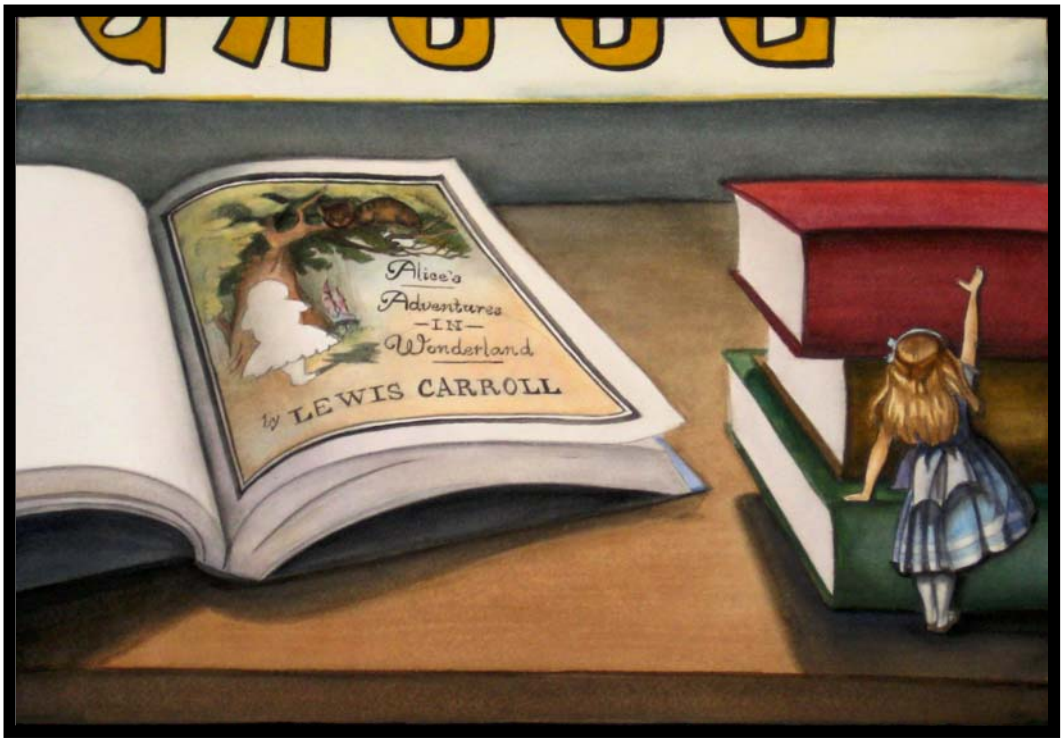

Fictions of Escape & the Economy of Gender in Victorian Children's Literature

Rachel Berube

English Honors Thesis

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Professor Mark Schoenfield _____

Professor Jonathan Farina _____

Professor Houston Baker _____

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Ecstatically leap --
Beloved only Afternoon
That Prison doesn't keep

They storm the Earth and stun the Air,
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Alas -- that Frowns should lie in wait
For such a Foe as this --

Emily Dickinson

Introduction

The children's stories of the nineteenth-century created identifiable characters and memorable adventures which still remain popular today. Young girls continue to feel the heartaches and laugh along at the humorous mishaps of heroines such as Ethel May of Charlotte Yonge's *The Daisy Chain* and Jo March of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. Young boys eagerly turn the pages of Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* still, waiting to read about Tom and Jim's adventures and their newest act of boldness and bravery. And readers of both genders eagerly continue to follow J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan to Neverland, a world where childish dreams and fantasies find new life and rules seem, at least for a time, to disappear. Yet these fun-filled stories are contingent upon an economic value-system delineated by patriarchal constructions of gendered social roles. An economic system in which patriarchal figures determine unequal and inescapable gendered identities produces the "fun" of these stories and naturalizes their gendered expectations, making them appear innocent and inculpable while concealing their more sinister ramifications.

In order to achieve a sense of personal value or capital, the boys and girls of these stories willingly succumb to constructed social expectations as defined by their respective genders, losing their childish freedom and capitulating to a life of obligation and responsibility. Young women have no personal capital of their own; it must be purchased through the sacrifice of childhood adventures in exchange for an investment of masculine guidance towards domestic virtue. Their social roles are products of a society regulated and enforced by masculine patriarchy, and they neither fall into their role naturally nor gladly. Their path to womanhood is a constant struggle to learn the social paradigms constructed and re-enforced by figures of

masculine domestic authority. Ethel's value must be purchased by her older brother's investment in her domestic lessons and the sacrifice of her education, while Jo's struggle to abandon her boyish youth succeeds because of the strength her father invests within her. These stories imply that young women are worthless, and must purchase masculine guidance in order to learn how to fulfill their role of domestic muliebrity and achieve a sense of personal capital in a male-dominated society.

The boys of the adventure stories face a different type of transaction when they accrue a sense of personal value. In *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* running away or leaving the home is the main signifier of boyish behavior and a necessary step towards claiming masculine value. Both Tom and Jim leave home to experience adventures and initiate their journey into maturity. Their separation from domestic restrictions allows the boys to establish their own rules and essentially become the patriarchs of their own society. They separate themselves from the world of domesticity to assert their masculine authority and claim their social value. Yet this social value is worthless apart from the social economic system which instills it with its worth. While boys isolate themselves to attain a sense of self-worth they remain unfulfilled until they return to their homes and find that they were missed by the women they left behind. A boy's value rests on the affirmation that, when he returns, he fulfills a void of masculine capital in the family he left behind.

Though boys retain a level of social authority which exceeds that of their feminine counterparts, they experience a sense of disillusionment with masculine maturity, especially in *Treasure Island*. Boys run away and claim their power to be independent and autonomous forces of masculine authority, yet in order to achieve the same social value women find as mothers these young boys must sacrifice their adventures to take up the obligations and responsibilities of

patriarchy. They too must purchase their own social value by sacrificing independence and adventure in exchange for a wife and children who will validate their masculine authority in the home.

In *Peter Pan*, this gendered value system established in domestic and adventure stories proves to be inescapable, even in the realm of dreams and fantasies. While in Neverland, both Peter and Wendy find that achieving a sense of personal value is impossible beyond the economic system of gender. Rather than taking advantage of the opportunity to explore a world without rules or restrictions, Wendy instead uses Neverland to bypass the restrictions of her youth and find value within the same gendered role she left behind her. Peter becomes the symbolic head of the family, regulating and ordering domestic interactions, while Wendy becomes the domestic mother-figure, sacrificing her time and autonomy to fill the needs of her pseudo-husband and the Lost Boys. In contrast, Peter's relationship to the established social structure remains in a state of tension. He refuses to grow up and succumb to his prescribed social role, yet while he remains in Neverland he can never find a true sense of personal value or fulfillment. He attempts to reconcile this tension by subversively stealing Wendy away and bringing her home with him. With her help, Peter creates a domestic realm where he finds the same sense of affirmation sought by both Tom Sawyer and Jim Hawkins in their respective stories without compromising his carefree life of adventure.

This gendered economy shapes the way that boys and girls of these stories find their value, and in turn the way that boys and girls reading about them come to realize the social expectations held within their gender. Most importantly, each of the authors writing these novels consciously reinforces this economy of gender within their own texts. Both Yonge and Alcott, like Wendy in *Peter Pan*, have an opportunity to explore beyond their gendered roles and test the

boundaries of prescribed femininity within their creative works. Yet rather than embracing an opportunity to defy social boundaries these women end up reinforcing them, not only through their heroines' acquiescence to their established domestic roles but through their writing itself. Each woman writer looks to the masculine canon of literature for guidance within her work and borrows from its social authority in an attempt to instill its value within her text. Yonge consciously attempts to imbue her work with patriarchal literary authority through epigrams she places at the beginning of each chapter, while Alcott acknowledges the superiority of masculine writing to the literary efforts of her own heroine and the Pickwick Club. Just as Ethel May and Jo March receive investments of masculine capital in order to become dutiful young women, these woman authors invest their novels with masculine literary capital in order to validate their creative work.

Similarly, Mark Twain and Robert Louis Stevenson utilize their masculine social capital to imbue their stories with literary weight and authority. Twain's satiric narrative voice criticizes the gendered stereotypes of patriarchal society and mocks its confining strictures, yet still makes conscious use of its regulatory power to frame his narrative and his characters. He condemns the women shaped by society to be hypocritical creatures of morals and duty, yet depends upon these gendered constructions to produce the same boyish adventure he admires and encourages throughout *Tom Sawyer*. In contrast, Stevenson's first person narrative drives Jim Hawkins' adventure and uses its masculine authority to imbue the tale with authenticity and value. Jim remains above reproach throughout the novel and the idealized echelon of masculine behavior, and he alone receives the authority to write the tale and shape how it will be remembered. However, the story which is the most self-conscious of the gendered, economic dynamics of society is *Peter Pan*. Within the novel Barrie's narrative voice persistently bemoans the short-

comings and prejudices of this gendered economic system and acknowledges its power and influence over his characters. Yet rather than attempting to refute this prejudiced social dynamic and highlight its flaws within his creative work, Barrie chooses to accept it and acknowledges its influence over all children for generations to come.

That this unequal economy of gendered values is tested, explored, and consciously acknowledged by the writers of these texts signifies its importance to the structures of the stories themselves. None of these writers successfully escape this economic system and none ever actually try; each creates the temptation of escape without actually acting upon it. Rather than reaching beyond the known and attempting to dispel the constructed and disparate values accorded to men and women within society, these stories choose to ignore the implications of this gendered economy and reinforce its authority over their respective plots and characters. The unfairness and struggles associated with conforming to this economic value system are naturalized by the stories, as if they were universal struggles of adolescence rather than a set of patriarchal social constructions it might be possible to undermine or escape. Ethel and Jo ultimately resign themselves to being women and live content and happy serving the men and families they love. Tom and Jim return home as heroes from their adventures and are acknowledged as powerful, independent, and undeniably important to their own families and homes, and Wendy finds value and fulfillment by fabricating a role for herself as a mother in Neverland. Even Peter, the one who comes closest to escaping his prescribed social role, fails to break free and returns year after year to the nursery to receive a constructed distortion of the domestic affirmation missing within his adventures. Each character finds success and value at the end of their story by submitting to the same gendered roles they wanted to escape from all along.

Like Wendy, readers presumably want the fiction of escape from a world of ordered expectations and interactions without losing the comfort of knowing this order exists, waiting for them to return. They enjoy the fun of the fictions, the brief escape from and defiance of reality, yet overlook the fact that this "fun" is created by a disparate and gendered economic value system. The men and women who wrote these stories, and presumably those who read them, would rather buy into an established social structure they know to be unequal and confining than face an alternative far more unsettling: a world where we shape and determine our own value, independent of who or what has come before us.

"I'm Just a Doll": The Masculine Construction of Women in *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women*

Introduction

Both *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* document a young female protagonist's journey into womanhood as an initiation into the social construction of masculine patriarchy, where a girl's value is acquired through an investment of masculine guidance and measured proportionally to her ability to fulfill her established social role. In whatever situation the young female protagonists encounter, they remain confined to patriarchal expectations which slowly fashion them into "proper" women of society. Ethel May and Jo March both face the temptation to shirk their responsibilities as women, yet both choose to subordinate their wishes to their duty as defined by the masculine figures of authority in their lives. These novels reaffirm the importance of this subordination through the self-destruction, humiliation, and death of the female characters who attempt to do otherwise, and imply that a girl's capital is nonexistent until she receives an investment of masculine capital and willingly acquiesces to her established social role. If she refuses, she loses all hope of finding value and faces the disastrous and inescapable consequences of her actions.

The journey of these novels' young protagonists parallels Yonge and Alcott's own exploration of their male-scripted roles through writing. As Poovey writes in *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer*:

> In reproducing the ideological configuration that protected bourgeois society, both the hierarchy of values and the rhetorical strategies contained in these works provided real women with the terms by which they conceptualized and interpreted their own behavior and desires. (16)

This exploration of their social boundaries allowed Yonge and Alcott to conceptualize their role within the domestic society they found themselves inescapably a part of. Yet ultimately, their exploration was doomed from its conception to re-enforce their constructed social roles. They, like their characters, cannot escape the patriarchal system which had fashioned them since birth; even their creative efforts must fall under the direction and guidance of a masculine literary orthodoxy. Yonge and Alcott find themselves, like their protagonists, entrenched even deeper within social paradigms than they were the moment they first set their pens to paper. Their writing, rather than an escape from social patriarchy or a subtle act of defiance, becomes an investment in the masculine orthodoxy which created them. Yonge and Alcott resolve their creative works as empty trifles, which only exist to entertain and appease their audience, just as they themselves work to appease the patriarchal society which created them.

