and DeLuca’s idea was to produce something that went more in depth, to present themes and develop those themes within the pages of a journal. In 1975 they pooled their resources, invested a thousand dollars each, and began to develop what has become one of the best journals of its kind for exploring and presenting the socio-historical aspects of children’s literature.

Children’s literature as a field of academic study in colleges and universities had for many years only been offered through Departments of Education. Around 1970, however, many radical changes in academia began to take place. It was at this time of political controversies and social unrest that the climate for change in literature of all kinds, and children’s literature in particular, was perfect. Parents, educators, librarians, and scholars all wanted more from the study of literature for America’s youth. As a matter of fact, up until that time librarians seemed to be the most vocal and/or visible advocates for change in the genre. They had been advocating changes in children’s literature for many years prior to the turn of the century.

In the mid 1800s, librarians involved with children’s literature, such as Alice Jordan of West Cambridge, Massachusetts, Minerva Saunder of Pawtuck, Rhode Island, Caroline Hewins of Hartford, Connecticut, and many others who had knowledge and foresight, pursued the development of children’s sections in public libraries (Pelloski 391-392). Before long the critical study and research into children’s literature soon captured the attention of scholars and educators at major universities, and it soon became a field of study. Courses in the genre were offered to students around the world who were interested in the concepts and historical context of the material, as well as discovering something new or significant about the literature of their youth (Hunt 606).
The Lion and the Unicorn is the only journal of its kind that consistently promotes and encourages further study and inquiry into the various issues and ideas presented within the literature. Beyond this, it not only introduces scholars to a variety of literature and literary concepts, but it presents the ideas and knowledge of others involved in critiquing, studying, and publishing children's literature.

Professors Natov and DeLuca “felt that the field [of children's literature] needed to be shaped” (Appendix B, 92). They wanted their journal to be more scholarly than similar journals on the market. They also wanted to present children's literature in a more socio, or politically relevant way. Natov and DeLuca felt that in the early days this type of literature was dealt with rather nostalgically, in a somewhat hard-edged canonical way.

Each issue of The Lion and the Unicorn is designed around a specific theme. Scholars in the field critically evaluate these themes and then present the ways that authors project those themes within the literature. Initially, contributions came from people that Natov and Deluca knew in the field, such as authors, educators, researchers, and even the current editor of The Lion and the Unicorn Professor Jack Zipes. Some even came from the author, educator, and the founder of Children's Literature (the journal) Professor Francelia Butler. Artists, adapters, and illustrators, such as Paul Zelinsky have contributed to this journal by way of interviews and personal articles. However, it did not take long before the list of contributors grew and expanded taking on a life of its own.

Today The Lion and the Unicorn has the largest, most comprehensive review sections of scholarly books on children's literature than any other journal. Its editors and publishers also encourage submissions from young scholars around the world. It is these kinds of contribution that have made The Lion and the Unicorn internationally renown.
Initially, Natov and DeLuca put a tremendous amount of time and energy into producing two thematic issues a year in their attempt to make the journal a success. Brooklyn College, while somewhat supportive of the venture, never allowed them any release time to work on it. In fact, every interview and essay selection and all of the printing, mailing, transcribing, editing, and publishing—every little thing that was required to produce this journal—was done on their own time. The most amazing thing about the success of this journal is that these two professors were able to continue doing all of this work and still produce a first rate scholarly journal for over ten years, before they were literally exhausted.

Only two thematic issues were published annually until about 1997 when a general issue was added. According to editor Jack Zipes, Professor at the University of Wisconsin, when Johns Hopkins Press took over the journal they wanted to publish three or four issues annually. Upon his insistence they started out with two, so that he and his coeditor, Louis Smith, could see what they could handle before taking on more. They did so well with two issues that Johns Hopkins Press now publishes three annual issues, and is actually considering adding a fourth. The thematic content of *The Lion and the Unicorn* might conceivably be divided into five primary categories or classifications: social/historical issues, political issues, literary types, contributors to the literature, and general subjects.

**Social/historical issues**

Reading through any one of the articles in a thematic issue of *The Lion and the Unicorn*, it is quite easy to see how each issue presents the meaning of that theme within
the literature. The issues also contain useful references for further study into the various
topics or themes. For example, in one of the early social/historical issues, Social Issues in
Children’s Literature published in 1979-1980, Professor Zipes wrote a wonderful article
entitled “Who’s Afraid of the Brothers Grimm?” In it he examines the “Socialization and
politic[ci]zation” messages found in fairy tales (Zipes 4). Zipes’ essay stresses the tendency
of current writers, especially German writers, to ostracize the Grimm Brothers for tales
that were politically motivated attempts to teach children specific roles, and their function
within a “bourgeois society”(4). His essay focuses primarily on three of the Grimm’s tales
that he says show how “different types of changes relate to gradual shifts in the norms and
socialization process reflecting the interests of the bourgeoisie”(8). The tales Zipes used
were The Frog Prince, Little Red Riding Hood, and Snow White, but he also includes
other fairy tales when explaining these issues.

Another example is Ellen Howard’s informational article found in The Dark Side
of Human Nature in Children’s Books, June 1988, entitled “Facing the Dark Side in
Children’s Books.” In it Howard explains how she came to write Gillyflower, a children’s
book that deals with a very sensitive issue, incest. She was unsuccessful in her attempts to
write stories for the adult market because, according to her husband, writing about sex
and violence never appealed to her. When she achieved success in the children’s book
market she wanted to write stories that would touch the dark side of childhood
experiences. One of those dark sides is the unpleasant, yet real life issue of the sexual
abuse of children.

Howard says, that when she began to research the subject, she had to come to
grips with the fact that ignorance about this kind of abuse ultimately allowed it to happen
to many young girls of her generation. She said, "I was not completely unaware that child sexual abuse did, in fact, occur. But still, I didn't allow myself to think of it" (Howard 8). It was only after hearing the voice of a child on the radio telling about her abuse that Howard decided to write a story that would, in the gentlest most realistic manner possible, tell the effect that this kind of abuse has on a child's life.

This essay reminds me of how much the society in which we live truly affects our children. That same issue contains several other articles about subjects found in children's literature today, as well as in books of the past that, truly touch the dark sides of a child's life. Dark and frightening things such as abduction, death, murder, holocausts, suicide, and a host of other evils are found in children's literature.

