THE LANDS OF ESCAPE:

THE MANIPULATION OF ADULT LINEAR TIME IN BRITISH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FANTASY WORLDS OF THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

by

David P. LeDoux

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Thesis Committee:

Dr. Martha Hixon, Chair

Dr. Wesley Houp, Reader

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Sarah for constantly believing in my ramblings.

I dedicate this thesis to my friends and colleagues in the English Department and Writing Center for unwavering support.

And I dedicate this thesis to my daughter Lorelai whose childhood is just beginning.

ABSTRACT

The time-stop story emerges in England in 1865 with the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* Time-stop novels share many qualities with their sister genre, the time-slip novel. Where time-slip novels focus primarily on heritage and national identity, time-stop novels deal with issues of time and growing up, or more specifically, not growing up. In this thesis, I focus on examining four authors' time-stop works: Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*, and Philippa Pearce's *Tom's Midnight Garden*. These secondary worlds reveal the attitudes about time and the conflict between childhood and adulthood of the authors who created them, as well as how childhood is culturally constructed at the time the novel was written.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

After H. G. Wells first published his novella *The Time Machine* in 1895, it would become the book which scholars most often credit as being the first to explore the concept of time manipulation in British fiction. This dystopian masterpiece helped pave the way for other writers' use of time travel in their own work both in adult fiction and in children's literature. As British literary scholar Tess Cosslett observes, Rudyard Kipling's novel *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906) and E. Nesbit's *Story of the Amulet* (also 1906) were the first works to use the concept of time travel in the genre of children's literature (243). As the genre grew, an appreciation for a period of time in the past also became a convention of the genre. Linda Hall, a time-slip scholar, notes that E. Nesbit's *The House of Arden* (1908) is another early novel to use the form that would become the time-slip novel ("House and Garden" 153). In the time-slip genre, children travel into the past, usually through the means of some magical object, and return to their own time, often without any time having elapsed in their original present.

These novels incorporated time travel as a means of education about national history or heritage. The over-arching attitude about time within these types of novels is the dismissal of it while the children go about on an adventure for the purposes of learning about something. Time-slip novels often emphasized education in some way for the children as the children educate themselves. Cosslett continues her discussion of the time-slip genre, stating that most time-slip stories feature a child who has been displaced from their home, some form of research being done by the child, a heritage connection to the past, and several other characteristics (243). While these time-slip stories have an

emphasis on the past, the protagonists of the story are rarely attempting to escape from something in their present.

However, around the same time that these time-slip stories were being produced, another genre of children's literature emerges: what I refer to as the time-stop novel. In these works, children are still engaged in magical travel of some kind (though not explicitly through time to an earlier time, although this is sometimes the case) to a secondary world. These stories certainly share qualities with the time-slip genre, and some works could be considered a part of both genres; however, instead of a focus on national identity and education, these time-stop stories focus specifically more on the conflict between childhood and the inevitable change of adulthood. The child protagonists are often searching for endless childhood or attempting to delay the onset of adulthood. The child characters in these stories facilitate their desires by traveling to an alternate world situated separately from the adult world. The primary reason for the travel to this secondary world is its freedom from or separation from the constraints of linear time, or adult time. These worlds are imbued with an altered flow of time as it fits with a more childlike understanding of time.

This thesis will explore the idea of and manipulation of time in the secondary worlds of four British children's fantasy authors from the beginning of the first golden age of children's literature to after World War II: Lewis Carroll's Wonderland/Looking-Glass Land from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, J. M. Barrie's Neverland from *Peter Pan*, A. A. Milne's Pooh's Forest from *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*, and finally Philippa Pearce's Midnight Garden

from *Tom's Midnight Garden*. These lands of escape all exhibit altered flows of time which support the child characters' desire to prolong their own childhood and avoid the eventualities of growing up. In addition, although the reader experiences these worlds through the perspective of a child character or characters, these worlds are created by *adult* authors. Valerie Krips, author of *The Presence of the Past: Memory, Heritage, and Childhood in Postwar Britain*, comments on the connection between childhood and adults: "childhood and its representations are intimately connected to the adult's sense of self" (xi). Each world, as it functions as a representation of childhood, also speaks to its author's attitude about time and growing up, with each author having differing influences for creating this secondary world ranging from a longing for a missed childhood to a nostalgia for a pre-World War England.

Even though the child characters of these worlds are imbued with their own motivations, they and the worlds they inhabit are all creations of adult authors. So these perceptions of time are not actually the creation of children, though that is the supposition within the fictional narrative. These perceptions of time are *adult* reflections of an idealized view of childhood. At a conference themed around the discussion of time in children's literature in August 1989, children's author Penelope Lively commented that "We cannot view childhood in the sense that it was when we were within it. It seems to me that you think you remember childhood, but what you're actually remembering is an experience that is already clouded by the perceptions and assumptions and the prejudices and the knowledge of life" (67-8). The authors' motivations inform the view of childhood they create. Each author's remembrance of childhood is different, which accounts for

some of the differences in their fantasy worlds. While there is certainly a degree of selective memory involved when recalling one's childhood, the memory of childhood these adults hold still offers insight into not only their own lives but the cultural attitude of their era regarding time and growing up.

The four authors discussed in this thesis share some of their motivations for creating a world in which to escape adult, linear time. Adult, linear time is the concept of time under which most adults operate. This adult, linear time (also referred to by time scholars as objective time or sometimes real world time) is the converse of a childlike conception of time. For children, while their time is regulated to some extent by adults, they have a degree of freedom in how to use that time that adults do not. Adult, linear time incorporates the idea of living according to a schedule, having responsibilities, and the loss of possibility. In essence, adult time is an idea of time heavily regulated by external sources. All of these authors identified some aspect that was missing from their adult lives (governed by adult time) and chose to find the solutions for these problems in the idea of childhood. Lewis Carroll, for instance, created Wonderland as a means to idealize his encounters with Alice Liddell, the figure which represented to him the idea of childhood. While the real life Alice and the fictional Alice are by no means interchangeable entities, Carroll's preference for and comfort with childhood was certainly influenced by his encounters with the young Victorian girl and compounded by his discomfort for adult life. J. M. Barrie wrote to recreate a childhood he never truly experienced partially due to the death of his brother, David. Instead spending his youth venturing to his own Neverland, Barrie spent his time consoling his mother by pretending

to be his deceased brother. Barrie also shared with Carroll the idealization of the child through his relationship with the Llewellyn Davies children. Having a much more appealing childhood than Carroll or Barrie, A. A. Milne created an idealized version of his own childhood and his son's childhood, situating them in an idealized version of idyllic England. Milne wrote in response to being witness to World War I and foreseeing the rift that would appear between him and his son. With motivations closest to Milne, Philippa Pearce wrote of her own positive childhood with more of an emphasis on a more peaceful England. She also offers the hopeful assurance that adults can re-experience the golden age of childhood through the window of dreaming about these secondary worlds.

The entire idea that these secondary worlds appeal to children over the adult world hinges upon the assumption that children perceive time differently than adults do. These secondary world representations of childhood therefore exhibit a more childlike understanding of time. The child's understanding of time has been the subject of much developmental study, the cornerstone of which is Jean Piaget's *The Child's Conception of Time,* published in 1927. This seminal work in the area of child psychology was composed as Piaget conducted a number of experiments through interviews with young children, presenting them with different scenarios and then asking questions relating to the scenario's sequence of events, its duration and the child's measurement of it, and simultaneity, which is the understanding that two events can and do occur at once. These interviews led him to many insightful conclusions, two of which pertain to the goal of this thesis. To begin with, he discovered that children do indeed have a differing perception of time than adults. Younger children tend to equate the dimension of time

with the dimension of space (i.e. the assumption that the object that traveled further along a path is the one that took longer) with this characteristic disappearing as the child grows to separate the spatial from the temporal. At this young age, children are unable to separate movement through space from movement through time. This connection appears in all the works discussed here, as all the children travel to a separate physical space in order to accomplish a temporal change, supporting Piaget's observation of the connection between spatial change and temporal change in young children.

Piaget's second observation which pertains to the subject of this thesis is that children differ from adults in their understanding of the idea of age. When presented with two objects (plants, pictures of people, etc.) with equal age but different size, younger children will identify the larger object to be the one that is older. The connection between size and age is an extension of the connection between the spatial and the temporal. This connection between age and size diminishes as the child grows to understand differing growth rates.

The observation about the way children perceive age leads to a discussion about how children view the idea of growing up. While this thesis aims to expound upon the attitudes of both child protagonists and their authors regarding how they feel about growing up, this thesis does not intend to argue that all children do not want to grow up. In fact, most children do view growing up as a positive event that enables them to pursue careers as firemen, astronauts, and doctors; however, this positive outlook can begin to deteriorate as the child goes from being a young child into being a young adult. As the child nears adulthood and leaves childhood, the knowledge of the burden of

responsibility and the realization that not everyone becomes what their child-self envisioned can create a trepidation about leaving behind the freedom and potential of childhood: a concept most effectively illustrated in the attitudes of Christopher Robin and Tom Long.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is the way that adults view childhood. As adults grow older, there comes an increased longing for “the time before”: the time before work, the time before disappointment, and the time before now. For most adults, the most accessible representation of that time is childhood. In the same way that younger children idealize adulthood, adults idealize their childhoods, remembering the freedom they had while forgetting all the things they did not yet have. Regarding adult longing for childhood, David Lowenthal, a scholar of perceptions of the past and conceptions of time, asks, “But what are we nostalgic for? Many aspects of childhood seemed at the time sad or unsavory; even the fortunate had to put up with grown-up imposition, incomprehension, and tyranny over time, place, and even . . . . We nostalgize what was different about childhood, however good or bad it may have been or now seems” (76). For the adult authors who wrote these works under examination here, childhood is their representation of what they wished was different in their lives. Childhood is not just the time when they were freer to do what they wished. Childhood is the time the world was more innocent, safer, and simpler, or at least it seemed that way. The idea of childhood represents more than just the time adults were young; childhood represents the time when something was better.

The other childhood developmental aspect regarding time which plays a role in this thesis is the way children perceive the systems of time, more specifically clock time and calendar time. Diana Paolitto, a developmental psychologist, conducted a series of interviews similar to those done by Piaget to ascertain how children understand "clock time," which she defines as a basic understanding of the passing of seconds, minutes, and hours and also how children understand "calendar time," defined as the understanding of any unit of measuring time from a day and beyond. Her study, "The Child's Perception of Time in Children's Books," showed that children younger than seven have a fluid understanding of the duration of activities in clock time. When questioned more than once about the duration of the same activity, the same children would give vastly different answers. Paolitto also found that younger children have trouble recognizing simultaneity. When asked about the duration of a day at the beach, younger children would say the day lasted longer for the child, who was active, than for the parents, who were passive. These findings support Piaget's earlier assertion that younger children connect the temporal to the spatial or physical in that the child attributes more movement in time to the party who moved further in space. However, Paolitto also discovered that children around ages seven to eight are first beginning to grasp the idea that time is relative, that the time at the beach might *feel* different to both parties, but objectively, it is the same. This assertion underlies the idea behind time-slip and time-stop fiction in that the children experience a different duration of time in their secondary world than the adults do in their real world.

I chose these four authors' works for a number of reasons. As a group, they represent a span of time across which much social change occurs. From *Alice*'s publication in 1865 to the publication of *Tom's Midnight Garden*'s in 1958, the world saw the turn of the century, two World Wars, and increased industrialization. Just as the world was going through a period of growth, this group of novels also goes through a period of development in the way that they treat the idea of time. Looking at the attitudes towards time and growing up in the stories, there is a continuum from *Alice* to *Tom*. Moving along this continuum, there are changes in the level of awareness that the child protagonists in the stories have about the workings of time and growing up.

For example, Alice's experiences are largely metaphoric, with her adventures in Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land being analogous to the way she views adult life but there are truths in the novels that she does not even grasp. Alice the character is shielded from the idea of death by Carroll and the knowledge that she will indeed grow up. Even through all of the absurdity she encounters while in her secondary worlds, Alice remains safely able to return to her childhood. From this safety, the progression moves into *Peter Pan* where the focus on time shifts slightly. While the metaphors and more abstract representations of the conflict between childhood and adulthood are still present, there is a much more explicit representation of this conflict as the goal of Neverland is obliquely stated as avoiding the fate of becoming an adult. The children in this story are at least aware of growing up in enough complexity to consider the possibility of avoiding it although they ultimately do not. *Winnie-the-Pooh* takes this progression one step further and portrays a child who has essentially become an adult to his own playthings: in

essence his children in the sense that they are his creations. Christopher Robin is much more aware of his own growth as evidenced by his attempts to communicate his feelings to Pooh, despite being unsuccessful. Christopher Robin is right on the cusp of growing up and leaving the infinite time of Pooh's Forest to submit to the linear time of the adult world, and the story ends with his doing so. So this action ends the story, and the reader is left with the hopeful afterthought that while perhaps Christopher Robin's adventure is over, the perpetuity of childhood remains. The inclusion of *Tom's Midnight Garden* in this study is done so in order to illustrate the preservation of the idea of the childhood space that *Pooh* leaves with its reader. Continuing the trend of increased awareness of time from text to text, *Tom's Midnight Garden* deals explicitly with the topic of time and growing up. Tom engages in conversation throughout the text that is directly related to his understanding of these concepts. Where earlier texts deal with this idea less openly, *Tom's Midnight Garden* demonstrates the apex of maturity regarding the attitude about time.

The genre of time-stop literature mirrors in its development the same development a child goes through as they grow to understand time. The entire sequence of novels presented here is analogous to the idea of a child moving from childhood towards adulthood. The earlier texts of Carroll and Barrie represent the quintessential eternal boy and girl. Alice and Peter Pan are both the epitome of childhood: representations of that which the authors wanted in their own lives. These stories are analogous to the young child who is more accepting and less informed about the nature of time. Milne writes these works after the first World War. In the same way this conflict

forced the world to change, Milne is forced to change the way he views the world. Although the violence of World War I is certainly not meant to be of an equal weight to the common act of growing up, the two experiences do share common features. With the violence of World War I, the world was forced to confront the idea that wide scale violence was a possibility. Milne saw the possibility that the childhood which he experienced might cease to be something future generation of children could enjoy. *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* represents the child who has first grasped the idea that he will grow up and that it might not be the adventure he previously believed it to be. Christopher Robin shows us this with his apprehension about leaving the safety of Pooh's Forest. However, Christopher Robin lacks the knowledge to comprehend exactly what the world of growing up will be like as evidenced by his convoluted description to Pooh. Years later, *Tom's Midnight Garden* will represent the full growth of the understanding of time and growing up. Just as *The Time Machine* was the first English novel to deal with time travel, *Tom's Midnight Garden* is among the first in children's literature to talk openly about time manipulation. Where earlier novels dance around the issue of growing up, *Tom's Midnight Garden* states explicitly what the others only hinted at. Tom knows that he is going to grow up and openly discusses ways to avoid this, to "duck Time" in a sense. The book is published after the second World War which forced changes in the attitudes regarding childhood in an even more significant way than did World War I. World War II more directly affected the childhoods of English children with the violence from that conflict having a much more

physical impact on England than World War I. *Tom's Midnight Garden* represents the full maturation and acceptance about the inevitability of growing up.