The Daisy Chain

The Daisy Chain portrays the contrasting expectations of brothers and sisters as they grow and mature in Victorian society. At the novel's opening the May children face the tragedy of losing a mother and the serious injury of their father and sister. While Dr. May recovers from his injuries the May children find themselves feeling alone and helpless. They mourn the loss of their mother, but none of the elder May sisters have the authority to lead their younger siblings in their father's convalescence. They prove capable enough in running the household and caring for their younger siblings, the duties which belonged to their mother, yet none of the girls can fill the void left by their father. Yet the moment Richard, the eldest May son, comes home from school his siblings feel "the sense of being desolate and forsaken was relieved, and they knew that now they had one to rely on and to comfort them" (29). Richard, not his sisters, becomes the source of security in the turbulent wake of his mother's loss. By making Richard the source of his family's comfort Yonge reasserts the ideology that a masculine patriarch provides the foundation of every family; without him, a family loses both emotional security as well as value as a family unit. A father figure is an irreplaceable guiding force, and until Richard returns home to fulfill his role as the interim patriarch the household remains stuck in ambiguity, directionless and uncertain of its own social role.

Because men form the foundation of the domestic world, they produce the standards female characters are expected to meet as domestic caretakers and through which they attain social capital. Thus the young women of these domestic stories must receive an investment of domestic knowledge from men in order to achieve their prescribed social value as women. Richard soon comes to channel his late mother's guiding domesticity to his siblings, implying that mother-figures are themselves products of masculine domestic authority. Dr. May claims

that his son is "more like his mother than any of them" and throughout the rest of the novel Richard takes the instruction of his younger sisters upon himself (121). For Ethel especially Richard becomes a personal tutor in domestic accomplishments. She receives lectures almost every day for dirtying her skirts, and as the pair walks home one day Richard begins teaching Ethel how to take some small steps towards becoming respectable:

> "My pins always come out," said Ethel, disconsolately, crumpling the black folds into one hand, while she hunted for a pin with the other.
> "No wonder, if you stick them in that way," said Richard. "Oh! You'll tear that crape. Here, let me help you. Don't you see, make it go in and out, that way; give it something to pull against."
> Ethel laughed. "That's the third thing you have taught me--to thread a needle, tie a bow, and stick in a pin! I never could learn those things of any one else; they show, but don't explain the theory." (51)

Only Richard manages to teach his sister to "thread a needle, tie a bow, and stick in a pin," all skills aligned with the needlework considered one of a woman's greatest assets and a skill sharply removed from the masculine domain (152). Richard teaches Ethel the theory behind her behavior, and ironically proves to be the only one capable of instructing his sister how to act as a woman. Despite cynicism and doubts from several of her siblings, Ethel manages to excel under her brother's tutelage. He, as a man, proves the most apt at teaching a woman how to act as a woman. Ethel claims,

> "There's no one such a help in those ways as Richard. Though he is so precise, he is never tiresome. He makes me see things, and do them neatly, without plaguing me, and putting me in a rage. I'm not ready to bite off my own fingers, or kick all the rattle-traps over and leave them, as I am when Miss Winter scolds me, or nurse, or even Flora sometimes …he teaches me the theory, and never lays hold of my poor fingers, and, when they won't bend the wrong way, calls them frogs." (76)

Richard's capacity for teaching Ethel excels even that of Ethel's own governess Miss Winter, a woman paid to teach feminine behavior. Only when Richard invests his domestic knowledge in Ethel can she fulfill her domestic role and find a sense of capital for herself.

The Daisy Chain implies that men form both the foundation of the home and the ultimate authority for imparting its knowledge, and subsequently it acknowledges them as the source of all feminine virtue and accomplishment. Any success a woman might achieve by fulfilling her own gendered roles ultimately reflects back not on the woman herself, but on the man who fashioned her into the successful woman she has become. By crediting Richard with Ethel's success, *The Daisy Chain* implies that men are the ultimate source of proper femininity. Women remain creatures disassociated from their own sexuality and valueless without an initial investment of social capital from a masculine authority.

Similarly, Ethel's individual pursuit of personal capital outside of her role in the home must be invested with a level of masculine authority to succeed. Ethel's dream of starting a school and building a church for the struggling community of Cocksmoor falls under the guidance of first Richard and then the family friend Dr. Spencer. In the early stages of Ethel's project Richard turns his masculine capital towards starting her school and initiates the transformation of her dream into a reality. Though the project originates in Ethel's heart and mind, Richard is the one who becomes its public figurehead. When their small school achieves its first success, Ethel cries "it is all Richard's doing. So much more good, and wise, and humble, as he is" (321). Ethel attributes the project's entire success to her brother's guidance and discretion, despite her significant role in its conception.

After Richard leaves home to continue his education, Ethel loses her masculine guidance and the capital to finance her project, and soon falls prey to the misdirected efforts of the local Ladies Club. Despite Flora's insistence that the Ladies Club's involvement can only help her cause, their actions appall the conservative and purpose-driven mind of Ethel. She argues, "Is it not too bad that they should have it all their own way, and spoil the whole female

population?" (217). The ladies make a great show about meeting and being proper yet never accomplish anything, and Ethel leaves each meeting feeling disheartened at the snail-like progress of her church. In one meeting, the ladies adjourn before the meeting even gets underway:

> Mrs. Ward, who was opposite to the Gothic clock- tower, began to look uneasy, and suggested, in a nervous manner, that it was half-past five, and she was afraid Mr. Ward would be kept waiting for his dinner. Mrs. Grey began to have like fears, that Mr. Grey would be come in from his ride after banking hours. The other ladies began to think of tea, and the meeting decided on adjourning till that day next week. (318)

Even though their husbands are absent, their desires continue to control the actions of their wives. The women of the Ladies Club prove incapable of functioning without a male, guiding authority, and Ethel parallels her experience with that of Robinson Crusoe: "If a good clergyman would only come, how willingly would I work under him! But Mrs. Ledwich and--it is like having all the Spaniards and savages spoiling Robinson Crusoe's desert island!" (290). Without male guidance, the efforts of the Ladies Club merely infringe upon the capital Ethel has worked so hard to establish at Cocksmoor.

Ethel considers her self-sacrifice and work for Cocksmoor an accumulation of personal wealth. This method of acquiring value, through sacrificial service to others, contrasts with boys who identify collection as the primary means by which they accumulate personal capital, a concept explored further in Chapter Two. Despite her personal investment in Cocksmoor, when Dr. Spencer arrives and takes up the burden Ethel submits the project to his direction without complaint. The women of the Ladies Committee, previously out of control and ridiculous, fall into line and begin making progress towards accomplishing their goal. Much like the May children who find comfort and direction under the guidance of their eldest brother, the Ladies

Committee finds new value when Dr. Spencer takes control of building a church for Cocksmoor. According to the Doctor, his leadership role comes naturally. He claims, "When women have enough to do, they are perfectly tractable" (433). Overnight, Dr. Spencer gains complete control of Cocksmoor and the immediate respect of every woman on the committee. As a man, Dr. Spencer does not violate Ethel's sense of proprietorship as the Ladies Committee does. He has authority over Ethel, socially and intellectually, and she submits her desert island to him as a matter of course. A feminine character cannot maintain capital of her own when a masculine one can control it for her.

A similar domestic authority extends itself to the realms of literature and education. Ethel's struggle for domestic felicity directly results from her pursuit of an education separate from her gendered context. In the early days of the narrative Ethel receives extra instruction from her brother Norman and studies the notes he brings home from school. Though she proves an exemplary student, her family disparages her domestic abilities far more than they appreciate her intelligence. Ethel's governess soon terminates her academic studies and forces Ethel to pursue more practical pursuits. Miss Winter claims, "Her time is too much occupied, and my conviction is, that it is hurtful to a girl of her age" (151). Margaret too attempts to persuade Ethel away from her education, and to illustrate her reasoning she explains exactly where Ethel's value lies in comparison to her brothers:

> "You see," said Margaret, kindly, "we all know that men have more power than women, and I suppose the time has come for Norman to pass beyond you. He would not be cleverer than anyone, if he could not do more than a girl at home…If you could keep up with him at all, you must give your whole time and thoughts to it, and when you had done so—if you could get all the honours in the University—what would it come to…would you give up being a useful, steady daughter and sister at home? The sort of woman that dear mamma wished to make you, and a comfort to papa."
> Ethel was silent, and large tears were gathering.
> "You own that that is the first thing?"

> "Yes," said Ethel, faintly.
> "And that is what you fail in most?"
> "Yes."
> "Then, Ethel dearest, when you made up your mind to Cocksmoor, you knew those things could not be done without a sacrifice?...I don't think dear mamma would have liked Greek and Cocksmoor to swallow up all the little common lady-like things." (155)

It would be impossible for Ethel to keep up with Norman's studies at Oxford while fulfilling her duties at home. Her worth as a woman depends upon her ability to sacrifice her studies and distance herself from the masculine academic sphere.

The patriarchy of the intellectual tradition extends its authority to literature, as poetry becomes the main vehicle of academic achievement in *The Daisy Chain*. Norman's poetry brings him acclaim at both the local school and Oxford, and until Ethel sacrifices her education she attempts to keep pace with his efforts. Her poems, however, leave the confinement of her home and family just once, when Norman accidentally takes them to school and Harry witnesses someone copying them:

> "Why, Anderson junior was gaping about in despair for sense for his verses--he comes on that, and slyly copies a whole set of her old ones, done when he--Norman, I mean--was in the fifth form…He never guessed I saw him, and thought he had done it famously. He showed them up, and would have got some noted good mark, but that, by great good luck, Ethel had made two of her pentameters too short, which he hadn't the wit to find out, thinking all Norman did must be right. So he has shown up a girl's verses-- isn't that rare?" cried Harry, dancing on his chair with triumph. (79)

Harry admits the poem "would have got some noted good mark" but to admit Ethel's verses could compete with an educated school boy's would undermine a masculine poetic legacy and blur the gendered boundaries of education. Her shortened pentameters symbolize the intellectual inferiority of a woman's written work, and even though Ethel's family recognizes her intellectual ability she fails to attain any authoritative praise for her academic work and, as a woman, never

will. Similarly, Harry finds the situation amusing not because the verses were flawed but that they were "a girl's verses." By asserting ownership of Ethel's poem, Anderson equates himself as her intellectual equal and therefore, as less than a man.

In Mary Poovey's book *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* she argues that women writers of the 19th century used the act of writing to express defiance at, and find escape from, the masculine social constructs directing their lives. She writes, "Just as the inhibitions visible in a woman's writing constitute a record of her historical oppression, so the work itself proclaims her momentary, possibly unconscious, but effective defiance" (xv). Yet Yonge deliberately attempts to extend the authority of the masculine poetic tradition to her own writing through epigraphs placed at the beginning of each chapter. Rather than defying patriarchal norms by writing she invites them to shape and preside over her work. She covers a large block of the most influential members of the British poetic tradition, including Chaucer, Longfellow, Shakespeare, Tennyson, and Wordsworth, yet of the fifty-one epigraphs in the novel only three belong to female poets. Yonge quotes Elizabeth Barrett Browning' s *The Lost Bower*, Catherine Fanshawe's *Parody on Gray*, and Catherine Dorset's children's poem *The Peacock at Home*. Yonge's attempt to disguise the feminine source of her epigraphs exacerbates the effect of the extreme disproportion of female poets to male. Of these three women poets, Yonge refers to only one by name, Catherine Fanshawe. Browning becomes E. B. Browning and Yonge excludes Catherine Dorset's name completely. Despite the small feminine contribution these epigraphs produce a text saturated with a literary legacy of male poets; through them Yonge's attempts to depict her novel as socially credible and validates the masculine authority extending over academia, literature, and society. These male poets literally hang over the text to reinforce its social propriety. Yonge's writing may appear to be a defiant escape, but writing can never be an

escape for women when the act of writing assiduously attempts to fit into a male-constructed form. Just as Ethel sacrifices her writing for her proper, domestic role Yonge invites the masculine literary legacy into her project, reinforcing the ideology of a patriarchal society and willingly submitting her window of escape to its authority.