**Political issues**

Some of the political issues published in *The Lion and the Unicorn* include articles like the one found in the 1990 June issue, *Politics and Ideology*. The article, entitled "Taking Political Stock: New Theoretical and Critical Approaches to Anglo-American Children's Literature" by Jack Zipes, discusses changes in literary criticism for children's literature that came about in the 1970s. In it Zipes presents some of the more recent trends in the academic study of children's literature. He says that unlike the past, where children's books were celebrated for their ideology and positive messages, today's scholars have "probed the ulterior motives of children's literature and explored its socio-political and psychological ramifications" (Zipes 9). Zipes points out that these changes have taken place mainly in England and North America, and are the fruits of the "liberal and left-wing politics" of the 1960s and 1970s (9).
Another political article was published in the June 1992 issue, *Political Correctness and Cultural Literacy* written by Herbert Kohl. The essay, “Uncommon Differences: On Political Correctness, Core Curriculum and Democracy in Education,” contains a discussion about the meaning of the term “politically correct,” as it was used in the 1940s and 1950s, and explains its relevance to today’s culture (Kohl 1). Kohl claims that it is a ploy by right-wing critics to accuse “people calling for compliance with anti-sexist and anti-racist education today [of being] similar to the Communist party hard-liners who insisted on compliance with the ‘correct’ line on the Hitler-Stalin pact” of almost fifty years ago (1). The same issue contains Louisa Smith and Jack Zipes’ tribute to the journal’s founders, Geraldine DeLuca and Roni Natov, for their many accomplishments, and their achievement of producing a first rate scholarly publication. It was also their first issue as the new editors.

**Types of Literature**

These are issues that cover types of literature that focus on specific subjects as children’s picture books, French literature, European literature and theory, contemporary British literature, children’s classics, children’s poetry, and even children’s films. For example, Suzanne Rahn wrote an essay about British author and artist Raymond Briggs’ book *Fungus the Bogeyman* for the 1983-1984 double issue, *Picture Books*. In “Beneath the Surface with Fungus the Bogeyman” Rahn says that this book, more that any of Briggs’ children’s books, “offers both the most fully developed fantasy and the most outrageous affront to conventional mores” (Rahn 5). According to Rahn, this book while showing the scary, mischievous, and dangerous side of its characters also shows the very
normal adult habits that children have learned to expect on a daily basis, such as eating breakfast with the family or parents leaving for work. In her essay she evaluates the presentation of ideas and images in children's books.

The June 1991 issue, Historical Fiction and NonFiction for Children, contains a wonderful article written by Rom Natov in which she shows the techniques authors use to incorporate actual historical events into their fiction. The story she uses to illustrate this point centers on an event that happened in the eighteenth-century involving the “messianic projection of a future society” (Natov 117). Natov shows how Leon Garfield creatively wrote his story, The Confidence Man without changing any of the circumstances that reflect what was actually known about the outcome in the twentieth-century, as a consequence of the event. Garfield literally creates “an ecstatic vision of utopia” in the minds of his characters (117). Her essay, entitled “History as Spiritual Healer: The Messianic Vision in Leon Garfield’s The Confidence Man,” explains how the author was able to masterfully incorporate the idea of mind projection into a future utopian world by the reader, that basically reflects what his characters visualize (Natov 117).

Ian Wojcik-Andrews, editor of the 1996 issue, wrote the introduction to the issue, Children’s Films, in which he discusses the ethics of presenting race and gender diversity in films for children. He points out that American films for children are devoid of “Black, Latino, Native American, or Asian characters in heroic roles” (Wojcik-Andrews v). He also suggests that, even in films where ethnic children are portrayed, the intention behind these stories is to drive home the ideals of the imperial and idealistic ruling class.
Contributors to the Literature

When it comes to individual contributors to children’s literature, several can be found in various issues of The Lion and the Unicorn. Some very good examples are found in the Spring 1978 issue, Writers of Adult Literature Who Also Write for Children. Others, like those found in the only issue published in 1985 entitled Varieties of Narrative, included Suzanne Rahn’s review of Howard Darling and Peter Neumeyer’s book Image and Maker: An Annual Dedicated to the Consideration of Book Illustration. This book contains articles about the work of famous and infamous illustrators and, according to Rahn, it “combines the bibliographical and historical approach of the collector with the aesthetic and analytical approach of the critic” (Rahn 101). This book also includes works done by H.J. Ford, Florence Henderson, Eleanor Boyle, Beatrix Potter, Edmund Dulac, Arthur Rackham, Luther Daniels Bradley, Jessie Wilcox Smith, and many others.

Another issue published in June 1994 entitled Nancy Drew, covers Mildred Wirt Benson’s contribution to the literature with her famous Nancy Drew mysteries. Nancy Tillman Romalov, guest editor of that issue, divulges some of the secrets and mysterious history behind the Stratemeyer Syndicate formed in the 1930s. She also includes a “Press Conference with Mildred Wirt Benson—April 17, 1993” in that same issue.

In the January 1997 issue of The Lion and the Unicorn: Forgotten Authors, Julia Mickenberg wrote a rather lengthy article about Meridel Le Sueur’s books for children. As a valuable contributor to children’s literature Mickenberg points out how and why this author’s work, along with others like her, was blacklisted, but that their contributions were nevertheless very significant. In the article, “Communist in a Coonskin Cap? Meridel Le Sueur’s Books for Children and the Reformulation of America’s Cold War
Frontier Epic,” Mickenberg presents some of the little known issues at the time that represent a period “in children’s literature which has been neglected in scholarship” (Mickenberg 59). She says that this was done “perhaps on the assumption that children’s literature produced in this ‘conformist’ era merely served the status quo” (59).

There is also an issue that contains articles about the most famous collectors of children’s literature like Kerlan, Rosenbach, and Opie entitled The Great Collectors. In this 1998 issue, editor Louise Smith wrote a wonderful introduction to various collectors, and includes her interview with the curator of the Renier Collection, Tessa Chester. Essays about collectors from other countries, like the Pond Collection in Australia, can be found in this issue, as well.

General Subjects

General issues, which began in 1997, allow contributors freedom from the constraints of theme or genre; thus there is a wide variety of topics in each issue. For instance, the April 1997 issue contains a very interesting article by Dennis Butts about the changes that took place in children’s literature in the 1840s that helped define and expand the industry. Butts presents some of the historical events that took place between 1820 and 1850 which had an impact on the publication of children’s books, and how “industrial expansion and social unrest” gave rise to the growing number of middle class households in Great Britain (Butts 153). The title of this article is “How Children’s Literature Changed: What Happened in the 1840s?” This same issue contains such articles as “Classic Fantasy Novel as Didactic Victorian Bildungsroman: The Cuckoo Clock” by Sanjay Sircar; “A Wilderness Inside: Domestic Space in the Work of Beatrix Potter” by
M. Daphne Kutzer; and “Reading the Shards and Fragments: Holocaust Literature for Young Readers” by David L. Russell.