Both children and adults create alternate situations which are not in line with reality. Children call it pretending; adults call it daydreaming. Regardless of what name it is given, both children and adults pretend for similar reasons. All pretending aims to create a situation in which some desired effect can be achieved. For these authors, one of those desired effects is an escape from linear time. These stories, along with much of children's literature, accomplish the manipulation of linear time by means of a secondary world. Simply put, the creation of the secondary world allows things to be accomplished that are not possible in the regular adult world. To briefly distinguish between these alternative worlds and the more general idea of a fantasy world, what the fantasy realm is set up against is important. In this thesis, these secondary worlds are separated from the real world, but there is still a "real" world that exists somewhere outside the bounds of the alternative world: While the children are in Neverland, there is still a London waiting for them, Alice spends brief narrative moments in the real world, Christopher Robin makes references to the world outside the Forest, and Tom spends his days in the real world and his nights in the Garden. This device contrasts with the creation of a true fantasy secondary world like Tolkien's Middle-Earth, which while certainly informed in its creation by aspects of the "real" world, is not set up as a concurrent alternative to a real world but is instead presented as the primary world.

Some of these worlds are the creations of the children in the stories. For example, Neverland is at least partially formed by the expectations of the children, and Alice's

expectations imbue the characters she encounters with certain traits. Other worlds seem to predate the arrival of the child protagonists who journey through them. For example, Pooh's Forest is implied to exist without Christopher Robin's presence. However, each world, while populated by child characters, is still an adult creation by an adult author. Children's literature critic Peter Hunt discusses the differences in the desires of children and adults for an alternate reality. "It is far more likely, as we shall see, with fantasists from Macdonald to Barrie and onwards, that it is adult writers who are interested in, or have a need for such alternatives. And so we might ask, is, to a developing child, this world not enough? And if it is not, is it because adults have closed off its inherent wonders?" (*Fantasy and Alternate Worlds* 4). The creation of these worlds, this thesis maintains, offers insight into both the child and the adult. The children in these stories utilize these alternate worlds to escape adult-imposed restrictions: Alice plays at being an adult, the Lost Boys leave their parents, Christopher Robin seeks solace from his education, and Tom circumvents the exile his parents forced upon him. However, the adult authors of these stories use the worlds as a means to combat larger social forces: Carroll seeks to protect the idealized child, Barrie recreates a childhood stolen, Milne preserves the idea of childhood, and Pearce hearkens back to a different childhood. The desires of the adult author are informed by the social context in which the story is written whereas the child concerns are much more localized. The time-stop genre presents the secondary worlds they contain as embodiments of both the authorial and cultural attitudes about time and growing up, and this thesis will examine the features of the secondary worlds created by these four authors.

CHAPTER TWO

FROM PAWN TO QUEEN: TIME AND GROWING UP IN *ALICE*

Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1871)[1] recount Alice's adventures through two of the most recognizable magical alternate realms in the entire corpus of children's fiction: Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land. Through extensive adaptations and reimaginings, countless children have followed Alice's journey through these fantasy worlds. In addition to their overwhelming popularity, Carroll's original Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land both exhibit altered flows of linear time as well as qualities of the time-stop story. Wonderland is a fantasy realm ruled by the Queen of Hearts where time does not move at all. Carroll, through the creative power of Alice's dreaming, creates Wonderland as a means for Alice to preserve the safety of her childhood while she questions and experiments with the unfamiliar adult world that Wonderland represents. Since time is virtually suspended while Alice is in Wonderland, she instead substitutes the concept of size in the place of age/time which is indicated by her constant shifts in her own size as well as the relative size of things around her. This constant shift in size represents her shifting back and forth between a child state (being smaller than those around her) and an adult state (being as large as, or larger than, those around her), as she metaphorically "tries on" what it means to be an adult in a confusing world. Her experiences moving back and forth between child and adult in Wonderland ultimately end with her safe return to her idyllic childhood, which emphasizes that her childhood is not yet lost although her sister alludes

[1] All textual citations of the *Alice* stories come from the 1992 Norton Critical Edition unless otherwise noted.

to its eventual loss in the story's final pages. While Wonderland's time is only suspended, Looking-Glass Land's flow of time is so stunted that it actually begins to move backwards in certain places. The backward movement indicates Carroll's awareness that Alice is inevitably approaching adulthood, and Looking-Glass Land is the manifestation of Alice's ultimately unsuccessful avoidance of the inevitable passage of time. Both Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land are manifestations of Carroll's interpretation of how Alice imagines her transition from childhood into adulthood, and the two fictional worlds' altered flows of time serve to complement the attempts at the preservation of the idealized Alice's childhood.

Lewis Carroll, the pen name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, originally created Wonderland as an entertaining story for the Liddell children. He and the Liddell family grew close (before eventually becoming estranged), and Wonderland was conceived on a day trip to Godstow with three of the Liddell girls. After drafting the tale into a partially complete manuscript entitled *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* which he presented to Alice Liddell, the child upon whom the character of Alice is popularly thought to be based, Dodgson let fellow writer George McDonald read the story, and McDonald urged Dodgson to take his work further. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published in 1865 with a sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass*, arriving in late 1871. When comparing the settings of the two works, it is clear that Wonderland possesses a freedom and an air of more open-ended possibilities whereas Looking-Glass Land has a darker, more somber inevitability to its eventual end.

Wonderland differs from fantasy realms that will come after it in this thesis in that Alice spends very little time there. Alice's adventures are continuous and not demarcated by sleep, whereas the adventures of the Darling children, Christopher Robin, and Tom Long all take place over at least more than one day in adult time. The secondary world does not occupy a truly real physical space, as the reader discovers when the book ends with Alice awakening from a dream. In essence, Wonderland represents the vision of adulthood from the viewpoint of a child. Alice's position as fictive creator of this world, through the power of her dreaming, endows the actions and attitudes of characters within Wonderland with elements of how Alice imagines adults and adulthood to be. Wonderland is a creation of the fictional Alice which she uses to help facilitate her experimentation and understanding of what is to be an adult. Alice's fantasy world is constructed unconsciously as she sleeps and dreams. Because Alice's intention is to experiment with the conventions of being an adult, by necessity the flow of time in Wonderland is halted. This altered flow of time is what allows Alice to play at being an adult: taking part in their conversations, toying with their conventions, and so on. Rather than actually changing her age from child to adult while there, Alice's size constantly fluctuates as a representation of her emotional transition between child and adult.

Alice's initial descent into Wonderland is further evidence of the frozen nature of time that exists there, and the stagnation that her fall represents is easily explained from a physics point of view given Carroll's familiarity with mathematics. A falling object's speed is affected by two forces: its initial velocity and its acceleration. The formula for calculating an object's acceleration involves a variable for change over time. Now if time

in Wonderland is *not changing*, then Alice's speed as she falls is also *not changing*. Thus this explains why Alice is able to "f[a]ll very slowly" (Carroll 8) in her initial descent into Wonderland. Alice's worlds' passage of time, as commented on by Maria Nikolajeva in her book *From Mythic to Linear: Time in Children's Literature*, conforms most closely to the "most common temporal pattern in fantasy, introduced and vastly commented on by Edith Nesbit . . . that the primary time, the adult chronological time, stands still while the child protagonists are away in a magical realm . . ." (90). Alice returns from her adventures to the almost exact moment that she left and resumes her childhood, ending her experimentation in Wonderland.

Looking-Glass Land, while similar to Wonderland in various respects, differs in ways which illuminate areas where Alice has grown closer to adulthood since the end of her last adventure. For example, Alice demonstrates more agency in the way she enters Looking-Glass Land as opposed to the way she entered Wonderland. Her decision to move into Looking-Glass Land through the permeable mist of the mirror is more conscious than is her decision to enter Wonderland, demonstrating growth towards the autonomy of adulthood. Her social position has also shifted as she begins this story; she is not lazily sitting by the river but situated in the drawing room of her home, a space firmly within the domestic feminine sphere she is bound to inhabit in her adult life. This same sentiment is mirrored (pun intended) in Looking-Glass Land's chess board structure: gone is the aimless freedom with which Alice wandered through Wonderland. Instead, Alice, as a pawn, can inevitably only move in one direction: forward. In Looking-Glass Land, not only is time stopped, but also cause and effect is often inverted,

giving the impression that time is actually moving backwards. The overall feeling of inevitability to Looking-Glass Land despite the altered flow of time is demonstrated by Alice's continual forward motion on the chess board. The story functions as an illustration of Alice's process of growing up from a pawn (a child) into a queen (an adult), and after she finds being a queen not as she imagined it, "'I ca'n't stand this any longer!' [Alice] cried" (204), she returns to the safety of childhood again, playing at being a mother to two kittens. Alice enjoys playing at being a mother more than she enjoys actually being a queen. Carroll seems to be implying that playing at being an adult in the real world is safer and more enjoyable to Alice than actually being an adult in Looking-Glass Land.

The conflict between the competing concepts of childhood and adulthood is central to the understanding of Alice's adventures in both fictional worlds. Carroll wrote the books as fictional representations of a fictional middle-class Victorian girl's exploration of her own boundaries and as a way of expressing his own feelings on the idea of growing up. Because the book focuses to a degree on childhood, the alteration of the linear time frame is essential in order to preserve (if only temporarily) Alice's childhood as she clashes with the representation of what she views adulthood to be like. Wonderland even begins with an illustration of the conflict in that Carroll gives us the contrasting images of Alice, idyllically contemplating the merits of making a daisy chain, versus the image of her sister, engaged in a text Alice herself deems to be pointless. When faced with this image of what she eventually will become, Alice retreats away from the image of her future and follows the White Rabbit down into Wonderland, a

place in which time is temporarily suspended allowing Alice to safely experiment with adulthood.

When Alice arrives in Wonderland, her first endeavors are to get to "the garden" that she can glimpse through the small door. Raymond Jones identifies the garden in literature as representative of "a time in every individual's life" (214). In Alice's case, the garden represents her childhood whereas the dark hallway is the contrasting representation of adulthood. We see Alice's pursuit of the garden again in Looking-Glass. Alice leaves the house and tries to make off towards the garden to see it better. However the path keeps her away from the garden and keeps pushing her back towards the house. Alice cries out against the house which she personifies as conspiring against her. "'I'm not going in again yet. I know I should have to get through the Looking-glass again—back into the old room—and there'd be an end to all my adventures'" (120). Alice knows that to go back into the real world will mean that her adventures in childhood are doomed to come to an end. The symbol of female domesticity in the form of the house continuously interferes in Alice's pursuit of the childhood symbol of the garden. Alice's struggle to reach this garden involves frequent changes in her size which in the absence of time in Wonderland is equated with age.

The connection between age and size is something confirmed in the vocabulary of children and the aging process. Older siblings are described by younger ones as being "bigger." The process of becoming older is even referred to as "growing up." This is a connection supported by Piaget's identification of the connection between the spatial and the temporal in children's perception. So when Alice eats and drinks her way through

multiple sizes, she is trying to settle on an age which allows her to do what she wants to do (reach the garden). She knows she gets through the door by becoming smaller (younger) and by drinking of the liquid (which is fortunately not poison). However, once she becomes small (young), she lacks the means to reach the garden. She eats to become larger (older) but now will no longer fit through the door. Her back and forth changes in size (repeated throughout the text) demonstrate Alice's internal conflict between being a child and able to achieve that idyllic existence, and being an adult and actually having the means to recognize that idea as something that is worth preserving. Later, Alice drinks from a different bottle and grows so much that she strains against the confines of the house she is inside. Feeling the pressure of the domestic space around her, she wishes that "I hope I sha'n't grow anymore" (28) but Carroll provides the reader with the reminder that Alice is doomed to grow up. "Alas! It was too late to wish that!" (28).

Another example of the conflict between childhood and adulthood and the connection of size and age occurs in *Wonderland* during the chapter in which Alice converses with the Caterpillar. Alice's conversation with the Caterpillar is, on its surface, circular and confusing. However, the conversation is also a summation of Alice's feelings about the process and experience of growing up. When questioned about who she is by the Caterpillar, Alice responds timidly with statements about being confused and how it has been disorienting being different sizes in one day. Alice has experienced what it feels like to be an adult and found it unsettling. She then describes the process of growing up as she envisions it for the Caterpillar. "'Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet,' said Alice, 'but when you have to turn into a chrysalis—you will someday you know—and

then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel it a little queer, wo'n't you?'" (36). Alice seeks solace in the idea that other people are uncomfortable with the idea of growing up which is symbolized by the changing sizes in Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land's altered time flow. Unfortunately, she finds none in the Caterpillar's terse answer of "Not a bit" (36).

When Alice's dual nature of child and adult moves too close to adult, Alice's own mind forces her to retreat back into the real world, a point supported by the endings of each story. During the chaotic court room scene at the end of *Wonderland*, Alice grows rapidly as she gets more and more weary of the nonsensical nature of the proceedings. As Alice grows larger and larger in this final scene in Wonderland, she grows more and more confident and authoritative in her understanding and lack of complacency with the events unfolding in front of her. "She had grown so large in the last few minutes that she wasn't a bit afraid of interrupting him" (95). Her size instills her with confidence to actually acknowledge the absurdity and confusion she has been feeling the whole time she is in Wonderland. With size substituted for age, Alice quickly approaches adulthood. When this occurs, she almost immediately leaves Wonderland for the temporary but real safety of her real life childhood. The same sequence of events occurs at the end of *Looking-Glass*. Alice has been more or less dealing with the absurdity of the situation while in Looking-Glass Land; however, when Alice can no longer stomach the absurdity of the conversations with the Queens, she finds that the Red Queen has "suddenly dwindled down to the size of a little doll" (204). When Alice utilizes her newfound size to physically assault the now diminutive Red Queen, the action returns her to the real

world. Alice's experiments with adulthood end when she rebels against the vision of adulthood she has created.

When Alice is not rejecting the idea of adulthood she had created for herself, her duality of character helps her to work through situations. Alice's duality as a character involves her attempting to be both child and adult, which is only possible with Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land's lack of linear time, and this duality is illustrated many times throughout the stories. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the narrator tells the reader that "this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people" (12). These two people are often her adult persona and child self, and this internal conflict between childhood and adulthood voices itself through her very speech. Also in *Wonderland*, the reader sees her acting out this duality through her speech when she finds herself trapped in White Rabbit's house. While trapped in the house, Alice talks through the series of events to herself, playing both sides of the conversation, simultaneously celebrating and lamenting the possibility of remaining the same age forever; in essence she looks at things from a child perspective and an adult perspective. The adult part of her recognizes the benefits of not growing up while the child part of her bemoans having to be in school forever, not recognizing that assumption to be likely false.

Alice demonstrates throughout both works that she is the fictive creator of both Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land. She considers the way that things ought to be and so they are because these worlds are her construction of how she imagines adulthood to be. For example, in the Pool of Tears in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Alice muses about the Mouse, thinking that "I should think very likely it can talk" (18) after which it

does. The same order of events occurs in *Looking-Glass* when Alice enters The Garden of Live Flowers. Alice exclaims, "I *wish* you could talk!" (120) after which the Tiger-Lily immediately speaks. She gives the characters of these worlds traits that she desires them to have in the same way she influences each world's flow of time. Since Alice is the fictive force of creation responsible for both fantasy worlds, their flow of time is altered to suit her needs. The only time that doubt is cast upon the authorship of the fantasy realm occurs in *Looking-Glass* when Alice encounters the Tweedles.