Ethel's sacrifice of her education marks her entrance into womanhood and the end of her duty-free childhood. Before her initiation into the sacrificial motif of her gender Ethel dreamed of following in her brother's academic footsteps. Yet suddenly Ethel grows too old for boyish pursuits, and her sacrifice marks the dividing moment between her childhood life without gendered expectations and her new role as a young woman. The education she shares with her brother Norman must be abandoned before she can even hope to fulfill her duty as a woman, and Ethel resigns herself to becoming "the sort of woman that [her mother] wished to make [her], and a comfort to papa" (155). She muses,

> "I suppose it is a wrong sort of ambition to want to learn more, in one's own way, when one is told it is not good for one. I was just going to say I hated being a woman, and having tiresome little trifles—my duty—instead of learning, which is yours, Norman."
> "I'm glad you did not," said Norman, "for it would have been very silly of you; and I assure you, Ethel, it is really time for you to stop, or you would get into a regular learned lady, and be good for nothing." …This argument from Norman himself, did much to reconcile Ethel's mind to the sacrifice she had made… (156)

Norman's argument, that educated ladies are "good for nothing," reassures Ethel and she willingly sacrifices her childhood love of learning and writing for the domestic knowledge which Norman claims is necessary to establish her personal value. As Jane West writes in *Letters to a Young Lady*, "Literature is with us an ornament, or an amusement, not a duty or profession; and when it is pursued with such avidity, as to withdraw us from the especial purposes of our creation, it becomes a crime" (329). The moment Ethel's guardians feel her education and writing begin to conflict with her duties as a woman, they force her to give it up. Though doubts

exist over Ethel's happiness with her new life, Margaret reassures herself and her father that, "though she does love learning, her real love is for goodness, and for you papa" (157). The sacrifice of Ethel's education serves to measure her goodness and devotion to her family; to have acted otherwise would have been disobedient, unloving, and sinful—a crime. Her value as a woman and daughter depends on her willing submission to her father and her family, and Ethel does submit yet not without pain at her loss. She sacrifices the last vestige of childhood equality with her brothers and submits to her duty as a woman, remaining at home in the service of her family while others pursue the education she dreamed of.

Inherent in the academic separation of the genders rests the presumption that male characters achieve personal value by separating themselves from the home while their feminine counterparts must find their value within it. The three older May boys, Richard, Norman, and Harry, all leave home to pursue their ambitions; Richard goes to study to become a preacher, Norman leaves to study at Oxford, and Harry goes to sea with the British navy. For Harry, joining the British navy fulfills his highest ambitions and requires little self-sacrifice. When he prepares to speak to his father about his ambitions Harry's battle for self-confidence exposes the contrasting expectations of a boy and a man:

> First, there was a thrill of intense, burning love to his father, scarcely less fondness to his sweet motherly sister; a clinging feeling to every chair and table of that room, which seemed still full of his mother's presence; a numbering over of all the others with ardent attachment, and a flinging from him with horror the notion of asking to be far away from that dearest father, that loving home, that arm that was round him. Anything rather than be without them in the dreary world! But then came the remembrance of cherished visions, the shame of relinquishing a settled purpose, the thought of weary morrows, with the tempters among his playmates, and his home blank and melancholy; and the roaming spirit of enterprise stirred again, and reproached him with being a baby, for fancying he could stay at home for ever…Harry's heart throbbed again for the boundless sea, the tall ship, and the wondrous foreign climes, where he had so often lived in fancy. (81)

Harry battles momentarily with fear at being without the comfort of his family, yet he never questions whether his family can manage without him. He feels an attachment to his siblings and father, and the comfort of a home where he is known and loved. Yet these feelings equate to "being a baby," and he then remembers his pride and dreams of going to sea, and the "spirit of enterprise" stirs within him. He scolds himself for "fancying he could stay at home for ever," implying that all boys, whether they desire it or not, must leave their home to become men and claim their social capital. In contrast to his sisters who become women by sacrificing their boyish exploits, Harry believes he becomes a man the moment he separates himself from his family to find adventure at sea, an idea paralleled by Jim in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Tom in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Men gain value through the act of separating themselves and independently setting out in the world, yet the process inverts for the female characters, whose worth directly correlates with the sacrifice of their autonomy and how deeply they attach themselves to their male-constructed roles in the home.

While a man's need to leave home to acquire value appears to undermine the argument that men form the irreplaceable foundation of the domestic world, the two ideas remain compatible. This paradoxical value system works because men produce the ideology directing the domestic women, so that even when they leave the home their women remain behind, reinforcing the values of the patriarchal domestic authority which created them. *Little Women* offers a prime example of a masculine patriarchy persisting even in the father's absence, a premise which will be examined later in this chapter. When the male figures leave home they fail to undermine their own domestic authority because they exist in two places at once: away from home on their "adventure," and as an ethereal presence at home through their wives and daughters.

The Daisy Chain suggests that the women who do manage to undermine the constraints of domestic authority and claim a more independent capital within society can only expect a disastrous fall from glory. The one May sister who escapes from home is Flora, and her journey ends in physical and spiritual death. Before her marriage Flora devotes her time and energy to fulfilling her duties as the woman of the house and making her father's and siblings' lives comfortable; she excelled as the ultimate example of domestic muliebrity. When she marries, her focus turns away from her family to utilizing her marriage as an opportunity to gain social prestige. She turns all of her energy and focus into fashioning her own husband into a successful politician, despite the fact that George Rivers is "a fellow with no more brains than a turnip lantern" (335). George's idiocy relegates him, as it does Richard, to a lesser state of masculine authority and Flora seizes the opportunity to undermine this authority and become the guiding force of their family. With Flora's guidance George becomes a Parliament member, and when her siblings observe her in London society they find,

> "Mrs. Rivers was an admirable woman." So every one felt, and her youthful beauty and success in the fashionable world made her qualities, as a wife and mistress of a household, the more appreciated…She made time for everything, and though, between business and fashion, she seemed to undertake more than mortal could accomplish, it was all effected, and excellently. She did, indeed, sigh over the briefness of the time that she could bestow on her child or on home correspondence, and declared that she should rejoice in rest; but, at the same time, her achievements were a positive pleasure to her. (475)

Though Flora achieves outstanding and far reaching success, she falls short in "the briefness of time that she could bestow on her child or on home correspondence," neglecting the most important of a woman's duties, her family.

Flora falls short of the ideal woman because each of her accomplishments is motivated by self-gratification and pride rather than a desire to fulfill her divine duty as the domestic caretaker of her family. Flora's inattention to her family leads to the death of the daughter she should have

cared for and protected. She failed to recognize that a woman cannot achieve any social capital when it comes at the expense of her family. She soon realizes,

> I have seemed to myself, and to you, to be trying to do right, but it was all hollow, for the sake of praise and credit. I know it, now it is too late; and He has let me destroy my child here, lest I should have destroyed her Everlasting Life, like my own. (486)

The one woman who successfully leaves her home and claims a sense of autonomous authority experiences the tragic loss of her daughter and the destruction of her spiritual life. *The Daisy Chain* implies that leaving home as a woman without the guidance of a strong man invites destruction and death. Flora, responsible for both her own and her husband's success, attempts to reach beyond the domestic realm of her duty and as a result, hollow worldly praise remains her only compensation for the loss of the daughter she loved.

In contrast to Flora, Ethel proves to be a model of feminine virtue when she rejects the allure of a life beyond of Stoneborough. When her family travels to Oxford, Ethel experiences for the first time the allure of a life beyond her family and Stoneborough when she falls in love with a man named Norman Ogilvie. She stands at a crossroads between an unromantic, dutiful life with the family she loves and the chance to have a family and future with Norman. Similar to Jo in *Little Women*, Ethel fears marriage's ability to tear her family from her, and when Flora marries she vows that,

> Leave him who might, she would never forsake [her father]; nothing but the will of Heaven should part them. It might be hasty and venturesome. She knew not what it might cost her; but… [She] laid up her secret vow--that no earthly object should be placed between her and her father. (336)

Despite her resolve, Ethel faces the gravity of her decision when she realizes what she has chosen to sacrifice. Ethel enjoys Norman's company more than any other member of her party and anxiously looks forward to their excursions together, so much so that she grows impatient

with spending time with her father. She finds herself falling in love, and feeling adventurous and beautiful for the first time in her life.

Yet, when her father kisses her goodnight, "it brought a sudden flash of thought across Ethel! What had she been doing? She had been impatient of her father's monopoly of her!" (368). Ethel finds great pleasure in the prospect of Norman and already shows signs of having feelings for him, yet she remembers her vow to her father and struggles to resolve herself once again to return home:

> She believed that no harm was done yet; she was sure that she loved her father better than anything else in the world, and whilst she did so, it was best to preserve her heart for him. Widowed as he was, she knew that he would sorely miss her, and that for years to come, she should be necessary at home. She had better come away while it would cost only a slight pang, for that it was pain to leave Norman Ogilvie, was symptom enough of the need of not letting her own silly heart go further. (370)

Ethel reaffirms her decision to sacrifice yet again for her father and family, and returns home early to keep herself from the temptation of finding someone to love. While Harry faces a similar struggle when he decides to go to sea, he gives himself over to "the roaming spirit of enterprise." Ethel, however, flees the temptation to leave her home because she knows she will be needed "for years to come." Harry's masculinity allows him the freedom to indulge in the temptation of adventure and separate himself from the home, while Ethel flees from adventure, returning to the masculine authority and duty of the home despite her heart's longing to abandon it. She resolves herself to a life of spinsterhood, consoling herself with thoughts that she is needed and wanted at home. Rather than exploring the temptations and opportunities of the outside world, *The Daisy Chain* continually encourages its female characters to forego any opportunity to leave the home and resign themselves to their constructed social roles.

Unfortunately Ethel's jaunt into society leaves its impression upon her and she returns home to a life which now appears boring and dull. The home that had once brought her pleasure transforms into a life of wearying toil and trial. Ethel's attitude grows so surly that Margaret confronts her one night before bed:

> "Ethel, dearest," said Margaret that night, after they were in bed, "is there anything the matter?"
> "No, nothing, but that Oxford has spoiled me," said Ethel, resolutely. "I am very cross and selfish!"
> "It will be better by-and-by," said Margaret, "if only you are sure you have nothing to make you unhappy."
> "Nothing," said Ethel. She was becoming too much ashamed of her fancy to breathe one word about it, and she had spoken the truth. Pleasure had spoilt her. (387)

Ethel's encounter with the outside world transforms her perception of her role as a woman and daughter. She no longer finds pleasure in her duty but instead only thinks of what she has sacrificed for her family, implying that the female characters of *The Daisy Chain* cannot even leave the home for fear of discovering the opportunities passing them by. Only by secluding themselves from knowledge of the world beyond their domestic walls can women find satisfaction in their domestic duties. Ethel does her best to find happiness again, moralizing that, "one great resolution that has been costly, must not blunt us in the daily details of life," and she eventually finds satisfaction again (388). She feels, "she had her vocation in her father, Margaret, the children, home and Cocksmoor; her mind and affections were occupied, and she never thought of wishing herself elsewhere" (538). Yonge validates Ethel's lost opportunity by giving her a sense of fulfillment in her duty, but it cannot erase Ethel's struggle to find happiness. *The Daisy Chain* formally insists that women are steadfastly confined to the home by the men who guide them. Though it tests the boundaries of feminine duty through Ethel's doubts and antipathy, the novel ultimately resolves and reinforces the masculine domestic hierarchy of its

time. The female characters of *The Daisy Chain* will only find fulfillment in the home precisely because their desires are not an expression of their own needs and wants but instead a reflection of the desires of the masculine desires and authority which created them.

Little Women

Louisa May Alcott's 1868 novel *Little Women* and the journey of her protagonist, Jo March, begins by questioning the March girls' role as "little women." Jo, more than any of her sisters, struggles to submit to her prescribed social role. She declares,

> I hate to think I've got to grow up, and be Miss March, and wear long gowns, and look as prim as a China Aster! It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boy's games and work and manners! I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy. And it's worse than ever now, for I'm dying to go and fight with Papa. And I can only stay home and knit, like a poky old woman! (5)

Much like Ethel May, Jo hates the thought of growing old and adopting the duties associated with her gender, duties she describes as "long gowns," "looking prim," and "knitting." Both Ethel and Jo reveal an underlying struggle among girls to succumb to the roles society forces upon them, implying that the domestic instincts society attributes to women are not universally shared or admired among them. Yet Jo remembers her father's wishes and decides to "try and be what he loves to call me, 'a little woman' and not be rough and wild, but do my duty here instead of wanting to be somewhere else" (10). The novel thus begins by defining "little women" as girls obedient to their duty, who gratify the desires of both spiritual and earthly fathers while sacrificing whatever pleasures or vanities necessary to meet the obligations of their gender. Jo's puerile innocence is replaced by a sense of duty, and she must take up her feminine burden and lose the fun, boyish adventures of her youth in order to fulfill this duty and, in doing so, achieve social capital. Jo's, and her sisters', journey throughout *Little Women* begins the moment the girls commit themselves to fulfilling their domestic duty, just as Ethel's journey begins the moment she sacrifices learning to fulfill her duties at home.