Another general issue, April of 1999, has an article by Michael Levy in which he presents problems faced by Southeast Asians in the United States in terms of the way that they are depicted in children’s books. Levy starts by saying that they are “one of the largest and most widely misunderstood immigrant group in recent U.S. history” (Levy 219). He points out, however, that Asians as a whole are also widely diverse because they are comprised of so many different groups, such as Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, Thai, Laosian, and others from different countries and provinces. Levy discusses the lack of representation of these groups in the literature for children in his essay entitled, “Refugees and Immigrants: The Southeast Asian Experience as Depicted in Recent American Children’s Books.” He also touches on other minority groups that are under represented in American children’s books, and how they are depicted within the literature.

Besides the specific themes, each issue of The Lion and the Unicorn very often contains an interview with some member of the children’s literary community, such as an illustrator, filmmaker, or storyteller. There are also professional notes and announcements found in almost every issue, as well as book reviews, contributors’ notes, introductions, and on occasion a special dedication or recognition.

Conclusion

In 1992, Jack Zipes and Louisa Smith officially took over as editors of The Lion and the Unicorn, and since that time Roni Natov and Geraldine DeLuca have actually been able to sit back and enjoy the fruits of their labor. Natov says that now as she looks back over those difficult and stressful years, it is with a sense of pride in knowing that they have
truly made a valuable contribution to the field of children's literature. Natov and DeLuca
remain actively involved with the journal, always keeping a watchful eye on its progress
and being available to guest edit an issue or two. After all this was their brainchild, and
even though it has grown and expanded beyond their wildest dreams, they are no less
concerned about its future.

Over the years The Lion and the Unicorn staff have not only expanded readership
but their focus as well. The editorial board has enhanced the range possible topics, that
the journal could cover, and at the same time it has dramatically increased its number of
contributors. This journal does not simply focus on novels, poetry, and films for children,
but includes information about books of art, science, self-help, and many other subjects.

As I browsed through twenty-five years of back issues, I noticed how the focus in
multi-cultural literature has changed from basically African American children's literature
to also include material from Hispanic, Chinese, Asian, and American Indian children's
books. There have also been articles about sensitive subjects as death, grieving, and self-
help for children learning to cope with losses of all types. Articles in some of the more
recent issues have touched on the subject of war and incidents of war like the holocaust.
There are articles about the way in which disabilities are reflected in the literature, as well
as how different types of religious belief impact children's stories. Almost any imaginable
subject has been touched on or addressed within the pages of this journal at one time or
another.

Since 1992, Johns Hopkins has made it possible for The Lion and the Unicorn to
grow in so many directions. The staff has enhanced the format, expanded distributions
internationally, and embarked on exciting new projects. The general issues have enabled
many new talented and experienced scholars from all over the world to submit interesting, insightful articles for publication, that look at children’s literature from various cultures and points of view. These articles provide American scholars with an opportunity to explore the ways children’s literature in other countries has developed, and to take a more in-depth look at the topics presented.

The future indeed looks bright for *The Lion and the Unicorn* because Johns Hopkins has quite literally taken it to new and exciting heights. More recently, *The Lion and the Unicorn* has gone high tech for it now can be found and viewed at major institutions via the internet at <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/uni>. Scholars, educators, and librarians can order it online, email its editors, submit papers, and make comments or inquiries, all via the internet. The most current and even some of the back issues of the journal are available through Project Muse, which can be accessed at most universities. The website contains issues of *The Lion and the Unicorn* as far back as volume 19 issue 1 of 1995, however, since individual subscriptions are not yet available, they can only be viewed through Project Muse.

Children’s literature has change tremendously over the past century. These changes came about as a result of the insight and courageous efforts of the educators, scholars, librarians, and parents who were concerned about the impact of literature upon the lives of children today. Thanks to the dedication of scholars and educators like Roni Natov and Geraldine DeLuca, and the continued efforts of professors Jack Zipes, Louisa Smith, students will learn the skills and techniques necessary to critically evaluate children’s literature, past and present, for many years to come. We must also be grateful to the staff at Johns Hopkins University Press for their contributions to this venture.
Appendix A: Professor Jack Zipes Interview

Date: February 13, 1999

Time: 10:00 Am

Interview: Professor Jack Zipes is coeditor of The Lion and the Unicorn journal with Louisa Smith. He is a professor at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis where he teaches German.

Professor Zipes has written, edited, and published numerous articles about children's literature, is very active in the community with the Children's Theater of Minneapolis, and is a story teller for local schools. Zipes is an active member of the children's literary community as a researcher, lecturer, and writer of the history of children's stories, which included folk tales and fairy tales. He often travels to Europe to research and collect material for his books.


This interview took place at the University of San Francisco's School of Education conference, "Reading the World: A Conference Celebrating Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults," held February 13 and 14, during the break between presentations. Professor Zipes had just returned from Rome where he was researching Italian fairy tales and folk tales.
Denise: I wanted to talk about The Lion and the Unicorn, I know that you've been working for them almost twenty years now.

Prof. Zipes: Yes. I actually came in at the beginning as a—Well, first they contacted me soon after they started the journal, and I wrote an essay for them.

Denise: Was that the one about, "Who's Afraid of Brothers Grimm?"

Prof. Zipes: That's right.

Denise: That was a good article.

Prof. Zipes: I forget what year that was.

Denise: 1979, I think.

Prof. Zipes: OK. And I think a year or two after that they invited me to join the editorial board, and I then began to take a very active role. I helped organize a very interesting conference in Brooklyn at Brooklyn College with the Germans with the Institut für Kinder-und Jugend Literatur. That's the institute for research on literature for young children, for young readers in Frankfurt. Some of the best and leading critics from Germany came over and shared their ideas and gave papers. Then the following summer a hand picked crew of The Lion and the Unicorn writers and editors went over to Frankfurt. Rosa Guy (pronounced Gee)—Do you know her? G-U-Y.

Denise: No.

Prof. Zipes: She's an African-American writer.

Denise: Is that pronounced Gee?

Prof. Zipes: Yes. She's from the Caribbean.

Denise: Oh! OK.

Prof. Zipes: She went with us. In other words, we brought a major writer over with us. It was a wonderful conference. The Lion and the Unicorn at that time was trying to develop something new and this conference was part of that early work, and part of my early contributitional collaboration also went along those lines.

Denise: Were you teaching at Brooklyn College?

Prof. Zipes: No. At that time I was at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.
Denise: OK. And now you're with Minnesota?

Prof. Zipes: Yes, I'm with the University of Minnesota.

Denise: That must have been what, about 1980? Or '81? The conference?

Prof. Zipes: The conference was around that time, '81, '82.

Denise: That was in Frankfurt?

Prof. Zipes: Frankfurt and then at Brooklyn College. You know, two years in a row.

Denise: OK.

Prof. Zipes: I wrote a few more articles and I did a special issue on the fairy tales; that was a double issue.

Denise: Was that the Refusal—the Great Refusal?