The question of whether or not Alice is the creator of Looking-Glass Land introduces the idea of the shared dream, the idea that Alice and another person are both dreaming of the same place, creating the world in tandem. Tweedledee and Tweedledum, in addition to be being characters that illustrate the duality and conflict of Alice being two people (child/adult), cast doubt on Alice being the creator of the space. The stories show Alice dreaming up this world filled with adult characters as she envisions adults to be. The Tweedles hypothesize that Alice is merely a character in the Red King's dream, making him an adult dreaming up child characters. Therefore he would be creating a world through which a child journeys as he remembers childhood to be. This mirrors the process that Carroll himself is undergoing as he creates a fictional version of Alice and imbues her created world with traits that he envisions she would do herself. Alice and Carroll share the dream of Alice's adventures as a young child because of Carroll's nostalgia for the connection that he shared with Alice. Alice defends herself against the accusation, but her defense lacks conviction. This conversation introduces the idea of the shared dream between child and adult, an idea that reappears later in Philippa Pearce's

Tom's Midnight Garden. Alice's dream creation of Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land is a mechanism for Alice to experiment with the idea of being an adult; it almost akin to a form of time travel which allows Alice to move seamlessly between the two experiences of being a child and adult in an effort to avoid the ultimate end of the process of growing up which is death.

The submission of the child to linear time means that the child will eventually grow up, and the end result of growing up in adult time will ultimately be death. At the Hatter's time-locked tea party, the party goers explain the system by which they partake of their tea time, which is a time in which the characters shield Alice from death. The party guests continue to move around the table in a circle as things get eaten. When Alice questions what happens when they get around to the beginning again, The March Hare quickly changes the subject. What Alice views as the beginning is also the end, which in the concept of growing up, is death. A similar situation occurs when Alice questions what happens at the end of the Mock Turtle's definition of his schooling. She is interrupted by the Gryphon who changes the subject. Since Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land are the fictive Alice's own creation, these characters are extensions of Alice's mind trying to shield her from the idea of death.

Although Alice is shielded from direct knowledge of death, both of Alice's stories contain references to death as the end result of passing from childhood to adulthood. For instance, upon Alice's exit from Wonderland she is immediately confronted by an image of death as a result of the passage of time. "[Alice] found herself lying on the bank, with her head in the lap of her sister, who was gently brushing away some dead leaves that had

fluttered down from the trees upon her face" (98). While her fantasy creations shield her from the idea of death, the image of death is the first thing the reader gets when Alice returns to the adult world. While Alice runs back to her home, her sister remains behind. While Alice never suspects the true nature of growing up, her sister is much more adult in her concept of time. The slow (static) pace of time in Wonderland, Alice's creation, sharply contrasts with the passage of time in the mind of Alice's sister at the end of the story in which Alice grows from child to adult in the span of a couple of paragraphs even though Alice had not aged a day for the past eleven chapters. Alice's sister, older and closer to adulthood, has a much more developed understanding of time which quickly propels Alice from childhood to adulthood. She expresses a nostalgia regarding childhood but knows that Alice will eventually grow up. She keeps this observation to herself, which is exactly what the characters of Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land do to shield Alice from the idea of death.

Not all characters shield Alice from death, however. In the conversation between the Gnat and Alice in *Looking-Glass*, the Gnat points out to her the Bread-and-butter-fly and the fact that it lives on "weak tea with cream in it" (134). When Alice asks about what would happen if the creature could not find any such food, the Gnat very bluntly tells her "[t]hen it would die, of course" (134). After Alice points out that this must happen often, the Gnat replies, "It always happens" (134). While on its surface, this comment is a nonsense observation about the nature of the wildlife of Looking-Glass Land, the comment is also an illustration of the problem that Alice faces. While her adventures to these fantasy worlds are efforts to escape the constraints of linear time, she

will ultimately be unsuccessful because death always happens. Alice's conversation with Humpty Dumpty indicates a change in her way of thinking regarding death and growing up. After they discuss Alice's age, Humpty Dumpty starts to muse on how if she had asked his advice, he would have encouraged her to "leave off at seven." Alice responds indignantly that "one ca'n't help growing older" (162). Humpty Dumpty then responds with the very morbid commentary that while one person can't help growing older, *two* can. "With proper assistance, you might have left off at seven" (162). The not-so-subtle implication here is of course murder and death on Alice's part which would technically leave her at age seven. Alice has already, based on her own dialogue here, recognized that she cannot delay her own growth into adulthood, and it is only here in Looking-Glass Land that her age/state of mind is affected at all. It is also Alice by this time, instead of another character, who abruptly shifts her away from the topic of death. After questioning the presence of the plum cake left behind by the Lion and the Unicorn, Alice decides that she is tired of feeling like she might be part of someone else's dream. She complains that she "has a great mind to go wake [the Red King], and see what happens" (179). Although she is taking control of the situation, she still does not understand the full implications of what would actually occur if she was part of the Red King's dream and he were to wake up, although she does appear prepared to face the consequences. In this instance, her thought process is interrupted by the character which represents Carroll himself: The White Knight.

The comparison between Carroll and the White Knight is easy to make when looking at their motivations. The White Knight is the force that escorts Alice through her

transition from being a pawn (child) into being a queen (adult). Carroll, as the author and co-creator of Alice's dream worlds, alone has the power to do so. Beneath his outward appearance of clumsiness, the White Knight's overall demeanor is that of sadness, sadness at having to see Alice off into this new phase of her life. He cannot follow her any longer because, as he puts it, "That's the end of my move" (181). He sees her through the seventh Square and turns back when they approach the border between Alice's life as a pawn and Alice's life as a Queen. This transition parallels Alice's transition from child to adult and the fact that Carroll's friendship cannot follow her into adulthood. Carroll knows this truth by the time this story was written, as the real life Alice has already grown up beyond his companionship, and the end of the White Knight and the fictional Alice's friendship is the metaphorical "death" of Carroll's connection to childhood.

Both of Alice's adventures contain a number of specific references to time and imagery of time, particularly clock imagery. The inclusion of clocks in particular in the two stories is made more interesting considering the altered nature of time and the functionality of the clocks. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* treats the reader to both clocks and clock imagery. Alice's motivation to first enter Wonderland begins with a clock. Alice follows the White Rabbit with a pocket watch down the rabbit-hole into Wonderland. It is not the appearance of a talking rabbit which initially strikes her interest but rather that the rabbit has a watch (Carroll 8). The White Rabbit's obsession with the watch (time) embodies the adult attitude of keeping to a schedule, which runs very counter to how we see Alice in the beginning of the story, lazily laying on the grassy bank drifting off to sleep instead of participating in educational enrichment as her sister

does by reading. The Mad Hatter's watch also represents an adult sense of time. The Mad Hatter holds a unique position in that he is aware that time is frozen in Wonderland (he does take blame in his recounting of the story) thus allowing him to have a watch that tells not the time but the day (Carroll 56). The watch is wrong by two days, as it is in fact Alice's birthday. Since time in Wonderland is locked at tea-time though, the days do not have quite as much significance if they have any at all. However, there is further significance to be found at the tea party and the structure of the books. The structure of books themselves supports further clock imagery. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* each have twelve chapters which Alice moves through to end up right back where she started, just as a clock does as it marks the passing of a day. Alice enters Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land and spends an undetermined amount of time in each only to return to the same moment in which she left. In *Wonderland*, she awakens still on the riverbank that she fell asleep on and in *Looking-Glass*, she awakens once again in the company of her kittens. No discernible amount of time has passed in her real world while she is in her respective dream worlds. The participants at the tea party shift seats around the table just like the moving hands of a clock. Despite the imagery of clocks, Alice's comments about normal linear time are not taken well. When Alice attempts to define the standard method of measuring a day, her life is threatened by the Duchess. "'Just think what work it would make with the day and night! You see the earth take twenty-four hours to turn round on its axis—'; 'Talking of axes,' said the Duchess, 'chop off her head!'" (48). Alice's attempts to reinstate a normal (adult) sense

of time are met with hostility. Linear time is associated with violence in this manner, and Alice is being pushed towards remaining in the safety of childhood.

Alice's story ends with unanswered questions about the true nature of Alice's shared dream, leaving the final answer up to the reader. The worlds of Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land are gone for now as the final poem all but confirms Alice has indeed grown up, and, now subject to linear time, she has moved on. The poem itself, with its imagery of changing seasons, gives the reader the impression that Carroll has finally accepted the fact that Alice is no longer the child in his story but rather a nearly grown woman. The story does not end on an entirely sad note. Despite the fact that Alice's fantasy does not effectively preserve her childhood forever as Carroll might want, the reader is afforded a degree of hope in the idea that future children will one day occupy their own Wonderlands as they are left with the image of a grown Alice telling stories to a new generation of children. Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land's endowment with a wishful childlike sense of infinite time creates an embodiment of the wonderfully idyllic childhood that Carroll envisioned and idealized.

CHAPTER THREE

THE GREAT ADVENTURE:

THE SUSPENSION OF TIME AND RESPONSIBILITY IN NEVERLAND

The Neverland of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* shares much with Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* in regard to the reasons for their initial creation. Both authors' secondary worlds were originally conceived as a source of entertainment for those children in the authors' lives who comprised the stories' first audiences. Barrie met the Llewellyn Davies children during an outing to the nearby Kensington Gardens from his London home in the 1890s and quickly formed a friendship with them and their parents that lasted the rest of their lives. With the help of the young boys during a summer vacation in 1901, Barrie began a series of imaginative games that would eventually create Peter Pan and Neverland.

Neverland (also referred to as Never-Never Land in early iterations of Barrie's work) is the magical realm to which Peter Pan escapes as an infant and lives in so that he may remain a young boy forever. Set up as a fantastic island adventure, Neverland is the paramount example of any Edwardian boy's dream adventure. Children's literature scholar Alison Lurie refers to Neverland as "a medley of incongruous fantasy settings – the mermaids' lagoon, the forest full of wolves and Indians, the pirate ship" (126). Neverland is composed of these archetypes of child fantasy in order to suit the wishes of the children, each element speaking to different aspects of childhood play: the sensual mystery of the mermaids, the wild unfamiliarity of the wolves and Indians, the danger

and adventure of pirates, etc. Neverland's geographic layout facilitates the adventures of Peter Pan and the Lost Boys in the same manner as that Neverland's altered flow of time facilitates their ability to not grow up. In order to demonstrate how the altered flow of time of Neverland affects the characters of *Peter Pan*, this chapter will take a more detailed look at the characters of Peter Pan, the eternal child unaccepting of time; Wendy, the child who submits to time; and Captain James Hook, the adult force against which Peter spends his days battling; as well as the representations of time presented in the portrayal of Neverland.

Neverland as a separate physical space coupled with its freedom from a linear flow of time epitomizes that attitude of opposition towards the consequences of adult time and growing up. The physical features of Neverland serve to reflect the activities of the children within. Barrie's authorial description of Neverland gives the reader the impression that the children are shaping it as they approach it for the first time: "Strange to say, [the Darling children] all recognized it at once, and until fear fell upon them they hailed it, not as something long dreamt of and seen at last, but as a familiar friend to whom they were returning home for the holidays" (Barrie, *Peter and Wendy* 105). As the children first see the island, they notice that it contains elements that appeal to all of them, elements which represent idealized versions of their childhood. Readers most commonly associate Peter Pan with this idea of perpetual youth. Young boys escape to Neverland with Peter so that they may also escape the inevitable responsibility of growing up. Both the play that eventually grew out of that summer adventure in 1901, *Peter Pan*, and the 1911 novelization of the play, *Peter and Wendy*, contain two distinct

settings which exemplify these two competing concepts of time: London, the place where adult concepts of time are imposed upon the young, and Neverland, the place to which children escape to remain children indefinitely. It is Neverland's freedom from the linear flow of time that enables the adventures of the children.

Where Neverland is the space of child-like time, London represents the adult defined concept of time which threatens Peter Pan and the other children. Set up in contrast to Neverland, the adult-framing reality of London begins the story. While in London, the Darling children are subject to the dominion of adult measured time. The Darling parents enforce various time-based restrictions on their children: Michael is forced to take a bath at a certain time and to take medicine, the adult Darlings attend a social event designated for Saturdays, and so on. When in London, the adults subject the children to things like bedtime as governed by the passage of time. Michael knows that the time to bathe and go to bed is coming because it is approaching six o'clock. Wendy grows old after returning home to London, during which time Peter does not even recognize that Time has passed on. While the framing reality of London follows the adult-defined, conventional model of time, time does not obey the typical conventions whenever our primary child characters enter the fantasy world of Neverland.

It is an important distinction that in Barrie's Neverland, time does pass; however, it does not pass in the normal "adult" fashion. Maria Nikolajeva defines it as such: "The adult, measurable time is abolished in the Neverland" (90). Time does *move* in a sense although the passage of time does not bring about its normal effects, i.e. the natural progression from childhood to adulthood. Certainly time does pass in Neverland in the

sense that there is a cycle of day and night as evidenced by the fact that the children go to bed at night and wake up in the morning. According to the play's initial description of Neverland, time also affects the seasons, although they too do not adhere to the normal pattern associated with them: spring, summer, fall, and then winter. "It is summer time on the trees and on the lagoon but winter on the river, which is not unremarkable on Peter's island where all four seasons may pass while you are filling a jug at the well" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1323). The seasons exist simultaneously to serve the purposes a child might want them to. For example, a tree would be more fun to climb in the summer with its foliage present, and a lagoon makes for a more pleasant swim if the temperature is higher. Conversely, a frozen river (river in winter) might represent a different type of adventure for a child. So although the seasons do pass (at the author's own admission), they are not any kind of accurate marker of time due to the nature of Peter's island.

This compression of the seasons pairs itself with the differing nature of time between Neverland and London. Time does not pass at the same rate in both locations. While Wendy says that "they stayed away for years," (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1340) it is not immediately clear how much time has passed for the Darling parents in London. The only indicator of time passing in *Peter Pan* is spoken by Mrs. Darling to Nana in the scene in which the children return to the nursery; she laments having to see the dog put out their (the children's) night clothes "night after night" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1351). In the novel, Barrie's narrator's lamentation about whether or not to let Mrs. Darling know her children are returning is the only real time marker given about the length of the trip: "One thing I should like to do immensely, and that is to tell her, in the way authors have, that

the children are coming back, that indeed they will be here on Thursday week" (Barrie, *Peter and Wendy* 207). While the text does show that enough nights have passed to cause the Darlings to become distressed about the disappearance of their children, there is no way to accurately ascertain how many have passed simply based on the text, supporting Paolitto's observation about children and the way they understand the relativity of time. It appears that more time passes for the children, who are active, than does for the parents, who are passive.

While time may have a cyclical nature in Neverland in regards to the fact that Peter seems to play these same types of games over and over with new Lost Boys and have new adventures with new "Wendies," time does not seem to flow backwards. Peter and Wendy do not travel backwards in time like characters from a Nesbit story. While the forward motion of time in Neverland is not like linear time in London, the pirates who die certainly seem to stay dead. Hook's hand does not return. Thus, time in Neverland moves forward but not at any measurable, adult pace as London does. Much like time in Pooh's Forest, which will be discussed in the next chapter, Neverland does have a forward flow of time, but a separate flow of time, and it does not cause any of the children within it to age as they would in the normal, adult world.

Since dying becomes more difficult in a world where people do not age, the concept of "real" death represents an intrusion of the adult time of London into the child world of Neverland. Even though many adventures are had in Neverland, and time does indeed move forward, the children living there never grow any older as long as they stay there. The narrator of *Peter and Wendy* does discuss Peter's tendency to "thin out" the

number of Lost Boys when they "seem to be growing up" (Barrie, *Peter and Wendy* 112) but "seeming" to grow up does not equate to actually growing up. Peter may simply grow tired of his companions and forget them as he often does with other details. Despite the fact that they have escaped adult time, Neverland presents evidence of the Lost Boys' discomfort with death and growing up. While the children themselves show no physical signs of growing older, plants do die of "age," as evidenced by Curly's confused remark that he "thought it was only flowers that die" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1328); however, with the death of flowers comes the implied promise of the return of the flowers in the following spring. Curly readily accepts the fact that flowers die because he knows that they will return again as the seasons change, but Wendy's apparent death unnerves him because the same rules may not apply to "Wendies." Wendy's apparent death is even more unsettling to the Lost Boys given that their leader is eternally youthful.