A common motif of these domestic stories is willing self-sacrifice as a signifier of mature muliebrity. As in *The Daisy Chain*, *Little Women* creates a progression of moralistic virtue in its

four young heroines. The story opens with Mrs. March's request that her daughters sacrifice their Christmas celebration to benefit those less fortunate, and she continues throughout the plot to encourage her daughters to think only of others rather than themselves. She is described as a "tall, motherly lady with a 'can-I-help-you' look about her" (8). As the idealized model of feminine behavior, Mrs. March embodies the notion that a woman's worth is proportional to her willingness to serve and sacrifice for others. Her efforts throughout the book focus on encouraging her daughters to consider others before themselves, and that upholding their duties to their God, country, and men should be their first priority. However, Mrs. March attributes her success as a woman not to herself but to her husband. Mrs. March constantly refers to Mr. March's wishes and desires when advising her daughters, and claims that his help and guidance are the reason she has become such a good example. Despite her idealized image within the novel, Mrs. March encourages her daughters to look not to her, but to their father for strength and encouragement when struggling to fulfill their duties as young women. She points to her own masculine authority, Mr. March, as the source of her domestic and feminine value.

Just as Ethel's journey towards accruing social capital must be initiated by an investment of masculine capital, the lessons of domestic virtue within *Little Women* are always framed within the context of ethereally or physically present masculine figures. Mr. March and Laurie fulfill the same role Richard and his father play for Ethel; one is always present, in one way or another, guiding the young girls towards the successful fulfillment of their social roles. Mr. March's letter sparks his daughters' journeys toward virtue in the novel and he is credited as the guiding source of Mrs. March's goodness. When Jo questions her mother on how she learned to control her emotions, she turns to the example Mr. March set before her. She claims,

> He never loses patience, never doubts or complains, but always hopes, and works and waits so cheerfully that one is ashamed to do otherwise before him. He helped

> and comforted me, and showed me that I must try to practice all the virtues I would have my little girls possess, for I was their example. (76)

Mrs. March represents the epitome of the selfless, loving woman which each of her daughters strives to become, and by making Mr. March the source of Mrs. March's goodness Alcott attributes all moral authority and value to him. Mr. March, though absent, constructed the home and Mrs. March herself, so that even when he is gone from the home she remains behind, reinforcing the values of the patriarchal domestic authority her husband instilled within her. He, the head of the family, is the underlying source of social value and authority in the March family and drives each of them to fulfill their duties within the masculine paradigms of society.

Alongside Mr. March, the thematic elements of *Pilgrim's Progress* woven throughout the plot reaffirm this sense of a patriarchal moral and literary capital just as the epigraphs of *The Daisy Chain* reinforce the superior value of a patriarchal literary tradition. The main character of *Pilgrim's Progress* becomes a masculine echelon of piety and perseverance the March girls look to for guidance and strength. Similarly, the March girls are repeatedly instructed to call upon their "Heavenly Father" to help them bear their burdens when their lives as young women seem too much to bear. The girls now have three ethereal masculine figures of moral authority investing masculine capital in them as they learn to fulfill their gendered roles: their father, God, and Christian. When the girls need the physical presence of a man, they have Laurie.

Laurie, as a boy, acts as both a protector and as a foil to the girls' progress in feminine virtue. In every dire situation the March family faces in its patriarch's absence, Laurie saves the day. When Amy falls through the ice, Jo's emotions render her utterly helpless:

> She tried to call Laurie, but her voice was gone. She tried to rush forward, but her feet seemed to have no strength in them, and for a second, she could only stand motionless, staring with a terror-stricken face at the little blue hood above the black water. (74)

Jo finds herself paralyzed by her emotions and fear, and Laurie, not Jo, must take command of the situation and save Amy from drowning. Jo, "worked as if possessed, blindly obeying Laurie, who was quite self-possessed, and lying flat, held Amy up by his arm and hockey stick till Jo dragged a rail from the fence" (74). Even though Jo is the most boyish of all the March girls, she fails to take the initiative in rescuing her sister. Laurie, not Jo, maintains the presence of mind to act swiftly and decisively as the situation demands, and Jo instinctively falls under his command. The scene reaffirms the ideology that women are crippled by their overpowering emotions and only men contain the authority, the self-control, and the strength to successfully lead in crisis situations.

Similarly, Laurie comforts the sisters in their mother's absence, and channels the patriarchal capital which before had been the responsibility of Mrs. March. When Jo learns her sister might die, she turns to Laurie for comfort:

> She stretched out her hand in a helpless sort of way, as if groping in the dark, and Laurie took it in his, whispering as well as he could with a lump in his throat, "I'm here. Hold on to me, Jo, dear!" She could not speak, but she did "hold on," and the warm grasp of the friendly human hand comforted her sore heart, and seemed to lead her nearer to the Divine arm which alone could uphold her in her trouble. (171)

Laurie, in the absence of Mrs. March, becomes the vehicle for reinforcing the masculine capital and authority guiding the March girls through their trials. Rather than sister comforting sister, or the family nurse comforting the girls, Laurie is their strength and comfort, reminding them of their heavenly Father's love.

Laurie also reinforces the female characters' submission to masculine social capital; the March girls repeatedly bow to Laurie's opinions and authority simply because of his gender. The girls are fond of creating secret societies throughout the novel, and one such society is the Pickwick Club, named in honor of Charles Dickens. They create an odd publication of their own,

the *Pickwick Chronicle*, but rather than writing as themselves or other young ladies they each adopt masculine identities with which to publish their articles, poems, and short stories. When Jo motions for the society to adopt Laurie into its folds, Amy objects that, "We don't wish any boys, they only joke and bounce about. This is a ladies club, and we wish to be private and proper" (99). Even though the girls adopt their masculine identities for the sake of their publication, the society remains a "ladies club" which suggests that the adoption of masculine identities is merely to validate their newspaper as a publication, an effort reminiscent of Yonge's attempts to lend her text some of the capital held by the masculine literary tradition through the epigraphs which preside over her chapters. The March girls understand that their writing holds no value because they are women; they therefore create masculine alternate identities which serve to imbue their writing with a sense of literary capital. Laurie, however, feels no need to adopt a feminine identity when he joins the Pickwick Club, reinforcing the idea that a sense of masculine authority rather than simple fancy leads the girls to create their male pretenses.

Even when pretending the March girls view masculine examples as unattainable standards their own writing strives to meet. Laurie's admission to the P.C. reinforces the literary authority separating the genders. Alcott claims,

> He certainly did add "spirit" to the meetings, and "a tone" to the paper, for his orations convulsed his hearers and his contributions were excellent, being patriotic, classical, comical, or dramatic, but never sentimental. Jo regarded them as worthy of Bacon, Milton, or Shakespeare, and remodeled her own works with good effect, she thought. (101)

Jo, the one person in the group who wants to be a writer, benefits from Laurie's example. She compares him with other great male writers of literary tradition, some of the same men Yonge extols in the epigraphs of her novel. Simply because of his gender, Laurie brings an entire literary legacy to bear upon the writings of the Pickwick Society. Even more importantly, Jo tries

to emulate Laurie, a boy with little experience in writing. Laurie's presence shapes Jo's own creative work and his examples become the investment of capital which gives her own writing a sense of value and worth. Even in the realm of the imagination, the men of *Little Women* must dominate and shape the creative actions of their female counterparts for them to find success. Their work can only gain value when it is invested with some sort of established masculine capital.

The masculine paradigms in *Little Women* reiterate the ideology of *The Daisy Chain* that the one way girls can find fulfillment comes through fulfilling their gendered social role and working for the benefit of others. Just as Ethel learns to find value by working to fulfill the needs of her family, the March girls learn that their value lies in placing others' needs and wants above their own. Mrs. March allows the girls to experience what it would be like to do nothing for a week at the outset of their summer vacation saying, "I think by Saturday night you will find that all play and no work is as bad as all work and no play" (103). She herself takes Saturday off, and the girls face a series of disasters as they are left to fend for themselves. Mrs. March claims,

> I thought, as a little lesson, I would show you what happens when everyone thinks only of herself. Don't you feel that it is pleasanter to help one another, to have daily duties which make leisure sweet when it comes, and to bear and forbear, that home may be comfortable and lovely to us all?... Work is wholesome, and there is plenty for everyone. It keeps us from ennui and mischief, is good for health and spirits, and gives us a sense of power and independence better than money or fashion. (110)

The March girls learn that as women, they achieve value and fulfillment by making the home "comfortable and lovely to us all"; without work, girls give way to "ennui and mischief." The only way women achieve a "sense of power and independence" comes by fulfilling their duty in the home; essentially, by submitting to the rules of the male-constructed social economy. Just as

The Daisy Chain does, *Little Women* reinforces the idea that the best and easiest way for girls to achieve independence and influence is to succumb to the expected social role they are to play.

The sacrifice motif inherent within these domestic novels includes both social vanity and beauty. At the Gardiner party Meg, concerned with the proper etiquette and accoutrements of "real ladies," contrasts sharply with Jo, a tomboy who cares very little for propriety. Alcott writes, "Meg's high-heeled slippers were very tight and hurt her, though she would not own it, and Jo's nineteen hairpins all seemed stuck straight into her head, which was not exactly comfortable, but, dear me, let us be elegant or die!" (25). Here the motif distorts into a painful sacrifice based on self-interest, which ultimately fails to appease the girls' vanity. Rather than the sacrifice of their comfort resulting in the praise and adoration of their peers, Jo and Meg become self-imposed social outcasts forced to hide out in hallways and libraries while secretly begging for rides home. Just like Flora, who falls from grace when she seeks glory for herself, Meg and Jo find themselves mired in a misery of their own making. Only through Laurie's timely intervention can the girls save face by the party's end. These female characters fall victims to their own narcissism when left to their own ways, and only by submitting to masculine authority and guidance can they be rescued from themselves.

Similarly, when Meg attends a party at the wealthy Moffat's she becomes the subject of unnecessary attention and pity because of her poverty:

> The more she saw of Annie Moffat's pretty things, the more she envied her and sighed to be rich. Home now looked bare and dismal as she thought of it, work grew harder than ever, and she felt that she was a very destitute and much-injured girl, in spite of the new gloves and silk stockings. (81)

She faces both conniving matchmaking and overbearing pity from her newfound friends, and finds herself tempted by the luxury around her. Meg falls for the temptation, just as Flora falls for the temptation of glory her marriage offers her, and as a result Meg concludes her week in

society by making a fool of herself. She overhears one man say, "They are making a fool of that little girl; I wanted you to see her…but she's nothing but a doll tonight" (88). Ashamed of her behavior, she adopts her role as a doll and puts aside her identity as Meg March till the morning. "I'm not Meg tonight" she claims, "I'm 'a doll' who does all sorts of crazy things. Tomorrow I shall put away my 'fuss and feathers' and be desperately good again" (89). As a doll she becomes the "toy" of both men and society and loses the independence and power Mrs. March claims follows from fulfilling your duty and serving others. Affected femininity, produced by the artifices of wealth and society and envied by Meg from afar, turns women into nothing more than a shallow shell. For Ethel, seeing the education she was denied at Oxford weakens her resolve for the life she lives at home. For Meg, the affluence of society is her temptation, and much like Ethel she ultimately runs away from the temptation and returns home to reaffirm her own identity as it is defined behind domestic walls. The home becomes a safe haven from the dangers and temptations of the outside world, and both girls flee back to a life of duty and restraint where they live safely hidden within the reinforced masculine restraints of domesticity.

Alcott's creation of the novel parallels Meg's flirtation with the restraints of society's gendered economy just as Yonge's writing parallels Ethel's temptation to abandon her domestic duty. The act of writing becomes their own act of defiance, testing their ability to contribute to the male literary tradition which their gender excludes them from. As Poovey writes,

> The very act of writing during a period in which self-assertion was considered "unlaydylike" exposes the contradictions inherent in propriety: just as the inhibitions visible in her writing constitute a record of her historical oppression, so the work itself proclaims her momentary, possibly unconscious, but effective defiance. (xv)

Poovey credits these women with achieving a small sense of success, what she claims is "effective defiance." Yet ultimately, Yonge and Alcott fail their act of defiance just as their

characters do. Their novels test the social boundaries, yet ultimately reinforce and strengthen both their authors' own social positions as well as the positions of their heroines in society, precisely because these novels look to masculine constructions of women and literature to find value. The social strictures of masculine patriarchy are too strong to escape, and by the novels' resolutions both their heroines and their authors become embedded even deeper within their prescribed social roles than they were at the novel's beginning.