Prof. Zipes: No, that's a book that I wrote. I did a double issue on the fairy tales.

Denise: Oh! OK.

Prof. Zipes: I think it was issue 7/8, or volume 7/8. That came out I think in the mid 80s. I have always been active in reading. Roni and Geri had a lot of difficulty during the early years because they didn't have a staff. They weren't getting help from Brooklyn College either. Roni can fill you in on all of this.

Denise: Yes, I'm going to have a phone conference with her on the 15th.

Prof. Zipes: You should ask her about the lack of support and why did she start it.

Denise: Why do you think the college wasn't interested? Was it not something they felt was important?

Prof. Zipes: Well, at that time children's literature was considered minor or was associated with women. It was not significant particularly because that's something the School of Education does; the University doesn't do that and the History Department doesn't do that. All of that's changed, and when Roni and Geri began the journal a movement had already begun, thanks to Francelia Butler with the Children's Literature Association, in 1972.

Denise: Now who was that?

Prof. Zipes: Francelia Butler. She died this past fall.
Denise: Oh! OK.

Prof. Zipes: She taught at the University of Connecticut and in 1972 she—and there were other people—she wasn't by herself but she was a key leader. She began the Children's Literature Association of America; there was no Children's Literature Association until that time. It's now one of the leading organizations in America that deals with children's literature. There were other organizations like librarians and Nation Counsel of Teachers of English, but this group was and still is important with regard to getting children's literature taught within the university. Not just the Schools of Education, but the English Department, the Journalism Department, and so on and so forth. Francelia Butler was responsible for that. Now Roni and Geri were very loosely associated with the Children's Literature Association, but they come out of that impetus; the movement that started before The Lion and the Unicorn. So it's important to bare that in mind. But with The Lion and the Unicorn, both Roni and Geri politically were very much to the left, and that's not entirely true of the Children's Literature Association. Francelia Butler certainly was on the left, too. When I say left, I mean progressive, open. Francelia Butler was involved in peace games and she developed a game for children that involved peace. There was always that thrust in terms of their writing and so on. I would say that The Lion and the Unicorn was looking to do something a little more daring, a little more innovative, a little more challenging than your traditional positivist type of writing that went on for children at that time.

Denise: So what would you say their main was focus then?

Prof. Zipes: Well, their main focus was—if there was a focus, and this is something you've got to talk over with them.—was to really promote children's literature that was socially relevant; a term of the student movement of the late sixties. They wanted to do something that was socially and politically relevant. For instance, Milton Meltzer—Do you know who he is?

Denise: No.

Prof. Zipes: Milton Meltzer is a left wing writer of mainly historical and non-fiction. He was on their board. It wasn't just left wingers on their board; people like Leonard Marcus was on their board. Leonard is very much aesthetically inclined; he is not very political. Michael Hearn, who's also very well known, is also on the board. Both of these are writers and compilers who don't have an ax to grind of any kind but who have tremendous knowledge, in-depth knowledge of children's literature. So I guess that they also represented the historical aspect because The Lion and The Unicorn was very concerned about the socio-historical context of children's literature, with a political touch as well. At the beginning they really struggled because they didn't have too much financial support from Brooklyn College. They
had to do almost all the work themselves, the copy editing, everything, and they didn't come out regularly.

Denise: Yes, I know originally they had two a year. Now when did it change to three?

Prof. Zipes: Under my allegiance with Louisa Smith. What happened was they at one point, after they'd been going I guess for about four, five, six years, were running out of steam. It was very laborious, and they began exploring the possibility of finding a publisher who would then take over most of the production work. They shopped around quite a bit and I tried to help them find a publisher. I think they found—I think they found Johns Hopkins by themselves. Johns Hopkins Press is one of the best journal presses in the United States. That happened, I think in about 1987/1988.

Denise: Who was printing it before that time? They were doing it mainly themselves?

Prof. Zipes: They were doing it mainly themselves. Brooklyn College would pay for the printing, basically—How they would worked out their production, distribution, and so on, I'm not too sure but they didn't get the journal out, not effectively. It's only with Johns Hopkins that it really took off.

Denise: That was not until '87, almost ten years later?

Prof. Zipes: Right, that's when they really started getting the journal well known. When they dropped out and they asked me, I was leaving Milwaukee to go the University of Florida. I went from Milwaukee to Florida in 1986, and from 1986 to 1989 I was at the University of Florida. I think it was 1989 when they asked me would I want to do the journal. I said, "Not by myself." I contacted Louisa Smith because Mankato State is right near Minneapolis. Louisa had never had anything to do with the journal. So I invited Louisa to become the coeditor of the journal.

Denise: How did you know her?

Prof. Zipes: Through the Children's Literature Association. I liked her a lot. I trusted her and I told her that—since I knew I was going to have a lot of work to do—I said, "Look I'll put in my share, but can you find a way to get support for production work and things like that." She said sure, she would look into that, so all manuscripts are sent to her. The wonderful thing for us is by that time, by the time we took it over, Johns Hopkins was extremely, extremely professional. They have the best copy editors; they have the best copy editor and production editor that we work directly with. Basically what we have to do—and this is different from what Roni and Oeri had to do—we don't have to worry about publishing or the cost or things like that. The journal in essence was actually sold to Johns Hopkins. Johns Hopkins actually acquired it. Louisa and I have a contract with
Johns Hopkins. Under Johns Hopkins, Lousia and I are better organized than Roni and Geri were. I don’t mean this in a derogatory sense, but they did not run a good ship. They were always late and naturally lost library sales, sales in general and subscriptions. So Johns Hopkins’ very kind condition, if anything, was “will you set up a schedule and will you meet the dates, because if not we might as well give up. We really won’t do you a service, you won’t do us a service.” So Louisa and I sat down and mapped out a strategy of having mainly topic issues, where we would work very closely with themes. This would make our journal different from the *Children’s Literature*, or most of the other journals that had general issues. The *Lion and the Unicorn*, essentially, did general issues up until that time.