Barrie's own desire to recapture his lost youth completes Peter's creation as the boy who would never grow up. Peter Pan is firmly entrenched in the world of children's literature as the quintessential example of the youthful child. Literary critic Jackie Wullschlager notes that "[a]lmost a century after it was written, *Peter Pan* remains a byword for eternal youth" (127). Peter Pan is partially a representation of Barrie himself, who was a man at odds with the idea of growing up and the society of adults. Barrie's childhood was permanently marred by the death of his brother David when Barrie was six years old. To ease his mother's devastation, Barrie would fill in the role of David as though he still lived. (Birkin 3-5). David's perpetual youth, preserved through Barrie's willingness to indulge his mother after David's death, plays a part in Peter's creation.

Peter Pan accomplishes what Barrie could not. Indeed, it is only Peter Pan who is able to escape the grasp of adult linear time and remain a child forever, as all the other children eventually move on from Neverland either toward death or growing up; however, Peter's behavior indicates that this feat does not come without a cost. Peter Pan is continuously abandoned by those children who move on. Barrie biographer Andrew Birkin observes that "Peter's character is a delicate balance between the mortal and immortal in his character" (117). Peter Pan scholar and editor Peter Hollingdale says of Peter Pan that "his resistance is also 'tragic': he is 'the tragic boy', in visible and terrible immunity from the rhythms of time to which all except himself consent" (xxvii). Peter's independence from these rhythms of time also affects his ability to recall events which have occurred in the past according to adult linear time.

Peter's memory is drastically affected by his separation from adult linear time. Unwilling to submit to linear time, he forfeits the ability to remember events in a linear fashion. He frequently forgets names and events, and even loses focus in the midst of an activity. A scene from *Peter and Wendy* aptly illustrates the speed at which Peter can forget his thoughts. As Peter and the Darling children are making their way to Neverland, Peter forgets who the children are in mid-flight on more than one occasion. "Indeed, sometimes when he returned he did not remember them, at least not well. Wendy was sure of it" (Barrie, *Peter and Wendy* 104). Wendy, who is more conscious of adult linear time due to her increased maturity, notices Peter's memory loss more than the other children. Wendy is the most adult-like of the children and thus has the firmest grasp of the passage of time and its effects.

Peter's grim trade of youth for memory is an oft repeated motif throughout the whole of *Peter Pan*. This device reveals itself to be a particularly integral part of the ending to *Peter and Wendy* as well. Peter participates in the cycle in which he continually visits the same nursery in which he first met Wendy and subsequently takes each new generation of daughter to Neverland to be his mother for a time until he forgets them. Barrie elucidates on the nature of the cycle: "When Margaret grows up she will have a daughter, who is to be Peter's mother in turn; and thus it will go on, so long as children are gay and innocent and heartless" (Barrie, *Peter and Wendy* 226). The ending speaks to the cyclical nature of time which, while not dominant in Neverland, is more present than adult linear time. Each generation of children ultimately leaves childhood—and Peter—behind while Peter remains fixed in childhood.

The ending of *Peter and Wendy* serves to highlight the exact nature of Peter's problem. Yes, Peter is free from the effects of linear time, but this also causes him to be ignorant of events that occurred in the past. Madeline Stern states in her article "Counterclockwise: The Flux of Time in Literature" that "[i]n Barrie's Neverland there is no necessity for Peter to have a sense of time" (345). He cannot maintain a linear memory of events past, but in his current circumstances, he does not need to. Peter's shortcomings are only highlighted when he interacts with the characters who are more closely associated with adult linear time such as Wendy or Captain Hook. Wendy's interest in Peter is consistently foiled by his confusion and inability to recognize her feelings, and Hook's disdain for Peter's youth is highlighted by Peter's seeming nonchalance. So long as Peter remains in Neverland, the altered flow of time will

continue to serve his need for adventure and his need for a mother figure. He cannot grow up but is left behind as others do grow up. Even Wendy grows up, but Peter's ignorance of time helps to shield him from that fact by letting his concept of time replace Wendy continuously.

As Peter Pan represents the resistance of youth to time, Wendy represents the acceptance of time and its power to make one grow up, to change from child to adult. The difference in the characters illustrates a difference in Barrie's way of thinking. Barrie himself felt differently about young girls as compared to young boys. While young boys could grow up slowly, Barrie considered girls to already be grown up, and Wendy is another example of the "unbroken continuum" between female children and female adults (Hollingdale xxii). Wendy is more grown up than the boys in Neverland. While Peter uses Neverland's altered time flow as a way to remain a child forever, Wendy simply uses it to have more time to continue playing at being an adult.

Wendy embraces certain aspects of adulthood even as a child. She knows that her role in life is likely to be that of a mother, of a provider, and of a wife, and her chosen play activities are evidence of that knowledge. Hollingdale discusses her choice of play in the book's introduction: "Wendy's favoured games are imitations of a life she can expect" (xiii). The boys bring Wendy to Neverland to fulfill the adult role of mother; given Neverland's flow of time, having a "real" mother cannot be accomplished, so the boys must create a mother through imagination and play. While the boys who escape to Neverland experience a change in their play activities, once Wendy joins them, she experiences no such change. Before they journey to Neverland, young boys are only

playing at fighting battles with pirates; in Neverland, these dreams are actualized. In Wendy's case, her play activities do not change. While under the rules of adult time in London, Wendy plays at being a mother, pretending to be her own mother. Even after she escapes to the child time of Neverland, Wendy still plays at being a mother. Wendy brings her concept of adult time with her into Neverland and continues to go on pretending. Even given freedom from the bounds of London adult time, Wendy is still unable to shake the compulsion towards mothering.

Where Wendy represents an acceptance of time, James Hook represents the fear of what Peter might become, what Barrie has become: an adult. Not only is Hook the threatening male adult in Neverland, but Hook is also an intrusion of adult London into the childlike Neverland. *Peter and Wendy* establishes Hook's connection to the adult real world through his knowledge of the traditions of Eton College, a boy's public school in the real world England. The play enhances this connection even further by often having the same actor play both Mr. Darling and Captain Hook. Hook's jealousy over Peter's exemption from adult time fuels his rage and drives him to hunt Peter relentlessly; however, Hook is the same as Peter in one respect: they both are trying to escape time. For Hook, time is personified in the crocodile which relentlessly pursues him.

In this fantasy realm of Neverland, the threat of death at the hands of time is given a physically frightening form: the crocodile. Hook hears the clock ticking from inside the crocodile. He even comments on how he once heard the clock inside the crocodile strike six (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1325). Six o'clock has been established as the time at which Michael, the youngest Darling, must prepare for bed. Barrie builds on the connection

between going to sleep and dying: Michael's sleep is heralded by the chiming of six o'clock just as Hook's death is heralded by the same. Smee makes the comment that "Some day the clock will run down, and then he'll get you" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1325). The degree of ambiguity in this statement presents many different interpretations. Is the "clock" to which Smee refers the clock inside the crocodile or Hook's metaphorical "life clock?" For that matter, is the "he" to which Smee refers the crocodile or Peter Pan? The best interpretation is that Smee's statement refers to all of these things at once.

In contrast to Peter Pan as the most complex representation of childhood in the story, the simplest representation of adulthood is the clock itself. The timepiece represents the measurement of time, a practice which has no real use in Neverland as time does not pass in a normal fashion there. In the framing setting of London, the play is begun by the sound of a clock: The cuckoo clock striking six o'clock is what starts both the play and Nana into motion. It sets up the idea for the opening scene of the play that this place is governed by adult time. While time in this context is the enemy of the children, Hook also faces his own version of this timeless foe. Michael Egan points out that "Peter Pan is not Hook's only enemy. His other indefatigable foe is Time itself, emblematically presented in the relentlessly pursuing crocodile" (51). The clock from the nursery is contrasted with the only one present in Neverland which happens to be inside of a crocodile.

The presence of the clock inside the crocodile is somewhat of a mystery. Neverland, by its very name, is a land where time does not function as it normally does. It stands to reason that clocks—or any other timepiece for that matter—have no business or

purpose in Neverland, as their normal function would not do Neverland's residents any good since children do not mark time by the hands of a clock but rather by the events of a day. So where did the clock that the crocodile swallowed come from? Given how Neverland is free from the constraints of adult linear time, the crocodile has consumed more than a literal clock and swallowed the metaphorical concept of Time. This theory would help to explain why time does not pass in Neverland, as Time itself is now trapped within the crocodile. The crocodile also represents the threat of death at the hands of Time. If time passes normally, the eventual outcome will be death, which is the same outcome Hook faces when he is eventually devoured by the crocodile.

Where the crocodile is a physical representation of time and its effects, the language that the characters use in regards to time offer insights into how they feel about child and adult concepts of time. Children's concepts of time, and for that matter adults' as well, are evidenced by the language used by the different groups of characters when making reference to the passing or marking of time. When looking at the specific words used which denote a period of time, adults in the story use more concrete language to define time as compared to the children who rarely use concrete language and rather use more abstract terms unless relating some adult concept. For example, Nana begins the play by performing her duties promptly at "six o'clock" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1311); this is a time that shows up repeatedly not just in *Peter Pan* but also in *Alice in Wonderland* as tea time. While in *Alice* it represents a time at which a specific event occurs, six o'clock plays an important role in *Peter Pan* as a representation of the "end" of things. While in London, Michael must go to bed around six, and his adventures for the day are ended.

The clock inside the crocodile is heard to strike six to herald Hook's impending death. Peter, as the poster child for eternal youth, demonstrates little concern for adult concepts of time. In a rare example of using adult language about time, Peter defines the amount of time that Lost Boys must be lost before they are sent away as "seven days" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1319). This measured unit of time is the most specific reference that Peter makes in the entirety of the play, and he makes this statement when he is in London, not Neverland. When in Neverland, Peter has no concept or need of time. It is only when in the real (adult) world that Peter needs to know anything of time. Mrs. Darling's limitation of Wendy in the closing act of the play serves to effectively force Peter to forget Wendy, as Peter is incapable of maintaining memories over a long period of adult time. After the children return to London, Mrs. Darling agrees to let Wendy visit Peter in Neverland "once a year for a week…" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1355). This explicitly adult-defined boundary of time impose the adult concept of time on Wendy's connection to childhood which is Peter.

While the previous examples are used to illustrate adult concepts, there are some terms which are used by both adults and children. The usage of these terms varies depending upon the age of the speaker and the concepts which are being referred to. For instance, in Act IV of the play when the Lost Boys want to play at dancing, they decide that it must be Saturday night. Given that adult time has no real meaning in the world of the Lost Boys, Saturday functions as the abstract concept of a time in which children commonly perceive their parents participating in various social activities outside of the home. Thus, Saturday's status as an actual day of the week has no real meaning here

since adult defined time also has no meaning. However, Saturday represents a distinct occasion for adults. It is likely the night on which adults do not have to concern themselves with work or the impending threat of work. So while Saturday is an abstract concept for the children, it is a concrete time for adults. The Lost Boys place the responsibility of establishing this concept on Wendy, their surrogate mother.

Moving from a larger unit of time to a smaller one, the play both begins and ends with a reference to "two minutes." This unit of time is uttered by Michael once, the youngest character of the story, and in the other instance it is spoken by Hook, one of the oldest characters. The same words lend themselves to both an abstract construction of time and an adult defined ultimatum. When threatened with the idea of going to bed at six o'clock, Michael first denies the legitimacy of adult defined time: "Nana, it isn't six o'clock yet" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1311). Even though the audience has just heard the cuckoo clock in the nursery strike six, Michael still does not accept the fact that it is indeed six o'clock and begs for "[t]wo minutes more, please, one minute more?" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1311). When Michael asks for this extension, he does not literally mean two minutes in the sense of it being one hundred and twenty seconds in clock time. He views this as an indeterminate amount of time only as a means to stave off the threat of bedtime. This particular usage contrasts with the usage of the phrase "two minutes" by Hook in the end of Act IV, and it also contrasts in terms of what occurs at the end of those "two" minutes. When faced with the unrelenting assault of Peter Pan, the embodiment of youth, Hook sets an explosive in the powder magazine of the ship. Upon his return he proclaims that, "[i]n two minutes the ship will be blown to pieces" (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1350). As an

adult and pirate familiar with these tools of destruction, Hook likely literally means two minutes when he speaks here. His adult status gives him the ability to measure both time and fuses. Comparing these two countdowns, at the end of Michael's countdown is the end of his adventures for the day. At the end of Hook's countdown, the same thing occurs albeit in a much more violent fashion. Given that these two events bookend the children's time in Neverland, Michael enters Neverland with a reference to "two minutes" and exits with one as well. An abstract, childlike usage of the time phrase precedes his entry into the child fantasy realm, and an adult usage of the same phrase signals his return into the adult world of London.

Speaking about the abstract nature of children's definition of time, one of the iconic lines from Peter Pan involves just that. When asked where he lives, Peter replies, "Second to the right and straight on till morning"[1] (Barrie, *Peter Pan* 1317). The idea of "morning," while representing a defined time of day, does not take into account the adventurer's starting time. Thus, Neverland can be reached by morning without regard to whatever time the journeyer chooses to depart or the starting location. A child's concept of nighttime, and by extension sleep, is illustrated by this mechanism. "Morning," as an abstract concept, represents the end of sleeping, the end of dreaming, and the beginning of a new adventure. This connection between measurement of time and sleeping is supported by other terms the children in *Peter Pan* use to define time. Other periods of time such as "after the night-lights are lit" (1316), "before I put you to bed" (1330), and "bedtime" (1355) are all phrases which are used to qualify time in relation to the act of

[1] It was not Barrie but Disney who was responsible for popularizing the addition of the word "star" to the familiar phrase.

going to sleep. Also the idea of being "put to bed" or "put to sleep" is another example of the adult conception of time imposing its will upon childhood. The children are not in control of how their time is spent. Adults limit how the children spend their childhood by imposing a schedule based in adult linear time.

While Peter and the Lost Boys already illustrate the competing attitudes of adult and child time through their language, their appetite for stories takes that illustration one step further. Both Peter and the other Lost Boys are very anxious to hear the end to the story of Cinderella, which only Wendy can tell. The plot of Cinderella involves a young woman who is bound by the confines of her magically imposed curfew. She endeavors to avoid violating her curfew and flees from her true love in an effort to adhere to the adult imposed boundaries. Hence, Wendy telling the Lost Boys a story about the consequences of young people ignoring the restraints and boundaries of adult defined time is significant, since that is precisely what Peter is pressuring all of the other children in the story to strive for. He wants to remain young forever in defiance of the imposing threat of growing old and dealing with adulthood. However, Cinderella chooses to try to adhere to the time limit and is eventually rewarded for her attempts to remain obedient to the imposed adult limitation. By leaving the ball before midnight, she loses her slipper, and the prince is able to locate her eventually, enabling them to achieve their own happily ever after. The children, particularly the Lost Boys, are rewarded with a new family for their return to London. Wendy is rewarded with increased awareness of times that have passed in the form of memory. Whereas she can remember the adventures that Peter and

she had together in Neverland, Peter, who remains in Neverland, cannot even remember the time of year he is supposed to visit Wendy.