The women of *Little Women*, like those of *The Daisy Chain*, are confined to the home until a new man supplants their father as the masculine authority in their lives. Meg's jaunt into society raises questions about her future prospects for matrimony. Despite Meg's concerns, Mrs. March dismisses her probing and decidedly orders,

> Don't be troubled, Meg, poverty seldom daunts a sincere lover. Some of the best and most honored women I know were poor girls, but so love-worthy that they were not allowed to be old maids. Leave these things to time. Make this home happy, so that you may be fit for homes of your own, if they are offered you, and contented here if they are not. (92)

According to Mrs. March, a woman's worth rests not in her material accomplishments or possessions but rather in her ability to love and be loved. Rather than striving for possessions out of reach or the "Cinderella-esque" appeal of balls and flattery, Meg and her sisters must satisfy themselves with moral accomplishments of kindness and virtue to help them attract a good man's heart. Their value depends not on their wealth, but how well they fulfill the masculine construction of their gender. Just like their counterparts in *The Daisy Chain*, there is no talk of the girls starting lives of their own, or of experiencing a life beyond what they live now. Their only opportunity for a different life, separate from the home of their youth, depends upon whether they can marry. If they are happy and loving, pious and virtuous at home, then they will

be rewarded with kind and caring husbands despite their poverty, and possession of a kind and caring husband is, according to Mrs. March, one of the greatest riches of all. She claims,

> I'm not ambitious for a splendid fortune, a fashionable position, or a great name for my girls… I am content to see Meg begin humbly, for if I am not mistaken, she will be rich in the possession of a good man's heart, and that is better than a fortune. (20)

A woman's value depends upon the value of the man who guides and directs her, not on any direct result of her own independent efforts.

Laurie's attempt to persuade Jo to run away with him showcases the depth to which women find themselves tied to the home. Jo sighs at Laurie's proposal, and fights the temptation, saying "If I was a boy, we'd run away together, and have a capital time, but as I'm a miserable girl, I must be proper and stop at home. Don't tempt me, Teddy, it's a crazy plan" (196). Jo feels the call of Laurie's plan, a plan for adventure initiated by him. Yet Jo's gender confines her to the home; she cannot escape the walls society has enclosed around her, and she finds herself sacrificing her dreams of wild adventures and submitting to the expectations she is held to. Earlier in the novel, Jo makes a conscious decision to "leave off boyish tricks," and she sticks to her commitment to her father and herself by rejecting Laurie's proposal (5). Yet Alcott makes it clear that once, Jo could have gladly joined Laurie in his adventure. In another scenario where Meg chides Jo for participating in boyish activities, she says "it didn't matter so much when you were a little girl, but now you are so tall, and turn up your hair, you should remember that you are a young lady" (5). A significant shift occurs when Jo began her journey towards becoming a lady. Alcott implies that the gender roles of boys and girls are at least blurred when young and innocent, and at one point she might have shared in Laurie's adventures just as Ethel shared in Norman's studies. Yet now, as a young lady, Jo has lost the ambiguity of youth and remains

firmly secured within the gendered role society holds for her, no matter how much she might wish otherwise.

Conclusion

In *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women*, Yonge and Alcott create images of girls fashioned into masculine roles of femininity. These girls can only acquire personal value by remaining in the home, sacrificing their own dreams and desires to the authority of the men who order and control their lives. In the next chapter, this accrual of value shifts dramatically when the protagonist is a boy rather than a girl. In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island*, young boys find value by creating adventures where they leave their constructed, domestic lives behind home in search of financial wealth. Yet these adventures are simply another masculine construction, hiding a man's need to feel that they are missed and irreplaceable forces at home. Men create these adventures in order to heroically return to the women and home where they were missed, yet ironically these women and their dependence upon masculine authority are constructions of masculine ideology.

"A Capital Time:" A Boy's Journey to Find Personal Capital in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island*

Introduction

In *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women*, Yonge and Alcott depict a femininity constructed by a masculine patriarchy and defined by dependence upon and sacrifice for masculine authority figures. Women, essentially, are creatures of a masculine, economic social order and fashioned to fulfill masculine needs. In the adventure stories of *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island*, masculine value is found by the separation from the home and the warm welcome young boys find waiting for them when they return. Both Tom Sawyer and Jim Hawkins begin their adventures under the premise that they are setting out to accrue value as men. They retain the ability, unlike their feminine counterparts, to distance themselves from society's authority, a necessary expression of independence and a prerequisite to any adventure. Ultimately boys find their value as heroic, masculine figures not on the adventures but in the act of returning to the homes they left behind. The most important part of the adventure is the woman who validates the boys as heroes by being physically present on the adventure and dependent upon the young hero to rescue her from danger, or by remaining at home, missing the boys when they are gone and waiting for them to return. In *Tom Sawyer*, Twain explores the playful adventures boys participate in and satirically condemns society that attempts to restrain them. Masculine adolescence is depicted as a carefree series of miscellaneous adventures, some fabricated and some real, which push the strictures of patriarchal society and establish a sense of independence apart from it. In contrast, Stevenson recounts masculinity as an ideal which can only be achieved in the ambiguity and mischief of youth. Young boys retain the freedom to defy social rules and

expectations without betraying their gendered roles, yet once these boys mature and submit to a masculine patriarchy their freedom to be adventurous diminishes. They become the enforcers of the economic order rather than rebels from it, and though they retain an ability to leave the home that women never will, their ability to submerge themselves in adventure is compromised and never the same again.

Unlike the female novelists who use their works to test futilely the social order which restrains them, the men who wrote *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* have no need to test the social boundaries of society. Rather than bringing in external sources of male authority to validate their writing within the literary hierarchy, Twain and Stevenson rely on their own narrative voice to imbue their works with masculine authority. They have no need to appeal to an established system for approval, because their gender ensures their literature gains approval from society and validation as a member of the masculine literary hierarchy.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

In *Tom Sawyer*, Twain uses several characters to hone the concept of the "ideal boy" as one who exists independent of domestic authority and actively attempts to remove himself from it. In "Tom Sawyer's Masculinity," Glenn Hendler argues that *Tom Sawyer* "[asserts] emphatically what a boy is *not*, and what a boy does *not* do" (36). Yet Huckleberry Finn is the image of idealized boyhood in the novel. He is the one Twain extols as the ideal boy, one who enjoys everything good in life without any obligations or restrictions. Twain writes that "the children admired him so, and delighted in his forbidden society, and wished they dared to be like him" (51). Huckleberry

> came and went at his own free will. He slept on door-steps in fine weather, and in empty hogsheads in wet; he did not have to go to school or to church, or call any being master, or obey anybody; he could go fishing or swimming when and where he chose, and stay as long as it suited him; nobody forbade him to fight; he could sit up as late as he pleased; he was always the first boy that went barefoot in the spring and the last to resume leather in the fall; he never had to wash, nor put on clean clothes; he could swear wonderfully. In a word, everything that goes to make life precious, that boy had. So thought every harassed, hampered, respectable boy in St. Petersburg. (53)

Huckleberry has, according to Twain, everything that makes a boy's life worth living. Within this brief description, Twain creates a definite list of all the things boys supposedly enjoy in life: sleeping outside, avoiding school and church, living without rules and under no man's authority, fishing, swimming and fighting whenever he pleases, being as dirty as he wants, and swearing as much as he wants. Huck lives completely outside the confines of the civilized town of St. Petersburg, and has no home or mother to care for him. His value, to himself and to his peers, depends not on what he accomplishes while away but what he leaves behind. When Huck finally finds himself confined to civilization after being adopted by the Widow, Twain claims that, "whithersoever he turned, the bars and shackles of civilization shut him in and bound him hand

and foot" (278). The civilized world is a restrictive, limiting force that prevents boys from enjoying life to the fullest.

While Huck lives outside of domestic life, he cannot be subjected to its restrictive walls, and yet once he finds himself bound by the "shackles of civilization" he still retains the autonomy to remove himself from them. He runs away, and Tom finds him once again, "unkempt, uncombed, and clad in the same old ruin of rags that had made him picturesque in the days when he was free and happy" (278). Huck only finds happiness when separated from the confining forces of society, yet his ultimate subjection to civilized strictures is his decision. Huck says, "Well, I'll go back to the widder for a month and tackle it and see if I can come to stand it" (279). Unlike his feminine counterparts, Huck's subjection to civilized strictures remains his own, conscious decision. Masculine characters can decide when and where they submit to social protocols, while the girls of *Little Women* or *The Daisy Chain* lack the autonomy to explore a life beyond domestic walls at their own pleasure, and when they do, their journey ends in destruction rather than fun-filled adventures.

While Twain extols Huck's independence and frames him as an idyllic example of boyish value, Tom's brother Sid represents the negative example Hendler speaks of by embodying everything a boy should not be. Twain depicts Sid as the "goody-two shoes" of the story, and characterizes him as, "a quiet boy, [who] had no adventurous, troublesome ways" (3). Sid is boring; he lacks the sense of adventure which, in Tom's mind, makes life worth living. However, he is smart and perceptive, and Sid uncovers Tom's mischief and rats him out for his adventures throughout the novel. Rather than defying civilized authority, Sid assists with its enforcement and his devotion to domestic order effeminates him. In case the reader misses the comparison, Twain uses the boys' guardian, Aunt Polly, to emphasize the contrast between Sid's unctuous

behavior and Tom's imaginative mischief. After Tom returns from his adventure as a pirate, an archetypal element of these boy stories, Aunt Polly berates him for not thinking of her feelings. She tells him, "Sid would have thought. And Sid would have come and done it, too" (150). Aunt Polly compares Sid's virtue against Tom's, and points out what she believes to be a lack of sensitivity on Tom's part. In a calculated move of dramatic irony, Twain writes the scene so that while Tom's virtue is in doubt, the reader knows the truth: Tom did think of his aunt and did visit her while she slept. Sid's efforts to paint Tom in a bad light turn him into an annoying pest rather than a source of moral virtue, and Aunt Polly's affection for him casts any overzealous desire for domestic approval as counterintuitive to what it means to be a model boy.

After Tom reveals that he did visit his Aunt while she slept, Sid still refuses to let him enjoy her loving praises. His self-righteous nature becomes so overbearing that even Aunt Polly, Sid's most ardent admirer, becomes so fed up that she says, "Shut up, Sid!" (153). Later in the story, Sid ruins the Welshman's plan to reveal his secret: that Huck was the unspoken hero who saved the Widow from Injun Joe. Tom declares, "Sid, there's only one person in this town mean enough to do that, and that's you…you can't do any but mean things, and you can't bear to see anybody praised for doing good ones" (273). Any optimistic feelings the reader once held for Sid disappear with his malicious and unprompted destruction of the Welshman's attempt to do something nice for Huck. Tattle tales, goody-two-shoes, and ingratiating mean-spirited wimps are all synonymous for a terrible, disagreeable boy, and the less like Sid a boy can be the better.

Unlike the girls of *The Daisy Chain* or *Little Women*, the boys of *Tom Sawyer* apply their own sets of values upon people and objects: they, unlike girls, create their own independent set of individual and economic values outside the realm of society's restrictions. Tom's interests and exploits all fall into the established category of "respectable" and "valuable" activities for boys.

He loves bugs, dead cats, and rats, loves fishing and sleeping outdoors, and pretends regularly to be Robin Hood, or "the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main." When Tom swindles the local boys into paying him to do his chore of whitewashing the fences, he claims to be "rolling in wealth," which includes,

> twelve marbles, part of a jew's harp, a piece of blue bottle-glass to look through, a spool-cannon, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a fragment of chalk, a glass stopper of a decanter, a tin soldier, a couple of tadpoles, six fire-crackers, a kitten with only one eye, a brass door-knob, a dog-collar, -but no dog- the handle of a knife, four pieces of orange peel, and a dilapidated old window-sash. (16)

Tom's interest lies not in cash but in oddities and ornaments with no intrinsic purpose or value. When he returns home from his pirate adventures to let his family know he and his friends are alive, Tom makes sure to take back to the island "certain school-boy treasures of almost inestimable value, among them a lump of chalk, an indiarubber ball, three fish-hooks, and one of that kind of marbles known as a 'sure 'nough crystal'" (124). These trinkets and oddities lack grace and charm; some might even consider them trash. Yet Twain makes sure to list every piece of Tom's treasury and identify them all as wealth or "treasures of inestimable value" any boy should be ecstatic to own. Tom and his friends impose their own system of capital upon objects and actions, independent of civilization and society, something the girls in *The Daisy Chain* or *Little Women* would never have the power to accomplish because they have no capital of their own.