**Denise:** They didn’t specifically focus on any one thing?

**Prof. Zipes:** No, the only one was one I insisted on, the fairy tale issue. I had been the editor of another journal called *New Journal Critique*, so I had a long editorial experience. We, at this other journal, had begun to do thematic issues. What we decided to do was to mainly contact people who were experts in children’s literature in psychology, children’s literature in films and they would then commission essays. We would have veto power. We would work with a general editor, and we begot a sort of Russian seven-year plan—(*laugh*) or ten-year plan. We sketched three or four years in advance with the deadlines. We made a major change; we changed the whole editorial board. Everybody was more of less, in quotes, “fired” from the old editorial board. Not that we disrespected them or anything like that, but we wanted to bring in new people and so there was a total change of the editorial board, except that Roni and Geri have stayed on. Basically, they don’t do anything for the journal at this point. They really—

**Denise:** They’ve got like an associate editor. What does that mean? You still have an editorial board, don’t you?

**Prof. Zipes:** Oh yes.

**Denise:** So you still have a board? How many people usually serve on that board?

**Prof. Zipes:** If I can remember who’s on the board—Suzanne Rahn is on the board. What I wanted to say is that one of the most important changes we have done is we feel strongly that the books that are coming out—as far as what should be reviewed, and reviewed very, very seriously. We more than most journals review anywhere from five to ten books that come out on children’s literature, or children’s culture. So we have two editors who just take care of the book reviews; that’s George Bodmer and Jan Susina. They’re in charge of the book reviews, and they actively go out and get books sent to them. We give them freehand, and they check in with us. They commission book reviewers who are experts, who will review the books. Then we have Suzanne Rahn who’s on the
board of editors, Herb Kohl who’s a leading educator is on the board, Margaret
Higonnet is on the board, Peter Hunt, with some English people, is on the board
of editors.

Denise: Now are these all through Johns Hopkins?

Prof. Zipes: No, we chose them. Peter Hunt is one of the leading children’s literature
critics in England, or actually in the world. Gillian Avery is also British, she
teaches at Wales. She’s at Oxford.

Denise: Do you get together at any time, or do you email? Or how do you—

Prof. Zipes: Email. Louisa and I live right near each other. We get together as often as
possible; we’re on the phone. We attend conferences together and then we have
little editorial meetings. Like Jan and George and Louisa have seen each other
more often recently, because I haven’t gone to some of the conferences. We do a
lot through email, a lot through phone. Sometimes two of us will be at a meeting
and we’ll sit down and talk for awhile. Contact with Johns Hopkins goes on
incessantly, because what happened was once we really took off our subscription
rate, I think, has quadrupled. It’s now become one of their preeminent journals.
We were getting a lot of submissions of very good essays and we were only doing
thematic issues. We had no place to put these very good essays, so I went to
Marie Hansen, who’s the major figure at Johns Hopkins, and I said “Marie”—
when we first took over I had a long— In fact, when the transition happened I
actually met them in Washington D.C. I was at a conference and they flew in,
and we had this powwow. Carol Hamblen, who is our editor there, and Marie
Hansen, who’s the—I think she’s the head of the journalist division at Johns
Hopkins. At that time she actually wanted—she said, “well what about doing
four issues a year?” I said, “whew!” cuss I said, “the more often you come out the
more you generate interest”—because if you only come out once a year—which
Children’s Literature, for instance, only comes out as an annual—you’re really
not going to do much. I said to Marie at that time, “You know, forget it.
(laugh) Let’s start slowly with the two issues.” Well, after a couple of years I saw
that we had really some very good essays and we couldn’t put them in all of our
thematic issues, they wouldn’t fit. We were also commissioning all of those
essays anyway. So I spoke to Louisa and I said, “Are you up for it, should we go
for a third issue a year and make that a general issue?” Louisa said, “Why not.”

Denise: So you went from themes to—Two theme and a—

Prof. Zipes: Now we have two themes and a general issue a year, and that began about
1993/1994. I’m not exactly sure but it’s fairly recent that we began that.

Denise: Did each year start with a different theme? Or each issue was a different theme?
Is that how it works?
Prof. Zipes: What we do is space things out. I’ll give you a schedule right now. We just came out with an issue on “Contemporary British Children’s Literature,” just appeared in December. Our next issue is a “General” issue. The issue after that is going to be “Literature and Sexuality.” The issue after that is going to be “Children’s Literature and Violence.” And the next issue after that would be “General” issue. So we have that—This is sort of the immediate plan, and we have an issue planned on, for instance, Alma Flor Ida, which organizes conferences, is going to do one on “Multi-cultural Children’s Literature.” So we have like the next seven or eight issues already planned. These issues come up very rapidly.

Denise: How do you decide what books are going to be covered in that issue?

Prof. Zipes: Whoever is doing it.—If it’s a general issue of course, then Louisa and I sit down. Like right now, I’ve just come from Minneapolis; I have about fifteen essays with me that have come in. We will accept and reject based on—we generally send out the essays—Louisa and I will reject immediately articles we can tell right away aren’t up to par in terms of their writing or style, and whatever. Those that we think are good, Louisa and I will first accept and then we’ll get some of our other editors involved to make sure our judgment is correct. And then we’ll build a general issue based on our decisions and their decision. Sometimes we’re over-flowing, so what we do is take the essays that are leftover and they’ll go into the next general issue. And with regard to a thematic issue—if we are doing a thematic issue—

Denise: So Louisa and you are basically doing the general?

Prof. Zipes: We always do the general, right. Now with the thematic issues, one of us shepherds the thematic issue. For instance, on the British, “Contemporary British” issue Louisa worked very closely with scholars at Redding—at the University of Redding in England. She’s quite often in England, and she worked very carefully with the two British scholars. They contacted various critics and they talked about the topics they wanted to write. The first thing the guest editor is essentially responsible for is what should and shouldn’t go. They show everything to us and if we get upset, of course, then we would start having a discussion. For the most part, I’d say to date we’ve had very few problems. We’ve maybe had—I don’t even know whether we’ve rejected anything from our guest editors, because they’re very careful. They know there’s a lot on the line, so to speak. That it’s very crucial that these essays are high quality and that— Generally we choose people who are very well known in the field and so their contacts with people they know are really superb. So it’s all worked out beautifully so far. We’ve had no complaints thus far. I mean, we’ve had problems. For instances, one time one of our general editors found out that one of the contributors that I suggested was plagiarizing. (laugh)
Denise: Oh, not so good.

Prof. Zipes: Not very good. It was very delicate—but we had to work around certain things. So there are sometimes some very disturbing factors where things happen that are unpleasant, but again very erratic. Right now we don’t plan any major changes. Our emphasis—We don’t have any, neither Louisa nor I have any ideological mission with regard to the journal. If we have any line or directive it’s in a socio-historical directive. That is we’re both very concerned that the articles that appear in *The Lion and the Unicorn* are grounded in a socio-historical tradition. And we are also very eager to address—and this goes back to the mission of *The Lion and the Unicorn*—social problems that are very relevant to people who teach children’s literature, or work with children, so therefore we’re doing an issues on violence. We’re doing an issue that deals with the whole question of sexuality and gender; we chose a multi-culture issue. In other words, we are a journal that really wants to address heavy the social problems that are reflected in the literature for children. We don’t want to have a journal where you read about children’s literature in the medieval period, although we will at times, in a general issue, publish something like that. It will be in a very unique way when we deal with that. Most of our emphasis is on contemporary—that is the contemporary post ‘45 period. Our general issues will go back to the nineteenth-century.