Although this thesis is focused on Barrie's original incarnations of Neverland, Disney's 1953 adaptation of the work offers some interesting insights into the relationship of Neverland to adult time. The film makes some notable changes to the story especially with regard to the early portions of the film. The film's opening line of "All this has happened before, and it will all happen again" (Sears) reinforces the interpretation of Neverland's flow of time being cyclical although this is truer in the Disney version of the story due to the survival of one James Hook at the story's end. The image of the clock in particular makes a memorable appearance in the Disney film. As the children fly above London on their way to Neverland to the catchy tune of "You Can Fly," Peter and the Darling children interact with the clock tower in a rather famous scene. Not only do they fly around Big Ben, they actually land on the clock's hands and change time. Rather than imagery and instances of adults imposing their perception of time on children, the Darling children, with Peter's help, actually alter adult time by changing the hands of London's iconic clock tower. It is only after they have altered time that Peter reveals to them the way to get to Neverland. By assuming agency over the adult definition of time, the children are able to access Peter's Neverland.

Peter Pan speaks to the youthful desire for eternal youth and avoidance of adulthood and responsibilities that come with it. Peter's desire mirrors Barrie's desire to return to days past and regain the childhood which he lost. Neverland's altered flow of time, both separate and different from adult linear time as represented by London, creates

the space in which Peter and children like Peter can live forever in the ideal place for childhood adventure. Where Peter represents Barrie's youthful desires, his discomfort with adulthood is embodied in Peter's interactions with Wendy and Captain Hook, the more adult presences in Neverland. Although Peter succeeds in his quest to remain young forever while Barrie cannot, Peter's forfeiture of his memory keeps him not only separate from the adult world but forever separate from the other children as well.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHAPTER IN WHICH POOH'S FOREST IS THE IDEALIZED ENGLISH CHILDHOOD

A. A. Milne, despite writing many other works in a variety of genres, is most popularly known for his stories about the adventures of the fictionalized version of his son Christopher Robin and his son's stuffed bear. The bear, although first known as Edward Bear, is now forever cemented in the minds of children everywhere as Winnie-the-Pooh. Alison Lurie notes that the appeal of Christopher Robin and Pooh's adventures lies largely in the fact that they "are concerned entirely with things children are most interested in – friends, food, birthdays, tree-houses and expeditions, jokes and songs" ("Now We Are Fifty"), and these adventures take place inside Pooh's Forest, which is commonly referred to as the Hundred Acre Wood. Christopher Robin's play in the Forest is timeless, with his childhood games representing the archetypal actions of an idealized English childhood and his activities being undertaken for the sake of exploration and enjoyment with no accomplishment necessary. This chapter will explore Christopher Robin's adventures while safely ensconced in the Forest and how it is a representation of the idealized childhood as well as a nostalgic reflection on Milne's part. This chapter will also examine how Christopher Robin's childhood inside the Forest is endless, directionless, and free as only youth can be; however, while the Forest itself is isolated from the outside adult world, Christopher Robin knows he must eventually leave as the passage of time outside the Forest and the threat of regimented education ultimately pull

him away. Pooh's Forest, however, remains as the epitome of the eternal idealized childhood safe from the trappings of adult time.

The Pooh stories embodied Milne's personal beliefs about not only his son but his own childhood as well. As a devoted parent, Alan Alexander Milne first gave fictional life to his son's stuffed animals and made them characters living and playing in Pooh's Forest to entertain young Christopher Robin Milne. Only later were they published as *Winnie-the-Pooh*, on October 14, 1926, in London. The second set of Pooh's stories, *The House at Pooh Corner*, was published in 1928, also in October. Both works were the types of stories a child would enjoy, but they were also stories created by an adult and enjoyed by adults as well. Milne endowed the stories with elements of both the childhood he remembered and the one that he envisioned for his son. By all accounts, Milne, unlike his predecessor Carroll and friend Barrie, had a normal, well-adjusted childhood, and he used this to invoke the feelings of nostalgia that Pooh's Forest so encompasses. Jackie Wullschlager said of Milne's childhood, "Where many of the others invented in fantasy the ideal youth they never knew, Milne had an idyllic childhood whose mood the Pooh stories recapture….The Pooh stories sprang from his own happiness just as Carroll's or Barrie's fantasies grew out of their disappointments" (177). Unlike the authors examined in this thesis who wrote before him, Milne wrote of a time in his life that was both real and positive. As a result, Pooh's Forest is much more similar to the real adult world than Wonderland or Neverland. A. A. Milne was very involved in his son's life and enjoyed the connection he shared with his young son, as it allowed him to create that same ideal childhood for his son that he himself had known. Alison Lurie concurs, saying that

"Milne's happy childhood centered around his father" ("Back to Pooh Corner"). Milne wished for his son to know the same happy childhood that he himself had. While Milne was not trying to write a life for himself that he had never known, he was trying to create a space separate from the England which he saw changing around him.

Milne's years of service in the military only served to reinforce the ideology behind the creation of the idyllic, pastoral safety of Pooh's Forest, a place untouched by time, war, death, or real fear. Even though he was a lifelong pacifist, Milne nevertheless served four years in the military during World War I. This war, the first large-scale conflict of its kind, posed not only a direct threat to the lives of a generation of men freshly pulled from their own childhoods but also threatened the historic, idyllic countryside of rural England. The threat of death touched those who previously thought themselves to be safe. Milne said of his time in the war, "[I] would have liked to ignore the four years [I] spent in the army. 'I should like to put asterisks here, and then write 'It was in 1919 that I found myself once again a civilian.' For it makes me almost physically sick to think of that nightmare of mental and moral degradation, the war'" (as qtd in Thwaite 161). As many biographers and critics theorize, his creation of Pooh's Forest is his response to the growing change in the prevalence of violence in the world. Children's literature scholar Paula Connolly says, "Indeed *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* depict a vision of the world that hearkens back not only to the 1920's but to the years of A. A. Milne's childhood and, indeed, from there to an idealized, preindustrial, rural England" (3). Pooh's Forest was shaped from the change Milne saw occurring around him, and World War I was a big part of that change.

Even though the world was changing, Milne still embraced the idea of a parent sharing a story with a child, and *Winnie-the-Pooh* uses this idea as both an anchor and a frame. Before the reader is taken into Pooh's Forest, the opening chapter of *Winnie-the-Pooh* not only introduces the reader to the ever lovable character of Pooh but also sets up the human participants in the stories. There is not one Christopher Robin but rather two, and the same is true for A. A. Milne. There is both Milne the author of the actual text and Milne the storyteller who is narrating Christopher Robin's adventure to him and creating the world of Pooh's Forest. Likewise, there is also both Christopher Robin the listener as well as Christopher Robin the character who is the protagonist and father figure to Pooh in Milne's story.

The conflict between the image of Christopher Robin that A. A. Milne popularized and how Christopher Milne reacted in later life to being associated with that image only highlights the motivations behind this version of the idealized child. Christopher Robin is the character through which the reader experiences the events in Pooh's Forest. However, Christopher Robin is not the only force responsible. While Christopher Robin the character is responsible for elements of Pooh's Forest, the place is also a construction of Milne's. He, as the storyteller, is not only creating an idealized version of England, of childhood, of safety; he is also creating an idealized version of his son both in the image of attentive child listening to his father's stories and adventurous explorer playing in nature. Milne's preference for the young, innocent child version of his son Christopher, who is six at the time of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, was what Milne wanted to preserve with his creation of Pooh's Forest.

The shift in the structure in the second set of stories reflects the growth that Milne observed in the real life Christopher Robin. In *The House at Pooh Corner*, the frame of bedtime stories is dropped. The distancing from bedtime stories fits with Christopher Robin's growing older and further from the ideal childhood of the Forest. Connolly suggests that "the confines of the nursery have been surpassed by a child now too old for bedtime stories" (45). This implies that Christopher Robin has already begun to change which also hints at his eventual growing up and his departure from the freedom of the Forest. The interference of the outside, adult world is what changes the structure of *The House at Pooh Corner* and Christopher Robin's desire to venture into his father's creation: Pooh's Forest.

Pooh's Forest is a magical realm set up to be as separate as possible from the outside influence of adult England and adult time. The imaginative Pooh's Forest is based on Ashdown Forest, also called the Five Hundred Acre Wood, which Milne could see from his country cottage in the spring of 1925 (Thwaite 262). While the Forest in the stories which Milne the storyteller describes to the fictional Christopher Robin of the frame story is based on a real place, it is the concepts that the Forest represents that make it a truly magical place. The Forest is both the example of and the setting for the idealized English childhood. The Forest endures as a symbol of the peaceful existence of a pre-war England or a post-war escape, specifically World War I. The Forest's emphasis on the natural elements with its trees, streams, and animals contrasts with the movement of England towards a more industrialized, man-made existence. Milne creates this space in

an attempt to preserve the innocent childhood both against a changing social landscape and the reaching effects of a new kind of war.

Where Wonderland suspends the idea of adult time completely, Pooh's Forest emphasizes separation/safety. The Forest is separated from the adult world, adult time, and adult problems. The only glimpses that we the reader even receive of the outside world are the brief acknowledgments of the framing narrative in the first set of stories as well as Christopher Robin's cryptic allusions to his schooling in the second set. Anita Wilson talks of the Forest as "[p]roviding liberation from the constraints of school and work (school is the beginning of the end of Christopher Robin's carefree existence) and freedom from danger and anxiety, the Forest represents an ideal world for both children and adults" (170). The fictional Christopher Robin of the frame story accepts the description of this world from Milne the storyteller as well as his role in the world. The Forest is also the place where Christopher Robin the character, the ideal child, acts out his youthful adventures. The Forest is an escape for both Christopher Robin and Milne himself. Christopher Robin the character physically escapes to the Forest as a means to avoid or postpone his inevitable growth into adulthood, while Milne uses the Forest as a nostalgic reflection on a better time in his son's life and England's life.

The Forest has its own flow of time separate from the adult flow of time in the real world outside. In the real world outside the Forest, time's passing inevitably leads to school, responsibility, and an end to childish pretend games; however, within the Forest, Christopher Robin is safe from the demands of adult time and is free to leisurely enjoy the childhood the Forest represents. His time to conduct his adventures is not limited or

restricted as it would be in the adult world. Christopher Robin and Pooh are willing and able to live slowly without necessity for hurry or agenda. Childhood exists in this way as something that is not concerned by the real world responsibilities that plague the adult mind. Literary critic Paul Wake talks about childhood in *Winnie-the-Pooh* being "placed outside of the temporal in a space that is clearly demarcated as somehow being *extra*-temporal, at least in the sense that it belongs to an instant that stands outside of the progression of time" (31). As time progresses in the outside world, time in Pooh's Forest does not pass in the same way. Whereas Christopher Robin can't permanently escape the rigors of linear time, the Forest provides him with a place to be unbothered by it. It also provides Milne with a way to preserve the idealized version of both his own childhood and his son's in the form of a remembrance of a time that he valued. The Forest functions both as real retreat from the dangers of a post-war England and the metaphoric representation of the idea of the ideal, eternal childhood.

The inherent appeal of Pooh's Forest lies in that sense of the idealized, infinite childhood. Maria Nikolajeva asserts that "In children's fiction, the idea of everlasting time is perhaps best expressed by two temporal indications in *Winnie-the-Pooh* and sequel: 'Once upon a time, a very long time ago, about last Friday' and 'a little boy and his bear will always be playing'…. Few adult novels evoke the same sense of timelessness . . ." (6). These quotes bookend the two sets of stories, and both invoke different ideas about child time: the first quote conveys the idea of the relativity and malleability of time that a child is capable of, and the second quote conveys the permanence of the idea or the feeling that childhood embodies. The contrasting ideas

between something as far away as “a very long time ago” and the relative closeness of something like “last Friday” exemplifies the childlike understanding of time. While the opening lines of *Winnie-the-Pooh* invoke the idea of this subjective view of time, *The House at Pooh Corner*’s end invokes the idea of infinite, separate, cyclical time. Childhood is a feeling, a state of mind, and a wonderful dream of playing in the woods with toys. The Forest exists separate and continuous to the adult world and will continue to do so even after this particular boy and his bear are gone. They will be replaced by new boys and new bears and loving fathers’ memories of them.

This continual process of renewal is perhaps best exemplified by Milne’s description of the stream/river that runs through the woods which Milne uses as a metaphor for the inevitable growing up that every child, including Christopher Robin, must do. This stream, the site of the game Poohsticks, runs through the middle of Pooh’s Forest flowing from the north end to the south end. Milne describes the stream in *The House at Pooh Corner*:

> By the time it came to the edge of the Forest, the stream had grown up, so that it was almost a river, and, being grown-up, it did not run and jump and sparkle along as it used to when it was younger, but moved more slowly. For it knew now where it was going, and it said to itself, ‘There is no hurry. We shall get there some day.’ But all the little streams higher up in the Forest went this way and that, quickly, eagerly, having so much to find out before it was too late. (256)

As Milne describes it, the stream moves through the Forest beginning as a child and exits the forest when it has grown into an adult. Christopher Robin does this as well in that he begins as a child and exits the Forest (or at least he alludes to the fact that he will do so) as he begins to grow up in the conclusion of *The House at Pooh Corner*. The continuous movement of the stream and the continued repetition of this process of growth from stream to river emphasizes the timeless perpetuity of the Forest with the ideal childhood constantly there for new children as they grow. The only threat to the idyll of Pooh's Forest is the idea that the outside world will force children to leave it behind in time. The most salient threat to remaining in the Forest is personified in the institution of school.

In the worldview of Christopher Robin the character, submitting to adult time, getting older, and leaving behind the pretend world he loves are all represented by school. School means education; school means responsibility; school means an eventual end to his idyllic days of spending time with Pooh. Milne spoke of his own memories of his vacations from school, describing them as some of the best times of his life:

> And on Tuesday evening we would bring a moment's comfort to ourselves by imagining that we were not going back on the morrow. Our favorite dream was that the school was burnt down . . . . of course, we were very happy at school really. The trouble was that we were so much happier in the holidays. ("The Happiest Half-hours of Life,"13-14)

Even though it is possible to enjoy oneself at school, it is a sharp contrast to the childhood depicted in Pooh's Forest. Christopher Robin's time in the Forest is both unregimented and carefree. It is Christopher Robin's decision as to how he spends his

time there. School, with its adult schedules, agendas, and objectives, threatens Christopher Robin's tranquil childhood existence. While education and even school are not inherently negative or dangerous things, to Christopher Robin, they threaten the loss of innocence, the loss of time, and the eventual loss of his secondary world. School exposes Christopher Robin to world matters that will eventually take away his innocence: knowledge of war, of death, of sadness that has no place in the Forest of Pooh. Christopher Robin's schedule is longer his own. School steals from him his own time and instead lets adults determine the best way for Christopher Robin to spend his hours. With school as well comes increased social interaction with other children. Real life playmates run the risk of replacing Christopher Robin's pretend friends. While school primarily exists in the world outside Pooh's Forest, its influence can be felt inside the Forest through Christopher Robin.

The incursion of school into the peaceful world of the Forest is slow at first. The only real hint of education in *Winnie-the-Pooh* is Shepard's illustration of Christopher Robin reading a "Sustaining Book" to Pooh while he is wedged in Rabbit's front door (28-9). While the illustration is not Milne's creation, Ann Thwaite writes about Milne's involvement in the creation of the illustrations: "So it is no wonder that [Milne] had plenty of time to involve himself in the whole business of the illustration, design, layout…. 'Milne's instructions were detailed, far more so than any [Shepard] had received from other authors'" (294). The illustration gives the impression that the book he is reading is an alphabet book, indicating the beginning of Christopher Robin's education. This also foreshadows Eeyore's speech about what Christopher Robin does in

the morning, which is also focused on the alphabet. After this subtle representation, the presence of education practically vanishes until *The House at Pooh Corner*'s opening "Contradiction."