On top of Tom's possessions, each of his boyish adventures expresses his ability to remove himself from the domestic realm of rules and regulations. By running away, boys essentially create an absence only they can fill; boys make themselves missed, and in turn construct a sense of their own value and importance in domestic society. The first of Tom's adventures occurs when he, Joe Harper, and Huck Finn decide to run away from home to be

pirates, men who, "take ships, and burn them, and get the money and bury it in awful places in their island where there's ghosts and things to watch it, and kill everybody in the ships—make 'em walk a plank,…they don't kill the women—they're too noble" (115). Tom wants to be a pirate because they are brave, feared, adventurous, and noble, traits universally admired among the boys of St. Augustine and by Jim in *Treasure Island*. Tom and his friends dream of escaping to a distant island, only after looting treasure and killing everyone on board but the women. Ironically, even pirates recognize that men need women; they become a different type of treasure, creating "wealth" by authenticating the capital of the men who capture and rule them. The pirates the boys fantasize about have no desire to spend the real wealth they capture. They simply take it from others and claim it for themselves. If the boys wanted the treasure for financial reasons, they would not bury it. Throughout their time as pirates the boys continue this defiant "us versus them" mentality. Twain writes, "They felt no longing for the little village sleeping in the distance beyond the majestic waste of water. A vagrant current…carried off their raft…its going was something like burning the bridge between them and civilization" (119). They have crossed over into a life beyond limits and rules, and the realization of their fantasy culminates in carefree days of pleasure and fun.

The boys' separation from society enforces their independence and suggests that they would be happier without the obligations of society. They manage well enough without their mothers to care for them or feed them. Despite their apparent independence however, the boys soon begin to feel homesick and miss their mothers, unacceptable feelings for pirates and outlaws. When Joe Harper begins to fell homesick, Tom says, "Go 'long home and get laughed at. Oh, you're a nice pirate. Huck and me ain't cry babies" (135). Any display of emotional weakness automatically labels a boy as a "cry baby," a title almost as bad as being equated with

Sid. Real boys enjoy escaping from home; they are not constrained by any relationships or expectations. Yet what the boys really miss are not their mothers, but the sense that they are loved and that someone waits for them to come home, an idea explored further within James Barrie's *Peter Pan*. A fundamental element to any adventure is that you are missed when you are gone and mourned if you are lost. Just as Mrs. March repeatedly reminds her daughters to think of their father in his absence, Tom and his friends need to be missed to make their adventure worth while.

When the boys realize the whole town is currently mourning their death, Twain writes they "felt like heroes in an instant. Here was a gorgeous triumph…best of all, the departed were the talk of the whole town, and the envy of all the boys" (122). Tom, Joe, and Huck all soon agree, "It was worth while to be a pirate, after all" (122). Boys cannot admit to any feelings for women which would hinder their adventures, yet these relationships remain a fundamental motivation behind them. When the boys return and Huck has no mother to welcome him home, Tom cries, "Aunt Polly, it ain't fair. Somebody's got to be glad to see Huck" (147). That the boys were missed by their family and friends makes them heroes, not what they did while they were gone. Without Tom's intervention Huck would have never become a true hero, precisely because he lacks those feminine, domestic relationships constructed to miss him when he is gone. While women are restricted from participating in adventures, and any attachment to them cheapens a boy's value, they still construe an integral part of the adventure ethos. The degree to which a boy is missed by the women he leaves behind is an essential factor in determining whether his adventure was a success and for measuring his own value in society. Yet if the ethos of mothers and the home are masculine constructions as *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women*

suggests, then when the boys leave their homes to prove themselves missed this sense of being missed is itself, to a certain extent, a masculine construction.

Tom's grandest adventure occurs at the end of the novel when he and Becky Thatcher get lost in McDougal's Cave. At first both wander along, hand in hand, searching the cavernous realms together. When Tom discovers a passage behind a waterfall, Twain writes, "at once the ambition to be a discoverer seized him [and] Becky responded to his call" (245). Just as Harry May feels the stirrings of adventure in *The Daisy Chain*, Tom feels its pull in the cave. Yet its call remains silent to Becky, and she remains unmoved by the thrill of adventure until she responds to the Tom's call. Twain implies that for girls to participate in adventures, they must be prompted by boys, an idea mirrored by Peter and Wendy's relationship in *Peter Pan*.

At every danger the pair face, Tom, not Becky, recognizes the danger and leads them to safety. When the two realize they have drifted a long way from their friends, Becky looks to Tom and asks, "Can you find the way, Tom? It's all a mixed-up crookedness to me" (246). Within the cave, Twain consistently characterizes Becky as frail and frightened; she "gave loose to tears and wailings" and found, "her sorrows were too oppressive, all her hopes were gone" (251). In contrast, Tom attempts to be optimistic and brave while actively pursuing a solution to their problem. He, not Becky, knows the bats could put out their candles, and, upon realizing they are lost, finds a spring and rests beside it so they will have fresh water. Tom directs and shapes the adventure, while Becky sits passively fulfilling the role of a damsel in distress. When Becky gives up hope and tells Tom to explore without her, Tom, "kissed her, with a choking sensation in his throat, and made a show of being confident of finding the searchers or an escape from the cave" (254). Just as Jo March's emotions cripple her when her sister falls through the

ice, Becky's emotions render her useless when she is confronted with the danger of their situation.

The entire hope of rescue rests in Tom's hands, while Becky sits, emotionally and physically weak, hoping her masculine pillar of strength finds a way to escape the cave. Tom succeeds in his quest, rescues Becky, and gets the privilege of telling "the history of the wonderful adventures" as a certified hero (256). Twain puts Becky in the cave merely so that Tom can become a hero and save his damsel in distress, an image replicated by Jim and his mother while they escape from pirates in *Treasure Island* and with Peter and Wendy's adventures in *Peter Pan*. Women cannot drive or initiate adventures, but their presence, whether physically or mentally, is a necessary component to make a boy into a hero. When playing at being a pirate the women were left behind, yet mentally present as something on the other side of the river, waiting for them to return. Here, Tom never thinks of his Aunt, because Becky's presence suffices as the feminine source of dependence needed to make Tom's adventure heroic and valuable. Successful, adventurous boys are smart, brave, savvy, and can successfully save themselves and women without anyone's help, especially a girl's.

As Becky and Tom interact throughout the book, they each attempt to "show-off" to impress the other, and each has a very distinct set of characteristics they feel gives them personal appeal and value. Tom plays to his "absurd, boyish ways" which involve "dangerous gymnastic performances" and "going on like an Indian; yelling, laughing, chasing boys, jumping over the fence at risk of life and limb, throwing handsprings, standing on his head—doing all the heroic things he could conceive of" (20, 107). His exploits center on dangerous risks and acts of bravery; Amy's showing off, on the other hand, involves "skylarking" and centers not on bravery or physical feats but on looks and daintiness. She shows off by, "tripping gaily back and forth

with flushed face and dancing eyes, pretending to be busy chasing schoolmates, and screaming with laughter when she made a capture" (155). What Becky and Tom advertise about themselves are the features that they feel society values in them. Tom earns the most admiration from his acrobatic and dangerous feats, while Becky's value lies in her beauty and gaiety. Girls are excluded from the world of danger and physical duress, while the physical appeal of boys matters less than the feats they can accomplish.

A similar expression of value occurs when Tom catches Becky sneaking around the teacher's desk. Becky becomes all flustered and bursts into tears at the thought that she will receive a whipping at school and has never been whipped before. After she runs out of the schoolhouse crying, Tom says to himself, "What a curious kind of a fool a girl is. Never been licked in school! Shucks, what's a licking! That's just like a girl—they're so thin-skinned and chicken-hearted…They ain't got any backbone" (166). Girls are characterized as weak, fearful, and irrational, incapable of standing up to criticism or pain. Boys, however, are expected to receive "lickings" without fear or weakness. In the same way Tom's masculine capital is augmented by rescuing Becky from the cave, he finds value by stepping in to take her physical punishment upon himself so she can avoid her impending fall from grace. Tom attains value as a heroic figure by stepping in to "save" Becky from a punishment which her gender renders her too emotional and weak to endure.

The characterization of girls as inferior to and dependent upon boys continues throughout *Tom Sawyer* and is emphasized by Twain's literary voice. Twain satirically portrays little girls as mindless, spineless, and worthless. While allusions and deference to masculine literary authority dominated the domestic stories, the patronizing narrative voice of *Tom Sawyer* achieves the same effect, sarcastically presiding over its characters and validating the social superiority of the male

gender. Twain spends a lavish amount of time haranguing the "original compositions" of the school's young ladies, each of which concludes with an, "inveterate and intolerable sermon that wagged its crippled tail at the end of each and every one" (174). He claims, "there is no school in all our land where the young ladies do not feel obliged to close their compositions with a sermon" and that these compositions concerned ideas, "illuminated upon similar occasions by their mothers before them, their grandmothers, and doubtless all their ancestors in the female line clear back to the Crusades" (174). The pages overflow with odious excerpts from original pieces Twain terms "nightmares," and he concludes the scene with a comic prank committed by the schoolboys (174). The prank highlights the contrast between the creative, mischievous, fun-loving nature of boys and what Twain depicts as the dull, insipid, and over-pious nature of girls. Twain groups the entire female sex, throughout modern history, into one unoriginal, hypocritical, and incorrigibly moralistic bunch.

Ironically, the moralistic nature Twain criticizes is the same nature Yonge and Alcott's novels depict as a construction of the masculine, gendered economy. Twain's satiric criticism of these young women correlates with his satiric depiction of a society dominated by a legacy of patriarchal, moral principles. Yet the socially constructed idea of women as dependent on and inferior to men remains fundamental to the sense of adventure Twain glorifies in his novel. Rather than allowing young girls to rise above their social restraints, Twain reinforces the same patriarchy he attempts to refute by confining them within the boundaries of a suppressive and debasing society.

As the book ends, Twain's conclusion states, "So endeth this chronicle. It being strictly a history of a boy, it must stop here; the story could not go much further without becoming the history of a man" (283). Twain's comment comes just after Tom has persuaded Huck to return to

the Widow and live a life within the constraints of civilization. Just as the girls of *Little Women* and *The Daisy Chain* become women when they willingly subject themselves to society's restrictions, Tom must concede to a life lived under the guidelines of acceptable society before he can become a man. Yet unlike Ethel, who sacrifices her education to become a woman, or Jo, who sacrifices her boyish adventures, Tom's submission to his gendered role does not appear to require the complete abandonment of his childhood dreams or fantasies. He claims, "Lookyhere, Huck, being rich ain't going to keep me back from turning robber" (281). Though the boys have to wear shoes and go to church and school, they have not lost all hope or opportunity for adventure. In fact, their submission to society marks their entrance into what they believe to be a more sophisticated sense of adventure, which operates both within and above the rules of society. Tom even argues that social sophistication is a pre-requisite to becoming a robber: "Huck, we can't let you into the gang if you ain't re- spectable, you know…What would people say?" (281). *Tom Sawyer* implies that boys, unlike the women of the domestic stories indefinitely confined to the home, hold the authority to remove themselves from society at will and participate in adventures even after they become men.

Tom's decision to submit to society hinges on his belief that the independence he must sacrifice to submit to society will be something he can reclaim when he wants it back. Rather than confining and suppressive, the boys believe that their subjection to social norms is merely a necessary nuisance they must bear to experience grander, more sophisticated adventures. Hendler rightly points out in "Tom Sawyer's Masculinity" that there exists, "an uneasy proximity between masculine individuality and its dissolution, on the almost explicit claim that radical self-loss is the prerequisite for the attainment of normative masculinity," a tension which is replicated in both *Treasure Island* and *Peter Pan* (46). The boys sacrifice their autonomy, a

key component of their masculine capital, in order to achieve what they perceive to be a greater amount of masculine value as men. Rather than addressing this tension, Twain avoids it by ending his narrative so that readers cannot see beyond Tom's decision to submit to society. Yet in *Treasure Island*, the tension Hendler suggests exists comes to the surface and Tom's dream of experiencing grander, more profound adventures after he grows up seems to be just that, a dream.

Treasure Island

While Twain explores the concept of the "ideal boy," Stevenson moves beyond the realm of boyish fantasies to recount Jim Hawkins' coming-of-age within a social context of danger and adult expectations. While the *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* are saturated with figures of masculine authority and guidance, *Treasure Island* and *Tom Sawyer* both subject their protagonists to little or no direct masculine, patriarchal authority. Tom lacks both a mother and father to teach him how to behave, and his social education is directed by his Aunt Polly, whose domestic authority remains throughout the course of the novel weak at best. As *Treasure Island* opens, Jim's father is fatally ill and soon dies. Tom and Jim subsequently choose their own role models from which they derive their own perception of masculinity. Tom collects other boys as models of behavior, particularly Sid and Huck. Jim, however, collects a series of adult examples of mature virility from which he learns the role he will play as a man. Unlike Huck and Sid, who present black and white pictures of what boys should and should not be, the men Jim comes to admire are neither wholly good nor bad examples of virility; they each contain traits Jim admires and traits he detests, and he determines their value for himself. Since none of the men Jim accrues as role models are actually his father, he retains the ability, like Tom Sawyer, to remove himself from their authority as he pleases without violating the patriarchal values of social order.