Denise: Before *The Lion and the Unicorn* came out was there any *per se* critical journals out for children’s literature?

Prof. Zipes: Well, there was the *Horn Book*. But the *Horn Book* was not very critical. That’s a famous journal that’s been around for years. I think it even started after the war, after ‘45, or maybe even before, probably after. That journal still is; it’s actually changed a lot. It’s become more critical I think because of the competition. It basically was a journal that celebrated children’s literature; there would be articles on children’s literature. And there were many other journals like the *Horn Book* out that catered to librarians. If you want some background on journals for children’s literature, Peter Hunt has done an *Encyclopedia of International Children’s Literature*. He has many different articles not only by himself, but by many too—And he’s got a wonderful section on journals and a whole essay written on journals written in America and Great Britain, to give you some background.

Denise: Do you know what its title is? Is it *The Encyclopedia of Children’s Lit*—?

Prof. Zipes: Yes. I think it’s called—Just remember Peter Hunt is the major editor and the publisher is Routledge.

Denise: OK.
Prof. Zipes: In 1972 Francelia Butler—remember her—she began a journal called at that time—Oh. It had a wonderful title for the journal. It was called the Great—something. (laugh) The original title was something like The Great Neglected or something like that, but it was that volume one that came out in 1972 or '73. Hopefully the title will come back to me. But they changed the title to simply Children's Literature, and it's published by Yale. Today, it is published by Yale University Press and it's an annual. That was the first journal really to begin publishing in a very critical, scholarly way in America, ever. It was a historical moment and that journal still exists today. It was not published by Yale at the beginning, it was first published by some dependent press, moved to Temple University Press, and then finally has wound up at Yale. If you’re a member of the Children's Literature Association, you automatically—part of your membership goes toward supporting it, which has now become somewhat debatable because there are other journals that are literature focused. The debate is whether that certain request is kosher or not. But then the Children's Literature Association, which is independent of Children's Literature, decided that they should start a quarterly and come out more often because people began publishing a lot. The Children’s Literature only came out once a year, and I would say something like two or three years after—

Denise: Now this is Children’s Literature Association?

Prof. Zipes: Right, which was very closely aligned to the journal Children’s Literature because Francelia Butler was the prime mover of that. I was on the board of directors at the very inception of Children's Literature Association and it took some years to build up money to have annual meetings. There’s an annual meeting once a year that’s generally held in June. We would have newsletters or we would publish the proceedings, but after awhile we decided that we would also like to have a quarterly. About three, four, or five years afterward—It wasn’t until maybe 1977/’78 that Children’s Literature Quarterly came into existence, right before The Lion and the Unicorn came into existence. So you have now these two journals the Children’s Literature, Children’s Literature Quarterly, and then The Lion and the Unicorn came along.

Denise: OK.

Prof. Zipes: The Children’s Literature Quarterly at the beginning had skimpy articles; the quality was not very high. They come out in a very inexpensive format; it is sort of like a nine by eleven format stapled; it’s not a bound thing, but it’s nice. It has improved over the years and the quality of the editor is better now. They also give you this wonderful—one of the issues a year is a bibliography, just wonderful and useful for people. The three journals Children’s Literature, Children’s Literature Quarterly, and The Lion and the Unicorn are all high quality, scholarly journals. There’s one other that is published in England and
America, it’s called *Children’s Literature in Education* that also began around this time.

**Denise:** Literature in Education?

**Prof. Zipes:** In education. That’s published both in America and in England. It is not as well known as the three other journals that I just mentioned. Now there are many others I could mention; there’s the *Five Owls*; I mentioned the *Horn Book*; I think the Library Association puts out a journal that deals with children’s literature, but quite often they are more informational. They’re not as critical as these other journals that target the university crowd, the more academic crowd. Although, *The Lion and the Unicorn* would like to include more and more people who are in the trenches, like librarians and teachers. We don’t want the language of our journal to exclude them or to feel that we are just into theory. So we are doing our best to find articles or ways and means whereby we can sort of reflect what is actually going on in the schools; how children’s literature is being used and so on. We are moving a little more in that direction; not abandoning the high scholarly work that we want to publish, but we also don’t want to be in the clouds and the towers up there, where as reality is totally something different.

**Denise:** That’s great!

We talked a little bit about Professor Zipes’ coeditor Louisa Smith. Then I told him that I had emailed Roni Natov and that I was going to do a telephone interview with her once she returns from a trip to Australia.

**Denise:** Actually, Louisa came on about the same time you did?

**Prof. Zipes:** Yes, what happened was, I travel a lot and I also work in other fields, other than children’s literature, and I knew that this is something I really wanted to do. I love the journal and I love children’s literature, but I also knew that I couldn’t do it by myself. Fortunately, just at the time they, Roni and Geri, offered me the job or position or whatever, I said, “Let me contact Louisa”—because I knew that she was the only one in the area of Minneapolis. Minneapolis has a very strong interest in children’s literature. There’s a major collection called the Kerlan Collection, at the University of Minnesota. There are many children’s literature writers—

**Denise:** Is that C-U-R?

**Prof. Zipes:** No, K-E-R-L-A-N—the Kerlan Collection. This is a major collection in the United States, and there’s some very good people—In fact the curator of that collection is also on our board at *The Lion and the Unicorn*; that’s Karen Nelson
Hoyle. Louisa is one I knew from the Children’s Literature Association and Mankato, where she teaches. Mankato State is forty minutes from Minneapolis. So I contacted her and, like I told you before, she said, “Well this is wonderful. I’ll jump in.” I said, “the major condition is, since I’m the one who travels a lot, you’re the base and then we’ll share the work and do all the planning together.” So that has happened and we have a very wonderful rapport. We trust each other and we have, since the time we’ve taken over, added these new touches. We have the benefit of (laugh) Johns Hopkins. We’ve also thrived and added this new—you know another issue, and like I said we’re perhaps a lot more together than Roni and Geri were in terms of writing, our guest editors, and making sure things get in; we’ve also added the book review editors. So in other words, we are better organized than the journal has ever been organized and Johns Hopkins gives us tremendous support. We are also on the web. You can subscribe to the journal through the web; it’s one of the few journals that you can actually do that. We feel that we have an outreach that is really great for ourselves. Our readership is probably much more than we realize. That’s our situation.

Denise: When did you go from Florida to Minneapolis?


Denise: OK. Do you teach there?

Prof. Zipes: Yes, I teach in the department of German, but I teach many—I’m associated with Comparative Literature. I’ll sometimes teach in the summer and I’m an active story teller. I do a lot of story telling in the school system in Minneapolis. I work with the Children’s Theater in Minneapolis. A lot of my work is in the field of children’s culture, either Children’s Theater or Children’s Literature or story telling; I’ve been very active.