In the "Contradiction," Milne hints at the eventuality that Christopher Robin is growing up and will be leaving the Forest. Published a couple years after *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *The House at Pooh Corner* reveals that Milne has seen his son grow beyond that magical age of six. In the "Contradiction" of *The House at Pooh Corner*, Milne describes himself giving lessons to Christopher Robin in the form of mathematic word problems. Milne aids his child's education, but when Milne begins to tell a story again, the word problem works its way into the opening. "How did the last one begin? 'One day when Pooh was walking in the Forest, there were one hundred and seven cows on a gate. . .' No, you see, we have lost it" (163-4). The example of education has derailed Milne's retelling of a story of childhood. Education directly interferes with the retelling of the story. He even comments that "It was the best, I think" (164). Education has taken focus from the enjoyment of childhood. This "invasion" is the precursor to Christopher Robin's cessation of "doing nothing" and attending school which is hinted at as *The House at Pooh Corner* progresses.

Chapter Five of *The House at Pooh Corner* introduces a change in Christopher Robin's behavior, namely the chapter title's question: What does Christopher Robin do in the morning? The reader may immediately know the answer to the characters' question: school. Christopher Robin is at school during the time the animals miss his presence. If Christopher Robin has already been in school before this point, the Forest's inhabitants

don't appear to have been cognizant of it until now. Pooh dwells on this, saying "And now that he did think of it, he began to remember that he hadn't seen Christopher Robin about so much lately. Not in the mornings. Afternoons, yes; evenings, yes; before breakfast, yes; just after breakfast, yes. And then, perhaps, 'See you again, Pooh,' and off he'd go" (249). Christopher Robin has some kind of new activity which is occupying his attention during a time he normally would be playing with his toys. His playmates have recognized that there is a gap of time during which they do not ever see Christopher Robin. Even though the characters recognize the change, they do not yet fully understand what it means, although Eeyore can venture a guess.

Eventually, Eeyore provides more insight into Christopher Robin's change. "What does Christopher Robin do in the mornings? He learns. He becomes Educated. He instigorates—I think that is the word he mentioned, but I may be referring to something else—he instigorates Knowledge" (254). Christopher Robin has been missing out on pretend time with his friends because school is unavoidable. The significance that Eeyore, the morose, unenthusiastic character, is the one to have this revelation is certainly purposeful and reinforces the negativity both the fictional Christopher Robin and Milne the author felt about school, as evidenced in the earlier quote about Milne's recurring wish that his school would burn down. So it is revealed that during the day, Christopher Robin has been attending school and becoming educated. This academic growth takes him one step further away from the idyll of childhood and one step closer to the dangers of adulthood outside the Forest. Academic growth will eventually lead Christopher Robin to mature, and this maturity threatens Christopher Robin's desire to visit the Forest.

Christopher Robin provides the evidence of such academic growth in the spelling of his sign. At the beginning of the chapter, his note to the characters reads, "GON OUT / BACKSON / BISY / BACKSON." At the end of the chapter, after we have learned of Christopher Robin's schooling, the newly revised sign reads "GONE OUT / BACK SOON." Christopher Robin's spelling improvements provide the answer to the question of what Christopher Robin does in the morning to all the animals in Pooh's Forest, save for the Spotted and Herbaceous Backson of course.

When Milne writes about Christopher Robin's entry into the Forest in Chapter Six, Milne reveals a little bit more of his own attitude towards school and learning. "Christopher Robin came down from the Forest to the bridge, feeling all sunny and careless, and just as if twice nineteen didn't matter a bit" (269). The fictional Christopher Robin is relishing in the freedom of the sunny day while trying to push the lessons of math that he has been taught from his mind. While here in the Forest, Christopher Robin is able to make it seem as though his lessons do not matter to him; nevertheless, the reality is that outside the Forest these lessons do occupy his mind and do matter to the outside world, the adult world. His feigned indifference to the lesson is his attempt to resist the schooling he is receiving and also resisting having school replace his time in the Forest.

As the second set of stories progresses, Christopher Robin's increased preoccupation with school shifts the tone of the story. For example, in Chapter Eight, Piglet makes the comment about going to see Christopher Robin but knowing that he is not there. On some level, Piglet and the other animals knows that Christopher Robin is at

school or at the very least that he is not always in the Forest with them. Christopher Robin returns later in the story although school is not specifically mentioned. The mood of his interactions with his friends has changed. There is a quality of sadness and an urgency that wasn't there before. Previous descriptions of Christopher Robin spending time with his toys paint a picture of an aimless kind of nonchalance with activities like walking in circles, sitting quietly, and so on. However, we see Christopher Robin acting differently with his friends in *The House at Pooh Corner*. "Christopher Robin was at home by this time, because it was the afternoon, and he was so glad to see them that they stayed there until very nearly tea-time" (295). Milne portrays the shift in the balance of how much time Christopher Robin spends pretending with his toys. When Milne talks of how long Pooh and Piglet stay, he is alluding to how long the fictional Christopher Robin engages in his world of pretend. Christopher Robin is doing his best to cherish what time he has left in the whimsical company of his pretend friends because he feels the pressure of school that will eventually force him from the Forest and his childhood.

Schooling and growing up have pushed Christopher Robin to the point where he knows that eventually he will have to leave his world of pretend behind which in turn imparts the knowledge to all of his imaginary companions. *The House at Pooh Corner*'s final chapter opens directly with the ominous, unavoidable truth: Christopher Robin is leaving the Forest. "Christopher Robin was going away. Nobody knew why he was going; nobody knew where he was going; indeed, nobody even knew why he knew that Christopher Robin was going away. But somehow or other everybody in the Forest felt that it was happening at last" (326). The imagined and animated inhabitants of Pooh's

Forest can feel the changes in Christopher Robin simply because Christopher Robin himself can feel them. His own personal awareness of his impending maturity filters into his pretend creations. His growth toward adulthood has been felt for some time apparently as indicated by the use of the phrase “happening at last.” His friends sense this and resolve to say good-bye to Christopher Robin even though none of them understand exactly where or why he is going.

Christopher Robin demonstrates an awareness of his situation in regards to himself growing up. While he understands the very basic premise that he is going to grow up, all that the fictional Christopher Robin knows for sure is that he will not be allowed to do “nothing” anymore. At the end of *The House at Pooh* Corner, Christopher Robin takes Pooh off by himself into the woods, to “Nowhere” (336), to broach the subject of what will happen after Christopher Robin is “gone.” In discussing their favorite activities at the end of *The House at Pooh Corner*, Christopher Robin describes his as, “’what I like doing best is Nothing’….’It means just going along, listening to all the things you can’t hear, and not bothering’” (336-37). Christopher Robin is effectively summarizing what childhood has been like for him: leisurely and bother-free.

If Pooh’s Forest is magical, then Galleons Lap is among the Forest’s most magical places. The boy and bear end up sitting in Galleons Lap in the top of the Forest. Christopher Robin calls it enchanted and describes it as “Being enchanted, its floor was not like the floor of the Forest, gorse and bracken and heather, but close-set grass, quiet smooth and green. It was the only place in the Forest where you could sit down carelessly, without getting up again almost at once and looking for somewhere else”

(337). If Christopher Robin has any chance at all of making his childhood last forever, it is here. Christopher Robin tries to explain some of his lessons to Pooh there in Galleons Lap. Of course Pooh does not truly understand but nods along just as a child would in the presence of a story that was beyond his understanding but not beyond his desire to be included. In reality, Christopher Robin does not truly understand what it is going to be like outside of childhood as the vision of adulthood he has received in school is complex and confusing. Eventually, Christopher Robin runs out of things to say. “And by-and-by Christopher Robin came to an end of the things, and was silent, and he sat there looking out over the world, and wishing it wouldn’t stop” (340). There at the top of the Forest, Christopher Robin can see his whole childhood laid out before him. The Forest is the world that he wishes wouldn’t stop; his childhood is ending here.

Christopher Robin tries to explain the sobering fact that he may be leaving behind his childish games of pretend to Pooh. His vague ventures into the topic tell Pooh that he is “’not going to do Nothing any more’” (342). Pooh asks him if he means not at all to which Christopher Robin replies “’Well, not so much. They don’t let you’” (342). Christopher Robin’s favorite thing is to do Nothing which is what he does with Pooh. The ominous “they” (the pressures of adult life, time, school, and forces outside the Forest in general) are pulling Christopher Robin away from his childhood, away from Pooh. Christopher Robin ultimately gives up, knowing Pooh will not be able understand, not want to understand. “’Pooh,’ said Christopher Robin earnestly, ‘if I—if I’m not quite— ‘he stopped and tried again—‘Pooh, whatever happens, you will understand, won’t you?’ ‘Understand what?’ ‘Oh, nothing.’ He laughed and jumped to his feet” (34). Instead,

Christopher Robin tells Pooh that they are going “Anywhere.” Earlier, as they moved closer to the enchanted crown of the Forest of Milne’s idealized childhood, Christopher Robin said they were going “Nowhere.” To go to the opposite of this is Christopher Robin’s amelioration of leaving the Forest and growing up. The Anywhere of the outside world has overtaken Christopher Robin’s Nowhere of the Forest.

Christopher Robin leaves Pooh’s Forest eventually not because it has changed but rather he has. Not only has Christopher Robin changed but Milne himself has also changed. Christopher Robin learns from his time in school that these childhood times will soon end. The eventuality is not that he won’t be able to physically go to the Forest where he plays inside trees with his stuffed animals. Christopher Robin knows that there will soon be a time where he won’t *want* to do those things any longer. The social and personal expansion that accompanies his time at school will supplant his time in the Forest. Milne goes through a similar experience from a different vantage point.

Milne sees his son growing up; he sees England changing; he sees his last connection to the idea of the idealized childhood slipping away from him. What he might not have known is how the theme of saying goodbye would apply to the field of literature for which he was best known. World War I changed the landscape of what it meant to be a child in England and Milne’s *Pooh* stories. In discussing the stories’ ending, Humphrey Carpenter says, “perhaps Milne is half consciously saying goodbye not so much to his own literary creation as to the whole image of the Enchanted Place, the Arcadia, the Never Never Land, the Secret Garden” (209). With the loss of innocence brought about

by World War I’s violence, these stories speak to the reader’s desire to return to an earlier, safer time.

CHAPTER FIVE

SEARCHING FOR 'TIME NO LONGER':

TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN AND THE TIME-STOP

Following the end of the first golden age of children's literature and the onset of World War II in 1939, the face of British children's literature would be altered forever. Years after the fighting ended, Philippa Pearce's second novel, *Tom's Midnight Garden*, would win the Carnegie Medal in 1958. While separated from the other works discussed in this thesis by years of war and vast global change, *Tom's Midnight Garden* possesses that quality of the idealization of childhood that unites all these works. Heather Montgomery, editor of *Children's Literature: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*, describes *Tom's Midnight Garden*, saying: "[I]t confronts the inevitable losses of growing up and growing old and recognizes that childhood is a transient phase of life that can never be revisited" (204). Although this assertion is partially true, this thesis will examine how this novel reveals that childhood, or the ideas and feelings that accompany childhood, can be revisited and relived. The novel focuses on Tom Long, the eponymous character, and his efforts to remain in his childhood forever. Childhood and its idealized innocence are symbolized in the story's magical garden (much like the book's predecessor Burnett's *The Secret Garden*) into which Tom escapes every night. This garden is the story's time-stop world in which Tom briefly glimpses the possibility of eternal childhood. Despite the eventual loss of the Midnight Garden, Tom grows more accepting to the inevitable nature of time with the assurance that childhood can be revisited from adulthood in a remembrance of the possibility experienced there.

Philippa Pearce wrote the story of *Tom's Midnight Garden* as a reflection of her own childhood growing up in Mill House, her childhood home. The nostalgic quality present throughout the novel is genuine as Pearce lamented the house being sold while she was in her early thirties saying in her biography from Penguin Books: "Suddenly my childhood was chopped off from me….I began thinking of writing a story based on the house and the garden and this feeling of things slipping away." The feelings of longing and loss that Pearce describes are, of course, central to the novel. A changing global environment brought on increased feelings of nostalgia for people who could remember the time "before." The experience of World War II from 1939-1945 had altered the landscape of what it meant to be a child in England as well as the world at large. The reaching effects of the violence reverberated across the tranquil existence of the isolated England. Where childhood had been revered in decades before, the innocence that was celebrated was no longer guaranteed. Pearce writes not specifically about her own childhood but rather about every childhood, as reinforced by the idea in the text that Tom and Mrs. Bartholomew/Hatty both share this same singular dream representation of childhood. Pearce says it best herself: "One garden; two time-separated childhoods: that is the basis of the story of *Tom's Midnight Garden*" ("Time Present" 72).With the focus on the longing for an earlier time being central to the text, the novel understandably expounds a great deal on time.

The most apparent theme that the novel deals with is time. Tom moves back and forth between two different time periods: Tom's childhood, or the present, and Hatty's childhood, or the past. Tom's time coincides with the 1960s a little beyond the book's

release in 1958 (Pearce “Time Present”), while Hatty’s time spans the end of the 1800s. Tom travels to Hatty’s time because he as a character is looking for a freedom he does not have in his own time, and Tom also travels as a commentary on Pearce’s longing for her own childhood. When in Hatty’s time, Tom can only be seen by a select group of people. Linda Hall explains the rationale behind who can and cannot see Tom. “As in all time-slip novels, he is a spirit or ghost who remains an outsider, unseen by all but a few ill-treated children, or adults highly sensitive to the sufferings of others” (“’A Chance Child’” 5). Because Tom is a child, he is connected to the other child in this secondary world. Tom’s ability to go unnoticed aids him in his primary goal. When all is revealed at the novel’s end, suddenly Tom has not only been traveling back and forth from one time to another; he has been traveling from one childhood to another. Tom’s presence in Mrs. Bartholomew’s memories of her own childhood highlights a key similarity between Tom and Hatty and by extension children and adults. Both characters, one young and one old, are longing for the same thing: childhood.

Where the Midnight Garden represents a kind of safety, Tom’s home represents the idea of danger. During Tom’s travels between the two different time periods, Tom works at delaying his return to his actual home. Tom knows that to go home will cut him off from the garden forever. Tom’s actual home is associated with the idea of danger: the dangers of growing up, the dangers of the sickness he has been sent here to avoid, and so on. To grow up at this point in the novel threatens his safety.

In order to try to avoid growing up, Tom needs to try to understand what is happening with regard to time. To better understand time in support of his efforts to avoid

growing up, Tom engages in conversations with his aunt and uncle in an effort to educate himself on how time "works." These discussions quickly separate the novel from others like it in two ways. First, they set Tom apart as a character who rather quickly grasps the basic premise of what is happening in regard to his time travel. He has no period of adjustment like an adult might. Second, the discussions also set the novel itself apart from other children's time-slip and time-stop novels in the respect that in earlier stories the machinations of time are rarely explicitly discussed. Nikolajeva comments that, "[i]n general, there is more preoccupation with the notion and nature of Time in *Tom's Midnight Garden* than in most so-called time-shift fantasies" (105). Earlier novels would not openly discuss the possibilities of whatever sort of magical phenomenon was occurring: the Darling children have no substantive discussion about how or why Peter does not age, Christopher Robin does not question the abilities of his animal friends to speak, and while Alice goes through stages of acceptance about her surroundings, she does not openly question the means by which she came to inhabit them. Perhaps the cause of the change lies in the exposure to the violence of the World Wars.