The first of these mentors is Billy Bones, the pirate who sets the plot into action by coming to stay at the family's inn. Jim describes Billy Bones with an air of respectful, yet terrified admiration. He says,

> All the time he lived with us the captain made no change whatever in his dress but to buy some stockings from a hawker. One of the cocks of his hat having fallen down, he let it hang from that day forth…He never wrote or received a letter, and he never spoke with any but the neighbours, and with these, for the most part, only when drunk on rum. (11)

Bones wears what he wants, eats and drinks what he wants, and appears to have no relationships of any kind as he "never wrote or received a letter." He depicts a sense of masculinity above social expectations, bordering on indulgent, dangerous excess and extreme independence. Bones' thwarts social protocols so successfully that he avoids paying his own rent for several months. Jim writes, "He kept on staying week after week, and at last month after month, so that all the money had been long exhausted, and still my father never plucked up the heart to insist on having more" (11). In contrast to Bones, Jim's father fails to exhibit an authority capable of measuring up to Bones' display of dominating virility. Mr. Hawkins' sickness deteriorates his masculine value, and Bones undermines his last source of capital as a business owner by refusing to respect it. Yet even though Jim worries over the pirate's tyrannizing behavior and its effect upon his father, he still admires Bones' independence and strength. He defends him from criticism, claiming,

> I really believe his presence did us good. People were frightened at the time, but on looking back they rather liked it; it was a fine excitement in a quiet country life; and there was even a party of the younger men who pretended to admire him, calling him a "true sea-dog," and a "real old salt," and such-like names, and saying there was the sort of man that made England terrible at sea.

Bones brings the excitement of adventure to Jim's quiet country life, and it is this, not his overbearing excess or social defiance, Jim admires about the old pirate. Just as Tom felt drawn to adventures beyond a quiet, dull life in St. Petersburg, Jim feels himself drawn to the enticing allure of an exciting, dangerous pirate life at sea.

Despite his admiration for Bones, Jim cannot quite give himself over to admire him completely. Young men only "pretend" to admire Bones, because his behavior falls too far outside the boundaries of society to ever be realistically copied. They may admire his independence and audacity, but his isolation from any and all relationships cripples his ability to

become an idealized image of masculinity. He lacks the relationships and home necessary to substantiate an adventure as an adventure. Like Huck, he has no one to welcome him home on his return and to miss him when he is gone. Bones' brief encounter with Dr. Livesay highlights this flaw within his character. When Bones pulls a knife on the Doctor, Livesay says, "If you do not put that knife this instant in your pocket, I promise, upon my honour, you shall hang at the next assizes" (13). Jim continues: "Then followed a battle of looks between them; but the captain soon knuckled under, put up his weapon, and resumed his seat, grumbling like a beaten dog" (13). Livesay lives within the strictures of society, and as a Doctor and Magistrate invests in the people of his community. These relationships give him a sense of power; people depend upon him to an extent Bones could never know, and though Bones exerts a sense of masculine authority Dr. Livesay's position of power within his community trumps the authority of the pirate and leaves him "grumbling like a beaten dog." Bones must live in a state of self-imposed exile; he chooses to reject society and its relationships, therefore society rejects him. Jim admires Bones' independence yet recognizes that it goes too far; Bones lacks the relationships necessary to authenticate him as an adventurer and as a man, and therefore cannot successfully become a patriarchal mentor to Jim.

In contrast to Bones, Dr. Livesay represents a model of civilized masculinity; Jim and other characters throughout *Treasure Island* classify him as a "gentleman and a magistrate" (40). When Jim sees the Doctor at the Admiral Benbow, he pointedly compares him to Bones. He says,

> I remember observing the contrast the neat bright doctor, with his powder as white as snow, and his bright, black eyes and pleasant manners, made with the coltish country folk, and above all, with that filthy, heavy, bleared scarecrow of a pirate of ours, sitting far gone in rum, with his arms on the table. (11-12)

The Doctor is a paragon of order and propriety, representing the authority and power of civilization with his clean, powdered wig and "pleasant manners." He not only submits to society but enforces patriarchal authority within it. This authority extends not only over the "coltish country folk" but also over Bones, who Livesay's appearance demotes to a "scarecrow of a pirate," a far less imposing and threatening characterization than Jim's initial description. At the inn, within the civilized world of regulated order, Dr. Livesay holds superior capital to Bones. Yet while Dr. Livesay retains power within society because of his relationships and ties to the law, those relationships and legalism cripple him when he finds himself outside the scripted roles of society. Jim, not Dr. Livesay, heroically saves the loyal party directly because he chooses to break the rules. Just as Bones chooses to reject society and is rejected in return, Dr. Livesay's devotion to law and order bars him from experiencing the life of a vagabond adventurer. Each man offers an extreme example of masculine capital; one is completely autonomous and isolated from society, dependent upon no one, while the other lives a life devoted to upholding the patriarchal social order of society, and neither portrays a virility that maintains authoritative capital in both the domestic and the adventurous sphere.

Long John Silver becomes Jim's favorite role model and the only one of the three men who appears to operate successfully in both worlds. Jim at first feels Silver is "a clean and pleasant-tempered landlord" very different from the few pirates he has met with in the past, including Billy Bones (59). Pirates such as Bones reject the rules of social decency; they are dirty and improperly dressed, with terrorizing personalities. Long John Silver, however, is "clean and pleasant-tempered," a distinction that suggests cleanliness and manners are distinguishing traits of civilized men and one that is consistent with Tom's characterization of Huck as an uncivilized boy. The coxswain tells Jim, "He had good schooling in his young days, and can

speak like a book when so minded; and brave—a lion's nothing alongside of Long John! I seen him grapple four, and knock their heads together—him unarmed" (73). Of these three figures of masculinity only Silver becomes a sort of stand-in father figure for Jim, teaching him the ways of the sea, treating him as a friendly confidante, and telling him stories. Jim says he, "would have gone bail for the innocence of Long John Silver" (61) and that he "made me think he was the best of men" (74). Silver enraptures Jim and convinces him that he has his best interests at heart; he appears to have the largest and most powerful amount of masculine capital in the story. Yet the moment Jim realizes Silver's duplicity the bonds of fatherly affection disappear; he claims he had, "taken such a horror of his cruelty, duplicity, and power that I could scarce conceal a shudder when he laid his hand upon my arm" (86). Unlike Bones or Livesay, Silver manages to glide between two worlds; he can be a civilized gentleman in one moment and a ruthless pirate the next. He is a part of both worlds without sacrificing his capital in one for the other, a characterization reminiscent of Captain Hook, the pirate captain of *Peter Pan*. Yet Silver can only move between these worlds through treachery; in order to succeed in one, he must betray the other, and this compromises his role as a masculine authority. Jim takes Silver's betrayal to heart, and when he hears him plotting his mutiny he recalls, "I think, if I had been able, I would have killed him through the barrel" (78). Silver's ruthlessness and callous disloyalty compromise the masculine capital Jim once credited him with having, and incites Jim's complete rejection of authority in the novel.

After Silver's treachery Jim finds himself in a world with no established social authority. He no longer has any man to guide him to a sense of his own value as a man, and when Jim sees the depth of Silver's treachery firsthand, he runs away from all the men of Treasure Island, first from fright and then as an expression of independence. Jim recalls, "I ran as I never ran before,

scarce minding the direction of my flight…It was all over I thought. Good-bye to the *Hispaniola*; good-bye to the squire, the doctor, the captain!" (104). Silver's betrayal encourages Jim to extricate himself from all masculine authority, and in the face of the failed masculine social order Jim creates his own economic system by which to accrue masculine capital. When all of the masculine authority figures fail him, Jim turns into his own masculine authority and sets out to repair the system of masculine value broken by Silver's treachery. Unlike the women of *The Daisy Chain* or *Little Women*, Jim can remove himself from patriarchal authority and, when it fails him, construct his own system of social order as he sees fit.

Silver's failure as a model figure of masculinity continues the recurring pattern of men failing to fulfill the expectations of their gender. Bones incites the thrill of adventure in Jim but his excessive drinking and overbearing nature keep him from depicting a realistic and rational virility, Livesay's masculinity excels in civilized society but falls short in a dangerous world of adventure untamed by patriarchal social order, and Jim's admiration of Silver fades in light of his treachery. Only Jim emerges as a successful example of manly virtue throughout *Treasure Island*, since he alone manages to balance a sense of defiant adventure with a sense of social restraint and order. Masculinity depends on more than independence or social authority; it depends upon the equilibrium between the two. A healthy disrespect for the rules must be balanced by the existence of a home and relationships to return to after an adventure. Tom grasps this in *Tom Sawyer* when he returns from his adventure as a pirate and makes a point to ensure someone is glad to see the homeless Huck. In light of the failed examples of masculine authority in *Treasure Island* Jim steps in to become the story's primary echelon of virility, moving between the world of uncivilized pirates and Dr. Livesay's band of loyal Englishmen.

Treasure Island suggests independence from rules and authority is a necessary precedent to any boy's adventure. It is only when Jim extracts himself from the dominion of all extraneous authority, just as Tom does in *Tom Sawyer*, that his boyish fantasies are realized. Before the group sets out on their adventure Jim recalls perusing the map and claims, "I approached that island in my fancy, from every possible direction; I explored every acre of its surface" (51). Jim dreams of exploring a mysterious island when he sets out to sea with his compatriots, but only when he separates himself from them does he actually have his adventure. The moment Jim leaves the *Hispaniola*, in defiance of orders, he,

> Felt for the first time the joy of exploration. The isle was uninhabited; my shipmates I had left behind, and nothing lived in front of me but dumb brutes and fowls. I turned hither and thither among the trees. Here and there were flowering plants, unknown to me; here and there I saw snakes, and one raised his head from a ledge of rock and hissed at me with a noise not unlike the spinning of a top. (99)

Jim's memory of his adventure emphasizes solitude as the key ingredient to his happiness; he confronts a world of unknown dangers and exciting mystery, but in order to experience an adventure and feel "the joy of exploration" Jim must confront this world without any rules or restraints. Tom and his friends must reject all confining and regulating relationships before they can become pirates, and Jim must reject both Dr. Livesay and Silver before he can exchange the structured life of the boat for a world ruled by him alone.

Stevenson encourages this attitude of temerarious independence by rewarding Jim for his defiant bravery and vilifying overbearing, patriarchal discipline. When the pirate Black Dog comes to the inn he proves a much more menacing figure than the overbearing Bones, "a pale, tallowy creature, wanting two fingers of the left hand" (14). Jim's characterization of Black Dog depicts him as evil and cruel, and ironically Stevenson chooses him to lecture Jim on discipline. Jim recalls,

> Once I stepped out myself into the road, but he immediately called me back, and as I did not obey quick enough for his fancy, a most horrible change came over his tallowy face, and he ordered me in with an oath that made me jump. As soon as I was back again he returned to his former manner, half fawning, half sneering, patted me on the shoulder, told me I was a good boy and he had taken quite a fancy to me. "I have a son of my own," said he, "as like you as two blocks, and he's all the pride of my 'art. But the great thing for boys is discipline, sonny--discipline. Now, if you had sailed along of Bill, you wouldn't have stood there to be spoke to twice--not you." (16)

Black Dog presents a terrifying image of a twisted, terrorizing father-figure, very different than the timid, frailty of Jim's own ailing father or the loving, guiding figures in *The Daisy Chain* or *Little Women*. This association with fatherhood vilifies the disciplined order of civilization, and lays the foundation for Jim's subsequent disobedience.

When Jim defiantly escapes from camp despite Livesay's direct order, his adventure turns out to be of such a great benefit that Jim is actually rewarded for his foolishness and lack of discipline. Jim even rationalizes his disobedience by saying, "I was only a boy, and I had made my mind up" (157). The fundamental difference between Jim and Silver is that Jim is "only a boy." He can escape from a world of order into one of adventure without compromising his loyalties, because boys are expected to break rules and push the boundaries. Livesay proves men still maintain the ability to separate themselves from society, but once separated they remain restricted by the responsibilities they left behind. Jim, just a boy, has no chains holding him to duty and he, not Livesay, can escape them without becoming a mutinous traitor like Silver. Just like Tom Sawyer, Jim retains the power to choose when and how he will submit to rules governing his behavior, and rather than being punished for impropriety or disobedience as the domestic stories punish their feminine characters, Jim is rewarded for his by gaining masculine capital a hero to his troop of loyal men.