Denise: Oh! Wow! That keeps you busy. And you do travel a lot? That’s got to be kind of hard on the family.

Professor Zipes said that his wife and daughter go with him when he travels for any length of time. His wife and fourteen-year-old daughter where presently in Rome where he has been doing research on Italian fairy tales and folk tales, and where he will work until July.

I asked Professor Zipes if he grew up in Europe. He said no that he had grown up in New York where he studied languages, specifically German and French, and that he
became fluent in both languages. Now he is fluent in Italian. He said that he loves languages and he loves Europe.

Professor Zipes suggested that I read some of the articles in The Lion and the Unicorn to understand some of the socio-historical concepts developed within the journal, and that looking at some secondary works would also be useful. I thanked him for his advice and his time, and I promised to contact him if I needed any additional information.

Professor Jack Zipes was extremely cordial and our hour long interview was delightful. I only wish that I had more time to spend talking with him about his work in the field of Children’s Literature. I promised to make an effort to get to Minneapolis to see the Kerlan Collection.

I want to extend my extreme gratitude and thanks to Professor Zipes for granting me this interview, and for this wonderful opportunity to document some of the history of this unique journal, The Lion and the Unicorn.
Appendix B: Professor Roni Natov Interview

Date: March 13, 1999

Time: 9:00 AM Telephone Interview: Roni Natov is cofounder of The Lion and the Unicorn and a Professor of English at Brooklyn College. Professor Natov is a Victorian fiction scholar and an active member of the Children's Literature Association. She has written numerous articles about children's literature. Currently she is writing a book on the poetics of childhood and working with the new Children's Studies program at Brooklyn College.

In 1976, Professor Natov and her partner, Geraldine De Luca, decided to design a journal that would address the socio-historical aspects of children's literature. Out of their dedicated efforts and years of hard work The Lion and the Unicorn was developed and has remained an interesting and vibrant journal for more than twenty years. This journal is now under the editorship of Professors Jack Zipes and Louisa Smith, and is published by Johns Hopkins University Press.

This interview provides an in-depth history of The Lion and the Unicorn and explains the reasons for its move to Johns Hopkins Press.

I want to thank Professor Natov for her time, her patience, and her gracious efforts in giving me as complete a background and history as possible about this scholarly journal. Interviewing her was truly delightful.

Denise Farian: Hey! How are you?

Roni Natov: I'm fine. How are you?

Denise: I'm just fine. I'm really glad that you let me call and talk with you. I wanted to get some information about the history of The Lion and The Unicorn, and I understand that you, and—was it Geraldine?
Roni: Yes.

Denise: Who started it?

Roni: We did.

Denise: What made you decide to go and start a journal for—it's kind of a critique, right, of children's literature?

Roni: Right. We were both teaching children's literature in the Department of English at Brooklyn College, and we noticed that there was only really one journal, a critical journal of children's literature around. That was the Children's Literature; The Great Excluded, it was called at that time. It was published by Temple, and it later became Children's Literature, the Yale University Press publication of the Modern Language Association.

Denise: Oh. OK.

Roni: We noticed that it was, at the time, basically a miscellany. It still is.

Denise: And it's still in publication?

Roni: Yes. In fact I have volume 25 here, so it's been around for a long time. It was fairly new at that time.

Denise: How often was that published?

Roni: Once a year.

Denise: Oh! Once a year.

Roni: Mostly it's a miscellany, and we wanted to do something that kind of went into more depth; to design each issue around a particular theme or genre. So we went and put in $1,000 each—

Denise: Wow!

Roni: And we started to publish it. We had Brooklyn College's support, at that time, for stamps and for a mailbox, stuff like that. But we never, ever received release time to do this work, ever.

Denise: Oh, so this was all on your own time.

Roni: Right.
Denise: Oh!

Roni: Time, money, and initiative, until 1985 when Johns Hopkins University Press took it and published it. A few years before that Brooklyn College paid for publication, but it took a long time for them to do it. They did it for a few years; then they dropped it. They decided they didn’t want to do it any more. They had other things they wanted to do, so we got Johns Hopkins to do it.

Denise: That was probably a blessing. Now was it you and Geraldine that contacted John Hopkins to take it over?

Roni: Yes.

Denise: What did they say when you first talked to them?

Roni: Well, there were two presses interested. One was Johns Hopkins, and one was Duke—I think.

Denise: Oh! OK.

Roni: But Johns Hopkins was more serious about it and we were happy for them to take it. They liked it a lot. They thought they could do very well with it. And they have!

Denise: Yes. When you initially started—about what year was that—1979?

Roni: No. It was ‘77, our first issue, so we began working in ‘76.

Denise: How did you get articles? Was that through your teaching?

Roni: We solicited them from people we know.

Denise: From all colleges?

Roni: Essentially, in the beginning it was people we knew. And then it grew, very quickly. We featured interviews with people in the field. So our first issue was on comedy in the spring of 1977, and we had an interview with Arnold Lobell. You know a Frog and Toad? You know he wrote those books.

Denise: Yes.

Roni: The second issue was in the fall of ‘77 on fantasy and creativity. We had an interview with George Woods, who was at that time the New York Times children’s book review editor. So we had a variety. We’ve had authors, illustrators, editors, scholars, translators, you know, in the interviews, and that
became a regular feature.

Denise: Yes, I saw your interviews. I didn’t know if that was still going on. I can’t remember in the last couple issues that I looked at if they had interviews. Do they still do them?

Roni: Yes, they do. The one in the January 1991 was an interview with Philip Pullman.

Denise: Ok. The interviews, they’re with authors that deal with this particular genre?

Roni: Authors, editors, scholars, illustrators.

Denise: How did the name come about?

Roni: Well Geri and I, we didn’t know what to call it, and she kind of made a joke, “Let’s call it the lion and the unicorn. Like out of the lion and the unicorn from Lewis Carroll.” And I said “that’s great!” I didn’t think it was so hilarious. I said it was great, because it encompassed a real and mythical creator. You know, the creators are real and mythical and I thought, well that’s children’s literature, realism and fantasy.

Denise: Oh that was nice. Good idea! I would have never thought of that either. Does Geraldine teach there also?

Roni: Yes.

Denise: You both still teach at Brooklyn College?

Roni: Right.

Denise: Ok. Now when did — John Hopkins take it over? In about 1985, you said?

Roni: Right.

Denise: Then you worked on it for almost ten years before that time?

Roni: Right.

Denise: That’s a long time.

Roni: And then we continued to edit it until—I think—1992, when I called Jack. I said, “Help. We cannot do this.” I mean we were just exhausted. It needed to be run by other people and you know we—we still serve as associate editors, but we really needed some relief.
Denise: So Jack came on. Now he wrote some articles before that, right?

Roni: He did. He wrote articles for us and he’s such an active scholar. Extraordinary! Extraordinarily, prolific.