Nearly all of Tom's discussions about understanding the nature of time occur between him and his Uncle Alan. The first discussion they have begins after Tom witnesses the fir tree's death during the storm in Hatty's time. Uncle Alan tells Tom that the tree's fall and inexplicable renewal could only be explained through manipulation of time. "'Not unless you put the clock back,' Uncle Alan said carelessly, in answer to Tom's last question" (Pearce 55). The offhand response that Uncle Alan provides helps to develop Tom's continued line of questioning throughout the story. Tom interprets Uncle

Alan's suggestion as a literal one instead of recognizing the metaphor, asking him, "'What clock?'" (Pearce 56). Uncle Alan explains that this is merely a saying that people use when they have a desire for their past and informs Tom that "'Time isn't like that'" (Pearce 56). This response inadvertently brings about the question that Tom will spend much of the remainder of the story trying to answer: "What *is* Time like, Uncle Alan?" (Pearce 56). In response to Aunt Gwen's admonishment of Tom for bothering his uncle, Uncle Alan responds, "'No, no, Gwen. A child's questions should certainly be answered" (Pearce 56). Although the answers Uncle Alan provides are not directly responsible for any of the answers that Tom finds about the question of time, these conversations with Uncle Alan do help facilitate Tom's own reasoning about the nature of time based on his own experience. After all, Tom is the only time traveler in the room.

The rest of Uncle Alan's explanations about time are confusing to Tom. Peter Hunt calls them "the theories of time inarticulately and angrily propounded by Tom's Uncle Alan" (227). Hunt's description of the theories being "inarticulately and angrily" conveyed to Tom is not inaccurate, but the attempt to educate invokes more of the idea of frustration that Milne conveys so well in his writing of Christopher Robin trying to explain growing up to Pooh. Both situations involve one older character trying to communicate a concept to another younger character with the assumption that the younger character cannot and will not fully grasp the situation. As much as Tom tries to understand Uncle Alan's adult ideas about time, he finds that he cannot. "Tom listened attentively, and sometimes he seemed to understand, and then, sometimes he was sure he didn't. 'But modern theories of Time,' said Uncle Alan . . . [Tom] thought again that he

was understanding, and then again was sure he wasn't" (Pearce 168-169). Uncle Alan and Tom's failure to communicate occurs because Uncle Alan is talking about time in *theory*, and Tom is talking about time in *practice*.

When Tom does not grasp the adult explanation of how time works, he pulls his understanding from the area that he does understand: a children's story. Even though Uncle Alan does not accomplish what he aims to with this explanation, he does, for the second time, inadvertently lead Tom to a further revelation. Uncle Alan starts to use Washington Irving's story of Rip Van Winkle as an illustration but abandons this line of thinking before he even begins. Even though Uncle Alan moves on to another explanation, Tom latches on to the idea of Rip Van Winkle strongly and relates his own situation to that of the fairy tale. "'Now', thought Tom, 'wasn't he himself like Rip van Winkle in reverse, so to speak?' Instead of going forward for twenty years, Tom went back a hundred and more, to Hatty's lifetime" (Pearce 171). Rather than the very adult, scientific theory Uncle Alan offers as an explanation, the children's story is the more successful effort to explain the time-slipping. Tom chooses the explanation that, like him, is closest to childhood.

Tom's impending loss of his vacation prompts him to reason against Uncle Alan's previous "instruction" about time, deciding that time can be manipulated: "[Time] can be dispensed with perhaps; or, rather, it can be dodged. Tom himself might be able to dodge behind Time's back and have the Past—that is, Hatty's Present and the garden—here, now and for ever" (Pearce 168). Indeed, Tom has been dodging his aunt and uncle at night for the past few weeks because they try to control how much time Tom has

remaining in his childhood. Time's march forward also threatens to keep Tom from remaining in his childhood. So, if time is an authority figure in Tom's life, he reasons that he might be able to dodge time as well.

Tom's adult relatives regulate how he occupies his time. His summer vacation, a time when children normally get to enjoy the freedom from the regimented schedule of schooling, has been interrupted by his exile from his home at the behest of his parents. After his arrival at the Kitsons', his Uncle Alan and Aunt Gwen pay particular attention in the early parts of the novel to regulating how Tom spends his time at night. The limitations range from limiting his activities—"After that Tom was rationed to ten minutes reading in bed" (Pearce 10)—to dictating the appropriate amount of sleep Tom should get: "'You go to bed at nine in the evening and get up at seven in the morning. That is ten hours. You need those ten hours' sleep because…" (Pearce 12). Very little information surfaces as to what, if any, restrictions his aunt and uncle place on Tom's daytime activities. Because Tom is treated like a child at night, Tom behaves much more like an adult during the day, engaging his uncle and aunt in conversation while saving his childlike play activities for the garden which he can only enter into at night. In restricting what Tom can do at night, his relatives are trying to regulate the time of day during which he behaves most like a child.

At night, Tom alternates between worrying deeply about time and slipping back into the simplicity of childhood. This shift between mindsets occurs most often when Tom is in Hatty's time, in the garden, in her childhood. "Tom, made easily unaware of the passage of time, crept back by the way he had come—back into the garden" (Pearce

39). So, Tom is preoccupied with thoughts about the nature of time but only when he is not "ducking" it. Tom's presence in Hatty's childhood helps him to forget about the passing of time. If the garden is symbolic of youth, then Tom's travel back in time is literally him going back "the way he had come:" through childhood. The garden serves many functions in Pearce's construction of the relationship between adulthood and childhood; it represents both the idyll of the simplistic childhood as well as the Arcadian image in contrast to an industrializing England.

The garden of the Melbourne's house is where Tom exits from his present into the past. Fundamentally the idea of a garden and what it represents makes multiple connections to time. In a general sense, the act of gardening is an attempt to alter and preserve life against the effects of natural time. The repeated cycle of planting and replanting creates the impression of timelessness. Tom's travels from his childhood to a previous childhood reinforces the idea of timelessness as this implies that someday the same might happen for Tom, with a new child visiting Tom's dreams of his own childhood. In addition, the simplicity of the garden connects strongly to the pre-World War England, the time period around which many time-slip and time-stop stories were created.

The garden for Tom, and for Mrs. Bartholomew, represents the simpler time during which they are children. Raymond Jones elaborates further on the representation of the garden: "The garden represents, not only a time in the social history of England, but more especially, a time in every individual's life" (214). Even for Pearce herself, the garden specifically reflected an aspect of her own childhood. For Mrs. Bartholomew, the

garden is symbolic of the time before she met her future husband and began the transition to adulthood. For Tom, the garden represents that place in which he played with his brother from whom he has been separated. “The garden is obviously, on one level, the product of psychological necessity. Tom cannot stand his life at the Kitsons’. As his surname suggests, he *longs* for a place of escape” (Jones 213). Jones asserts that just as the garden is a creation of Hatty’s longing for her childhood, the garden is also a creation of Tom’s because of his longing to get away from his aunt and uncle’s home. The absence of his brother serves to help Tom find his way into Mrs. Bartholomew’s shared dream. Tom feels as though the garden is something that the adults in his life are actively trying to keep from him. “They had tried to keep this from him, but they could not stop him now—not his aunt, nor his uncle, nor the back flat tenants, nor even particular Mrs. Bartholomew” (Pearce 20). Unbeknownst to Tom at this point in the narrative, it is only Mrs. Bartholomew, an adult, who allows him access to the garden at all through her dream.

The garden into which Tom adventures is bounded more by the limits of Mrs. Bartholomew’s memory than actual physical walls. Although the garden is a non-linear experience through Hatty’s childhood, the garden is also bounded by the times at which Hatty’s childhood begins and ends. Furthermore, the garden represents that idea of adventure in a place that blends the wildness of nature with civilization in the form of a walled garden. Therefore, children’s adventures can take place in the garden without exposing them to the real danger that the open world provides. Angelika Zirker observes that “Tom and Hatty show a fascination with the garden that, particularly in the form of

the walled garden, has a long tradition in children's literature: Alice wants to enter a walled garden, and all her adventures in Wonderland start with this longing; Mary in *The Secret Garden* has a similar desire" (280). Both the child and the adult characters seek refuge in the garden.

When Tom visits the garden, he eventually discovers that the time of day, the season, and the year do not match between his present and the past. "He saw the garden at many times of its day, and at different seasons—its favourite season was summer, with perfect weather" (Pearce 45). If childhood has a season, would it not be summer? The freedom from school and the weather which is suited to numerous outdoor adventures would make summer the most childlike of seasons. "Like the Neverland, the magical *enclosed* garden (a *locus communus* of pastoral) is a paradise, where there is always summer and fine weather, since it is evoked by Hatty's nostalgic memories" (Nikolajeva 103). During the time in which the garden is in summer, Hatty is young like Tom. However, after her accident, Hatty begins to age, and the season in the garden turns to winter. "Tom had been ready for changes in Hatty; what took him utterly by surprise, when he opened the garden door, was a change in the season. It was mid-winter—not a dreary, grey mid-winter, but one shining with new-fallen snow" (Pearce 160). Winter, as it affects the garden which represents childhood, signals the coming end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood. It is not yet the debilitating dead of winter, but perhaps the seasons are shifting in that direction. During Tom's last trip to the garden, the winter weather has turned into a heavy frost. "A deep frost lay everywhere, binding fast the trees and all the plants of the garden so that there seemed not the slightest movement or life"

(Pearce 183) The coming of winter brings about the end of the Tom's adventures, and this "deep frost" also physically stops the motion and life of the garden, effectively stopping Time. "The trip to Ely occurs during the winter, the season of death" (Jones 216). This trip brings about the death of Hatty's childhood, the death of the garden. For Hatty, the garden ends at a different time than Tom. Although Tom witnesses the night the fir tree falls, it is not his last experience with the garden, a disjointed timeline not possible in the normal, adult linear time from which Tom is trying to escape. When the tree falls in the garden, Hatty recognizes that act as the last day of being a child. "[I]t marks the end of her childhood, the end of her stay at her aunt's—and thus also the end to her playing in the garden. She has to leave the paradise of her childhood" (Zirker 279). For Hatty, it is the symbolic event of the tree's death which alters her way of thinking to a more adult mindset. She communicates her new ideas to Tom in their conversation some sixty years later. "'And then I knew, Tom, that the garden was changing all the time, because nothing stands still, except in our memory" (Pearce 223). While Hatty's garden is no longer physically available to her as Mrs. Bartholomew, Tom's garden is still there at his home full of adventures to be shared with his brother in the experience of Tom's childhood which has yet to end.

Before the story reaches this cathartic resolution, Tom is still endeavoring to escape linear time. After repeated trips to the Midnight Garden, Tom discovers what he must do to dodge time. Tom finally makes the connection that if he wants to escape the ineffability of linear time, then he has to take advantage of the time-slip between his time and Hatty's time because Tom's time (present) does not move while he is in Hatty's time

(past). After his first trip, Tom examines the grandfather clock to discover that despite the fact he has been gone for several hours, not a minute has passed in his time. Tom reasons that “the hours after the twelfth do not exist in ordinary Time; they are not bound by the laws of ordinary Time; they are not over in sixty ordinary minutes; they are endless” (Pearce 181). If he finds a way to stay in Hatty’s time forever, there will be no reason to ever have to leave the garden. In this manner, Tom becomes again like Barrie’s Peter Pan, a young boy attempting to avoid growing up. Humphrey Carpenter comments that Tom “is in fact Peter Pan to Hatty’s Wendy, and *Tom’s Midnight Garden* is in one respect a rewriting of *Peter Pan* from Peter’s point of view” (219). Hatty, like Wendy, is unable to remain in the place in which she will not age forever. As Wendy leaves Neverland, Hatty leaves her childhood. Ultimately, Tom discovers that staying in Hatty’s time forever is impossible and that he must embrace the inevitable. “…[T]he story’s conclusion describes Tom’s acceptance of what Peter Pan can never accept: that Time must be allowed to pass, and growth and even old age must be accepted as necessary and even desirable facets of human existence” (Carpenter 220). Tom’s maturity perhaps represents a larger maturation; people have come to accept that childhood is something unable to be preserved forever but something worth reflecting on. In his actions, Tom acts more like Wendy than Peter Pan in his acceptance of growing up and returning to his parents and to his present where the grandfather clock still ticks on.

The grandfather clock in the hallway at the Kitsons’ is one of the first things that Tom notices when he arrives, which is fitting considering the role it will play in his summer exile. The grandfather clock will be the magical object that enables Tom to move

from one time to another (like the amulet in Nesbit's *Story of the Amulet* or the time turner in Rowling's *Harry Potter: Prisoner of Azkaban*). The grandfather clock is described later as "a tall ancient figure of black in lesser blackness" (Pearce 18), and the angel on the clock is described as "above the dial itself stood a creature like a man but with enormous, sweeping wings. His body was wound about something white. His face was a round of gold, and his feet were of the same colour and were planted on either side of the clock-dial. One foot seemed to stand on a piece of grassy land; the other went into the sea" (Pearce 33). The angel's stance becomes much more significant when it is mirrored by Tom every time he goes into the garden. "Outside the front door of the flat he took off one of his slippers; he laid it on the floor against the door jamb and then closed the door on to it, as on to a wedge. That would keep the door open for his return" (Pearce 18). With one shoe in his time and one shoe in Hatty's time, Tom is straddling the border between the two realms: the present and the past, childhood and adulthood, acceptance and resistance. Like Tom, the clock, and by extension time, exhibits both an unavoidable quality and a duality regarding its motivations.

The grandfather clock is an anchor for Tom in that it is present in both time periods, but after the door to the garden disappears, the clock is portrayed as unsympathetic to Tom's wishes to remain in the garden forever. "…he halted in the middle of the hall by the grandfather clock, sobbing. The grandfather clock ticked coldly on" (211). Time, represented by the clock, is unavoidable as Tom learns in the end. The fact that Hatty has not "dodged" aging into Mrs. Bartholomew further proves that no one is free from the effects of linear time.

As time is represented by the grandfather clock, the grandfather clock is portrayed both as a positive enabling force and a negative limiting force throughout the novel. "[The clock] would tick on to bedtime, and in that way Time was Tom's friend; but, after that, it would tick on to Saturday, and in that way Time was Tom's enemy" (Pearce 158). The grandfather clock serves as the means by which Tom enters the garden, but it also measures out the time that Tom has left in the garden. This double edged nature of time blends with the other dualities presented in the novel: night and day, child and adult, past and present, dream and awake.

Another duality present in the novel is Tom's measurement of time. Tom has both the public sense of time, or clock time, and the personal sense of time. So Tom's sense of measurement, much like the grandfather clock which chimes the incorrect hour, is wrong when compared to the adult public time. "[Tom] longed for the minutes and hours to pass quickly until tonight. Time was so long from now until then; so short from now until Saturday" (157). Night is the time during which Tom is able to enter the garden, and Saturday is the day on which Tom must return home. Despite the fact that in a world governed by linear time "tonight" comes before "Saturday," Tom identifies Saturday as the event which feels closer. The child's concept of time is very relative depending on perceived importance and interest: Saturday, as it is the end of his time in the garden, represents the end of childhood both for him and for Hatty. Tom blames the grandfather clock for this, placing control of time with the clock itself.

The grandfather clock is responsible for bringing about the end of both Tom's vacation and Mrs. Bartholomew's dream. "All that morning, Tom seemed to hear the

ticking of the grandfather clock, bringing Saturday, minute by minute, nearer and nearer. He hated the clock for that" (Pearce 156). Tom does not want to leave the garden ever, least of all before he has discovered the secrets of the grandfather clock which he cannot currently access. The clock is always locked to Tom. A real understanding of time (represented by the grandfather clock's internal workings) is inaccessible to Tom on his own because he is a child. "He fumbled first at one side of the door, then at the other; but there seemed no catch—no way in. He remembered how the pendulum-case door had not yielded to him either on that first day" (Pearce 18). However, Tom witnesses Mrs. Bartholomew opening the clock early in his experience. "This is the morning that Mrs. Bartholomew always goes downstairs to wind the grandfather clock" (Pearce 29). Mrs. Bartholomew can access the clock because as an adult she has accepted time and grown up. Mrs. Bartholomew, by growing up, *has* a past to dream about. Tom, as a child, does not yet.

While the grandfather clock clearly plays the most important role as time-keeper (and time-giver) in the novel, there are three other clocks present: the kitchen clock, the sundial in the garden, and the village church clock. The kitchen clock is "an ugly little clock, but it always kept perfect time" (Pearce 43). Despite its mundane appearance, especially in contrast to the complexity of the grandfather clock, it does serve to facilitate one of Tom's revelations about the nature of Time. While sitting at the kitchen staring at the kitchen clock, Tom muses, "However long a time he spent in the garden, the kitchen clock measured none of it. He spent time there, without spending a fraction of a second of

ordinary time" (Pearce 181). The kitchen clock, in its ugliness and plainness, measures out that ordinary time.

While the grandfather clock serves as the link between past and present, the sundial in the garden represents even older time. On his second trip to the garden, Tom describes the sundial. "On the high south wall, half covered by the sporting of a vine, there was a sundial . . . the sight of the sundial, even without the sun upon it yet, had reminded him again of the passing of time" (Pearce 39-40). This trip into the garden is started and ended by clocks. The grandfather clock permits him access to the garden, and the sundial reminds him of time, after which he exits the garden. "[T]he sundial's iron finger threw a shadow at last, and told the time. Day was beginning, and Tom was afraid of being caught in a daytime not his own" (Pearce 42). The framing of this journey with the two clocks is repeated in the framing of the entire adventure by the grandfather clock and the village church clock.

Only briefly heard and never actually seen, the village church clock signals Tom's final exit from Hatty's Time in much the same way that the grandfather clock enables his initial entrance into Hatty's Time. "A village church clock struck across the darkened countryside, and Tom thought of Time" (Pearce 205). When the village clock sounds, Tom is watching Hatty's interaction with young Barty, the man who will eventually become her husband. The couple is ignoring Tom and leaving him alone with his thoughts on Time: "how he had been sure of mastering it, and of exchanging his own Time for an Eternity of Hatty's and so of living pleasurably in the garden for ever. The garden was still there, but meanwhile Hatty's Time had stolen a march on him, and had

turned Hatty herself from his playmate into a grown-up woman" (Pearce 205). Tom attempts to hold on to his own youth, he neglects to ensure that Hatty retains hers. Upon meeting her future husband, Hatty begins to lose that connection to her childhood through which she interacts with Tom, causing him to fade away from the garden forever. Tom can no longer visit the garden of Hatty's childhood through Mrs. Bartholomew's dream because her dreams have moved on to the next stage of her life.

Moving back to the grandfather clock, the fact that Hatty is the one who is able to open it in the past foreshadows the eventual connection between the two girls. It is Tom's physical access to the grandfather clock that reveals the inscription of the words 'Time No Longer,' a reference to the apocalyptic verses of Revelations from the Bible. Tom's interest piques over the idea of 'Time No Longer' as he associates the agency of time with the clocks themselves. "'Time no longer…' murmured Tom, and thought of all the clocks in the world stopping ticking, and their striking stopped for ever…the three words began to seem full of enormous possibilities" (Pearce 166). This idea is an escalation of Tom's goal from the beginning of the novel. At the beginning of the story, Tom is chasing after that elusive 'extra hour.' Now, he has discovered what he sees as an escape from the confines of time and growing up; however, Tom does not initially perceive the connection between this iteration of 'Time No Longer' and death (much like Alice does), misunderstanding this particular religious idea of 'Time No Longer' to a certain degree.

In addition to no physical access, Tom does not understand what the clock tries to tell him. "What the clock told him, Tom could not yet understand, and his mind turned away from it" (Pearce 33). Tom, as a child, cannot fully understand the implications of

time and how it stands to affect his life. It is not until later, when he can no longer go to the garden (the most visible representation of childhood), that he understands Mrs. Bartholomew's explanation of time. The adult character has to impart that knowledge to the child character by the explanation of what her dream means.

The connection between dreams and the past is not fully explored until the closing chapters of the novel when Tom finally speaks to Mrs. Bartholomew. As Tom questions Mrs. Bartholomew about her experiences with time travel, he asks, "' [a]nd since you've come to live here, you've often gone back in Time, haven't you?' 'Gone back in Time?' 'Gone back into the Past.' 'When you're my age Tom, you live in the Past a great deal. You remember it; you dream of it'" (Pearce 224). This is the point at which Tom realizes how he was able to travel to the past (the presence of Hatty's skates in his floorboards disproves the idea that it was *only* a dream or a memory and Tom was not actually in the past). Mrs. Bartholomew's desire to re-experience a happier time in her life creates the "door" of the dream to the past. Tom's desire for companionship allows him to travel through that same "door" to join Mrs. Bartholomew in her Past. Mrs. Bartholomew's duality of character, in that she is both Hatty and Mrs. Bartholomew, is subtly mirrored in Tom at numerous points. Just as Mrs. Bartholomew's double natures are connected by her dream, so is Tom's double nature.

The first indication of Tom's dream duality occurs very early in the novel in what can later be understood as an instance of foreshadowing given Mrs. Bartholomew's division between her dream life (Past) and real life (Present). "…[I]n his half-dreaming, he became two persons, and one of him would not go to sleep but selfishly insisted on

keeping the other awake with a little muttering monologue on whipped cream and shrimp sauce and rum butter and real mayonnaise and all the other rich variety of his diet" (Pearce 10). Tom's two parts play on that idea of the relationship of child to adult. These dual natures also serve to push the idea of validating the grandfather clock. "Admittedly, argued the other Tom—the one who would never let the sleepy Tom go to sleep—admittedly the clock struck the hours at the wrong time; but, all the same, they were hours—real hours—hours that really existed" (Pearce 16). Tom's other half recognizes the possibility very early on that these hours, despite not fitting into the linear notion of time, do exist and are accessible to Tom in the form of the garden.

This dream duality is further enhanced by the fact that Tom and his brother Peter look very similar. "Hatty looked round to see where Tom had got to. She saw, instead of one boy, two: they were very much alike, and dressed identically in pyjamas. The second boy had the same insubstantial look that she had noticed recently in Tom himself" (Pearce 197). This is the point in the story at which Peter, who is still at Tom's home, discovers that he can actually reach Tom in the same way that Tom reaches Hatty: through the time slip aspect of dreaming. Just as Mrs. Bartholomew is reconnecting with her childhood in the form of Hatty, Tom is reconnecting with his *own* childhood in the form of Peter. While Tom is only travelling through time when he goes through the magical door each night, Peter must travel through space as well as time in order to reconnect Tom. According to J.W. Dunne's *An Experiment with Time*, time is the fourth extension of the idea of three-dimensional space and to draw some kind of distinction between travelling through Time and travelling through Space would be false (119-123).

The two brothers exhibit another similarity related to their night time travels in that both Tom and Peter first enter into the shared space of Mrs. Bartholomew's dream by counting to themselves, in essence *keeping time* like a clock would. Just as the grandfather clock serves as the link between the two times, the mimicry of a clock connects Peter back to his brother. Tom begins by counting the chimes of the grandfather clock. "Even in his irritation, Tom could not stop counting; it had become a habit with him at night…After all, the clock was the only thing that would speak to him at all in these hours of darkness" (Pearce 15). Peter likewise counts his way into the dream. "[Peter] began to count, in order to send himself off to sleep. He did not count the usual sheep going through a stile, because there are neither sheep nor stiles in a garden: he simply counted. Numbers, in their regularity began to send Peter to sleep" (Pearce 195). Peter is actively seeking the garden, seeking Tom, seeking escape from the imprisonment of his sickness. All three characters' desires afford them the opportunity to break free of the confines of normal, linear time much like in a fairy tale. When characters wish for something, it is that wish that brings about the change desired. The novel's connection to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* a connection that *Tom's Midnight Garden* shares with Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill,* reinforces this convention.

Tom leaves Mrs. Bartholomew and the Kitsons' home with mixed emotions. The door to Hatty's garden has been closed to him, but this too is positive in its own way: "[T]he doorway between past and present closes after the two-sided healing, the balancing of present and past values, occurs" (Nodelman 17). Tom has achieved a new appreciation for the natural order of time now that he has discovered Hatty, now Mrs.

Bartholomew, still exists in his time, connecting that sought after past with his own present. Mrs. Bartholomew was able to relive the memories of her youth again in the peace of her childhood garden. Tom still longs for the garden in which he can escape time, but he recognizes the possibility in "the warmth of that homecoming; and, when the welcomes were over, he would draw Peter aside into the little back garden and whisper: 'Peter, I've got the secret of the other garden to tell you, and I've an invitation for you from Hatty'" (Pearce 228). Tom's acceptance of growth and linear time and its effects grants him the opportunity to return home to Peter, his current childhood, and to share the excitement of the adventure with him. "[T]he experience of the past becomes part of a theme of moving on, growing, accepting change, death and loss" (Cosslett 244). In the end, Tom returns to his own garden in his own time where another childhood's worth of memories waits to be created and perhaps experienced by another in the shared dream of childhood where there is 'Time No Longer.'

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

These lands of escape serve their dual purposes: to enable the adventures of the fictional child protagonists that inhabit them and to exemplify the authors' attitude about their own childhoods. Despite having a variety of characters and plot, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*, and Philippa Pearce's *Tom's Midnight Garden* all share the common trait of a focus on the conflict between the potential freedom offered by childhood and the loss of that freedom that comes with transitioning into adulthood and the adult world which adults necessarily inhabit.

For each author the most convenient way to attempt to circumvent this inevitability is the creation of a secondary world that is, to varying degrees, free from the bounds of the adult world. The other unifying trait these works all share is that none of the secondary worlds succeed in enabling their inhabitants to avoid linear time forever: Alice leaves, Wendy goes home, Christopher Robin goes to school, and Tom returns to his brother. Despite the temporary escape from the certainty of growing up, all the works eventually allow their characters to grow up, some with a more positive tone than others. While such an ending creates a sense of melancholy in the *Alice* books and *Peter Pan*, the *Pooh* stories and *Tom's Midnight Garden* end instead with an image of hope, an implication that despite the inevitability of leaving childhood that things will still be good. The attitude about the prospect of growing up changes from a less hopeful outlook

to an attitude which conveys a sense of potential happiness despite acknowledging and accepting the end of childhood as an inevitable part of life.

In the *Alice* books, Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land exemplify that childlike approach towards the curious and grotesque view of adulthood that Carroll allows Alice to experiment with. Alice arrives and departs in her secondary worlds without much consideration or awareness of her approach toward adulthood. In *Peter Pan*, Neverland offers an escape from the inevitability of growing up but not without a cost, as Peter forfeits his memory by remaining there, and he is perpetually left behind as other children grow past him into adulthood. Neverland also establishes the idea of the physical representation of the idea of childhood as informed by the children who inhabit it. In *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*, Pooh's Forest continues this physical representation with Milne's creation of the idealized space for the experience of Christopher Robin's childhood safe from the dangers of the outside world. Milne reinforces the idea that childhood is an experience which repeats over and over again and new children who come after will inhabit the spaces the growing children have left behind. The idea of the once child, now adult sharing her experiences with a new generation of children first dreamed by Alice's sister in *Alice in Wonderland* is fully realized in the close of *Tom's Midnight Garden*. When the young character of Hatty is revealed to in fact be Mrs. Bartholomew, the promise left by Carroll at the end of *Alice in Wonderland* is brought to fruition. Alice's sister envisions the possible future for Alice in the novel's closing paragraphs.

> Lastly, [Alice's sister] pictured to herself how this same little sister of hers would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman; and how she would keep, through all her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood; and how she would gather about her other little children, and make *their* eyes bright and eager with many a strange tale, perhaps even with the dream of Wonderland long ago; and how she would feel all their simple sorrows, and find a pleasure in their simple joys, remembering her own child-life, and the happy summer days. (Carroll 99)

The possible future that Alice's sister envisions for Alice is what actually happens for Mrs. Bartholomew. Tom sees the version of Mrs. Bartholomew's childhood that she remembers and idealizes. Even though Mrs. Bartholomew's own version of Wonderland is far into the past, her dream of the events and the feelings that accompany childhood make her experiences timeless and enable her to share in the experience of childhood with an inhabitant of a new generation of childhood. Tom will leave Mrs. Bartholomew and return to his own childhood in the same way Alice leaves her sister alone; however, Tom runs back to Mrs. Bartholomew, now called Hatty, briefly to symbolize the youthful connection they share, and hugs her, adding a quality of contentment to the close of the novel whereas *Alice* ends with a heavy melancholy.

While I chose to focus on British authors from the late 19th and early 20th century, there are many avenues through which this research could be taken further. Examining the attitude about time and manipulation of linear time from American children's literature produced at the same time during which these English works were written no

doubt holds insight into cultural differences between the idea of childhood in England and the idea of childhood in America. Additionally, as a continuum in the manipulation of linear time has been identified here in the nearly century long period from 1865 to 1958, there remains work to be done in examining how this trend continues to change. Particularly suited to this topic would be the works of Madeline L'Engle in her *Time Quintet* and C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* as they are works published shortly after *Tom's Midnight Garden* with child characters traveling to an alternate world.

Even though the authors of these works do not succeed in creating a secondary world in which children can infinitely escape adult linear time, each author does demonstrate sufficiently that they all identify with and privilege the viewpoint of a child situated in childhood. It is less important whether these are "accurate" reflections of childhood and more important in what they represent about childhood. For this author, childhood was arriving home just after school, shedding the crushing weight of my school books and escaping carefree into the suburban jungle of my neighborhood. In this pre-cellphone era, I was allowed to roam and adventure until the street lights came on just as it began to get dark. As a child, this period of time felt limitless to me. I could sprint across the country and back before the street lights came on. A fort could be built, assaulted by the ever generic but undeniably evil "bad guys" and dismantled before the street lights came on. An entire World Series of tennis-baseball could be played before the streetlights came on. Looking back on it as an adult, I recognize this duration of time could have been, at the greatest possible maximum, objectively no longer than four to five hours. As working diligently on this thesis has consistently reinforced, four hours is

hardly enough time to get anything done at all. Despite knowing this, the memory of childhood time still feels just a little bit longer. As a child, I was free from the responsibility that comes with work, with school, or with a marriage. My time was my own to spend how I pleased. So, I could feel the possibility that childhood held in terms of where I might go from there.

Just as my construction of my childhood offers insight into the type of childhood I had, these secondary worlds reveal the attitudes about time and the conflict between childhood and adulthood of the authors who created them as well as how childhood was culturally constructed at the time the novel was written. The novels, though they ultimately do not succeed in escaping from adult linear time, create a space in which childhood can at least be prolonged and, most importantly, enjoyed.

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