Denise: I met him and it’s true, he’s a nice, very nice, man. I really enjoyed visiting with him.

Roni: Wonderful person. So he said, “Ok.” He and Louisa Smith would do it together. He’s also — Geri and I had trouble getting a single issue out on time, because we were just so overwhelmed. But he gets everything out on time.

Denise: That’s good. It probably helps too that he maybe has time in his schedule to do that, and that you weren’t really allowed that, it sounds like.

Roni: We never got release time. I mean I can’t imagine that Jack has time for anything, but he seems to manage.

Denise: Yes, it sounds like he does quite a bit. Doesn’t he?

Roni: Yes.

Denise: Well let’s see. I’m trying to think of what else. Initially, when you started did you do it yearly or bi-yearly?

Roni: We did it twice a year. Then we went to once a year, because we couldn’t—we didn’t seem to be able to do it—on our own. Then when Johns Hopkins took it, we went back to twice a year.

Denise: Oh! OK. How long was it just once a year?

Roni: Let me see—maybe just a couple of years. Yes, just a couple of years.

Denise: Now they’re coming out three times a year.

Roni: (chuckle)—Oh I cannot believe that.

Denise: Well, Jack was telling me that they wanted to do three or four a year initially, and —(chuckle) —he said, “let’s start slow,” because he wasn’t sure he’d be able to get the two out for sure, and they didn’t want to throw in three or four.

Roni: It’s so much work.

Denise: Yes, I can imagine. I can imagine it’s a lot of work.
Roni: It’s a lot of work.

Denise: Now when you and Geraldine did it, how did you do the publishing? I mean did you do all of that? Did you do it through the college, or you have somebody else? Did you have to take it out and get it printed, or what?

Roni: The first few years we had to take it out. I don’t remember. Somebody was type setting—I don’t remember how we did that? I can’t even imagine how we did that.

Denise: So they didn’t actually do this at the college? You had to take it to somebody else to do the printing?

Roni: No. But then for a few years they did it at the college. And—then when they pulled out, Thank God, Johns Hopkins took it and they did everything there, and sent us—what is it they sent us? Maybe just final proofs. We used to have to do every little part. It was hideous.

Denise: So you had to—

Roni: We had to transcribe interviews and—it was just hideous. We had them on tape recorders. You know, a lot of it before computers. It was just grotesque.

Denise: Oh, I can’t even imagine.

Roni: I really can’t either.

Denise: It’s amazing what you find and look back, and think how did I do all that.

Roni: I know! And we both had little children.

Denise: Oh my goodness!

Roni: Geri and I.

Denise: That makes it even harder. You know having a family. You have another full time job and trying to do something like this. It’s amazing that you did it for so long. I mean, five or six years would seem like a lot of work. Now did you have students help out with this?

Roni: We did. We tried doing that, and that was good—working with production and layout and stuff like that. But when you have people working with you who have to learn how to do it, it’s very time consuming. (chuckle)

Denise: Yes, and they’re not there forever because they graduate and move on and you
have to bring in a whole new staff.

Roni: Right. Oh God, the billing and the bios! That was all very hard.

Denise: How did you handle the billing?

Roni: There was a secretary who worked for the English Department, Anita Stein. We paid her to do it, but it was a tremendous amount of work for her.

Denise: Yes that’s a lot of work. Well at least you had somebody that was willing to do that.

Roni: She loved it. And she was great! Very efficient, smart woman.

Denise: Now Geraldine and you both—do you teach English?

Roni: Yes. We’re both English professors.

Denise: OK. Have you been with Brooklyn College for a long time?

Roni: Yes. We’ve both been there a long time; I’ve been there since 1969 and Geri since 1973.

Denise: Well that’s kind of nice to stay at one place when you’re familiar with it. Let’s see. I really can’t think of much else. Is there anything in the history that you would like me to put in this?

Roni: Well, when the journal—when we first conceived of the journal, we felt that the field itself needed to be shaped. It was a little bit like the nostalgic wing—“Oh remember the wonderful days” such thing, verses the scholar and that; Milton and children’s literature; Shakespeare and children’s literature—and we felt that books children actually read should be serious topics for inquiry. Not that Children’s Literature; The Great Excluded didn’t do some of it. But it began because the MLA and the field itself wasn’t taking seriously the field of children’s literature. And as the Children’s Literature Association of the MLA, and The Lion and The Unicorn, and children’s literature developed, the field got taken more seriously. But in the early days it was sort of like mostly nostalgia and reminiscence for hard-edge, canonical scholarship. And we wanted something that—I don’t know—that really looked at children’s literature.

Denise: Now do you teach children’s literature?

Roni: Well, neither of us actually teaches children’s literature much anymore. Geri is the head of Freshmen English, and I’m a Victorian Fiction Scholar. But I’m writing a
book on the poetics of childhood, and I’m working with a new Children’s Studies Program at Brooklyn College. I’m also going to do a guest edit of an issue of The Lion and The Unicorn on children’s studies, which is a field that looks at childhood, and the study of children from many and interdisciplinary perspectives.

**Denise:** That will be very interesting.

**Roni:** I’ve taught courses recently on the imagination of childhood and now I’m doing a seminar in the English Department on the literature of Victorian Childhood. So I’m still involved with it.

**Denise:** But they just don’t specifically have a course that teaches it there?

**Roni:** They do. They have children’s literature, but other people are doing that.

**Denise:** Oh! OK.

**Roni:** The course is still viable and popular.

**Denise:** Yes, I should imagine it is. There’s one question I have. Have they ever done an anniversary issue, or have they talked about it?

**Roni:** No. *laugh* What a good idea!

**Denise:** Yes. I mean, it’s been out there now over twenty years and I was trying to look through most of them. I haven’t had a whole lot of time to sit and read, but I did read a few articles. I didn’t find an issue that was specifically celebrating the even the twentieth year, so I wondered if they had talked about it at all. But you haven’t?

**Roni:** No, what a nice idea. Maybe we should for the twenty-fifth.

**Denise:** Yes.

**Roni:** 77 and 25 is how much, 2002?

**Denise:** Yes.

**Roni:** Oh God!

**Denise:** It’s wonderful that’s lasting though.

**Roni:** I know. You know, I sat down to look at them. I said “Oh my God!”

**Denise:** Doesn’t that make—make you feel proud?
Roni: Yes—and grateful.

Denise: That’s really great! OK. Well—

Roni: If you need anything else feel free to call or e-mail.

Denise: OK, I will. How do pronounce your last name?

Roni: Na tov

Denise: Na tov. OK. Well thank you very much Roni. I really appreciate it, and I hope you have a nice weekend.

Roni: Thanks. You too.

Denise: OK!

Roni: Good luck with your work

Denise: Thank you.
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