Stevenson validates Jim's social capital by having each of Jim's masculine paradigms validate him as a "good boy." Billy Bones tells Jim, "you're the only one here that's worth anything" (21), and Silver claims, "I've always liked you, I have, for a lad of spirit" (200). Dr. Livesay completely forgives Jim his defiant behavior, and praises him as a hero. The Doctor claims, "There is a kind of fate in this…Every step, it's you that saves our lives" (221). Jim, not any of the story's adult figures, is repeatedly credited as the best of them all, and on top of this extraneous praise Jim affirms his individual value himself:

> Here you are, in a bad way--ship lost, treasure lost, men lost, your whole business gone to wreck; and if you want to know who did it--it was I! I was in the apple barrel the night we sighted land, and I heard you, John, and you, Dick Johnson, and Hands, who is now at the bottom of the sea, and told every word you said before the hour was out. And as for the schooner, it was I who cut her cable, and it was I that killed the men you had aboard of her, and it was I who brought her where you'll never see her more, not one of you. The laugh's on my side; I've had the top of this business from the first; I no more fear you than I fear a fly. (202)

If there was any doubt that Jim had been the hero of the story he affirms it in his speech to Silver. He is the key to uncovering the plot, meeting Ben Gunn, and saving the *Hispaniola*, all essential events for the ultimate victory over the mutinous pirates. Jim combines the best traits of all his substitute patriarchs within himself, becoming the hero of the story and the ultimate figure of masculine virtue, yet more importantly he finds value because he claims it for himself.

Just as Jim asserts his own value as a masculine force within *Treasure Island*, Jim's narrative voice drives the direction of the novel's plot and asserts its value within a literary patriarchy. The masculine authority of literature is asserted not through external, masculine literary guidance, as it is in *Little Women* and *The Daisy Chain*, but through a self-conscious, narrative voice which unhesitatingly asserts its authority within the novel. Twain accomplishes this in *Tom Sawyer* through his biting, narrative satire of society and women, and Stevenson accomplishes it by having his protagonist act as the tale's narrator. Except for the few brief

chapters where Dr. Livesay fills the narrative gaps, the story is completely recounted by Jim. He claims,

> Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesay, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted, I take up my pen in the year of grace 17__ and go back to the time when my father kept the Admiral Benbow inn and the brown old seaman with the saber cut first took up his lodging under our roof.

Despite the age difference between Jim and his fellow adventurers, they relegate the authorial role to him. That Jim, the unmatched masculine figure in the adventure of *Treasure Island*, is sought out as its narrator reinforces the patriarchal tradition of literature and adds a sense of credibility to the account. Just as masculine authority presides over the text of *The Daisy Chain* through its epigraphs, Jim's narrative voice presides over the tale of *Treasure Island*, validating its events with its narrator's authoritative masculine capital.

Jim's masculine capital and his authority over his own narrative role coincide with his complete absolution from the consequences of his actions. In the throes of adventure death becomes an all too familiar occurrence, and Jim quickly hardens to its presence until he himself becomes capable of murder. When Jim kills Israel Hands, he appears a completely different person than the tearful boy at the Admiral Benbow who cried over leaving his mother. He is cocky and confident, rather than sickened by the thought of killing a fellow human being. As he points his pistols at him, Jim says, "One more step, Mr. Hands…and I'll blow your brains out! Dead men don't bite you know" (187). Jim laughs in the face of an impending murder, apparently unshaken by the thought that he is about to kill the man before him. But though he shoots Hands, apparently without remorse, Stevenson lets Jim side-step the blame for killing another human being. He writes

> I felt then a sharp pang, and there I was pinned by the shoulder to the mast. In the horrid pain and surprise of the moment—I scarce can say it was by my own volition, and I am sure it was without a conscious aim—both my pistols went off, and both escaped out of my hands. They did not fall alone; with a choked cry, the coxswain loosed his grasp upon the shrouds, and plunged head first into the water. (188)

By framing the death as a subconscious accident, Jim takes credit for Hands' demise without accepting any moral responsibility for his actions. Just as Jim escapes the blame which usually follows a violation of rules, he avoids the moral responsibility associated with destroying another man's life. His actions remain isolated within his own narrative, framed by his own perceptions of actions and events, and thus completely out of reach from society's educational and punitive forces. Death brings with it none of the moral lessons learned in *The Daisy Chain* or *Little Women*, and instead Jim's power to steal the life of another man becomes another expression of authority over his account of his adventure.

Jim's narrative also expresses the disconnection between the masculinity of youth and the reality of manhood. Silver looks at Jim and claims he is "the picture of my own self when I was young and handsome," and Jim looks back on his adventures with a similar air of nostalgia, recounting the time when he experienced the depth and authority of his own virility (200). Kathleen Blake in "The Sea Dream" calls Jim's adventures on Treasure Island, "the fulfillment of the sea-dreams of its boy hero Jim Hawkins…and of the sea-dreams of generations of boys like him, who knew what was the right thing to go with what, what should follow, what answered" (165). Jim's adventure on Treasure Island is the culmination of those fantasies and desires that Blake claims exist almost universally among young boys, readers and characters alike. They were certainly present in Harry May, who dreamed of becoming a sailor; in Tom Sawyer, who ran away from home to become a pirate and who ultimately finds his own buried treasure, and in Peter and the Lost Boys of *Peter Pan*, who live out adventures with pirates every

day. Though Jim fulfills this "sea-dream" to become the hero of the story, he writes, as a mature narrator, with a sense of distance that suggests this dream may not be as ideal or care-free as Blake claims it to be. The narrative comes to a close as soon as the adventure ends, and Jim offers no information about himself nor hints at any current, adventurous pursuits to disprove the underlying tension between masculine autonomy and the social suppression of maturity hinted at by Hendler in "Tom Sawyer's Masculinity." Unlike Tom Sawyer, who feels maturity within society offers an opportunity to explore grander adventures than before, Jim writes from the other side of adolescence and his adventures seem to have stopped the moment he re-entered society as a man. Dr. Livesay's comment to Jim, that his actions on Treasure Island are "the best deed[s] that ever you did, or will do, though you live to ninety," appears to portend a future where adventure remains confined to boyhood and unattainable in maturity (221). Jim has experienced his one adventure, and now, writing as a man, he looks back and remembers this great accumulation of masculine capital and offers no evidence that the hopes Tom had of finding grander adventures as men prove to be true. Thus while *Treasure Island* certainly plays to the "sea-dream" Blake discusses in her work, its idyllic representation of adventure still falls under a shadow of disillusionment and compromised masculine capital. As boys, these characters retain an ability to remove themselves from patriarchal order, yet once they become men they must enforce patriarchal order rather than living in defiance of it. The "sea-dream" may be an idyllic escape from social authority, but once the dream ends and boys willingly accept their social responsibilities their masculine capital is forever compromised and they can never return home as the hero of the adventure again.

Jim's masculine narrative also excludes women from the realm of adventures. Women are almost completely absent from the text, the one exception being Mrs. Hawkins, and their

absence shows their lack of physical importance to the adventure narrative. Yet even though they are largely absent, women are not excluded completely. Just as women must be present to validate an adventure in the eyes of the boys in *Tom Sawyer*, Jim must have someone to leave behind and return to once his adventure ends to substantiate his masculine capital. When Jim sees his mother's new apprentice, he writes,

> It was on seeing that boy that I understood, for the first time, my situation. I had thought up to that moment of the adventures before me, not at all of the home I was leaving; and now at the sight of this clumsy stranger, who was to stay here in my place beside my mother, I had my first attack of tears. (55)

Jim feels the pain of separation when he faces his mother and with a slight hint of shame admits that he cries. Yet once Jim leaves the Admiral Benbow his narrative voice scarcely gives his mother a second thought. Her character exists only to emphasize Jim's departure from his home and the start of his adventure. She rarely enters Jim's thoughts once he leaves, for to miss his mother and his home would undermine his masculine capital within the narrative. Just as Joe Harper's longing for his mother threatens the success of his sojourn as a pirate, any feelings of affection or attachment to his mother would threaten Jim's status within the novel as a nostalgic emblem of the ideal boy. Even though Mrs. Hawkins remains physically absent for the majority of *Treasure Island* her simple existence is fundamental to Jim's success within his gender role. Jim's mother is a construction of patriarchal society, someone he leaves to find treasure and acquire value as a man, yet the value Jim accrues from finding the treasure or defeating the mutinous pirates must be substantiated by returning home to the mother he left behind. Yet ironically, this feeling of being missed which validates boys as heroes is the result of a social ideology which turns women into creatures utterly reliant upon masculine authority and guidance to function within their prescribed social context.

Conclusion

In the adventure stories of *Treasure Island* and *Tom Sawyer*, Twain and Stevenson depict a sense of masculine capital that is validated and collected through a series of adventures away from the authority of society. Yet this independent and collected wealth proves to be a façade, disguising from young men their own paradoxical dependence upon the masculine construction of the home and mother figure to claim their social capital as men. The same gendered economy which regulates the domestic and adventure stories regulates the plot of *Peter Pan* and the actions of its two most important characters. The economic system that tells the girls of *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* that they cannot find value outside the home bears down upon Wendy and directs her pursuit of her gendered value in Neverland, while the archetypes of masculine capital outlined by *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* culminate in the island's chief figure and enforcer of masculine authority, Peter Pan. Even in the fantasy land of Neverland, both Peter and Wendy remain confined to the interactions outlined by a gendered economy.

"Let Us Pretend": The Game of Gender in *Peter Pan*

Introduction

James Barrie's *Peter Pan* unites the gendered ideals constructed by domestic novels and adventure stories in a land of children's dreams and fantasies. While Neverland offers boys an opportunity to escape the patriarchal social order and its gendered expectations, it simultaneously reinforces the patriarchal construction of domestic femininity prevalent in both *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* by confining Wendy's own pursuit of value to the patriarchal principles it allows her male counterparts to escape. The dream world of Neverland gives boys the opportunity to explore beyond the confining forces of society, yet offers Wendy nothing more than the opportunity to explore the gendered role that someday will confine her.

In contrast to Ethel May and Jo March, who struggle to conform to their prescribed social roles and sacrifice their childhood autonomy, Wendy is a young woman who has been constructed from birth to recognize and accept that her social capital depends upon her becoming a wife and mother. While Wendy does find a sense of personal capital in Neverland, she only achieves it through the creation of a make-believe, patriarchal family where she finds value as a mother. Though Wendy attempts to create a family for herself, she only succeeds because Peter invests his masculine capital into her project and chooses to allow it. Just as Ethel's attempts to pursue capital depends upon an investment by her brother and Dr. Spencer, Wendy's attempt to pursue capital depends upon Peter's willingness to lend his masculine authority to her fantasy.

The paradoxical masculine identity established in the adventure novels comes full circle in the character of Peter Pan. He manifests the "ideal boy" image of *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* while also portraying a boy eternally and tragically isolated from domestic love and care.

Peter rejects all prospects of a future and a home, and chooses instead to live his life hopping from one adventure to the next. Yet, although Peter rejects civilized domesticity, he repeatedly proves a boy's need for a mother figure to validate his masculine capital. Wendy's presence in Neverland becomes a type of payment in exchange for Peter's participation in her domestic fantasy. While Peter's masculinity can function without women to validate its authority, Wendy augments Peter's masculine capital in a way no adventure can; she heightens the stakes of his adventures because now someone will miss him when he leaves and mourn him if he falls. In return, Peter upholds the domestic illusion Wendy depends upon to find a sense of personal capital. Even after she leaves Neverland Peter maintains this economic arrangement. He depends upon first Wendy, then her daughter, and then her granddaughter to wait for him as his own constructed version of the home, and in exchange he lets them experience a domestic fantasy where they can feel a sense of social value.

"It's only make-believe, isn't it?": Wendy's Domestic Fantasy

In *Peter Pan*, the same principles of femininity discussed in *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* form the foundations both of Wendy's understanding of her own value and of her place in the adventures of Neverland. Just as Ethel May and Jo March find fulfillment through submission to their prescribed social roles, Wendy finds her own sense of capital by attempting to fulfill her future role a mother. Everything Wendy understands about what it means to be a woman comes from her perception of her mother's role in their family, and Mrs. Darling holds no inherent economic value beyond what she accrues as a mother; even her meager attempt to keep the household books proves a failure because she dreams about her future children. Barrie writes, "At first she kept the books perfectly, almost gleefully, as if it were a game, not so much as a Brussels sprout was missing; but by and by whole cauliflowers dropped out, and instead of them there were pictures of babies without faces" (2). The mere prospect of becoming a mother weakens Mrs. Darling's ability to participate in the masculine world of business; the two appear completely incompatible. She views dalliances beyond her prescribed social role as a "game," and nothing more. Mr. Darling makes a point to inform Mrs. Darling that she would not be able to provide for herself or her children without him. He emphatically claims,

> "I warn you of this, mother, that unless this tie is round my neck we don't go out to dinner to-night, and if I don't go out to dinner to-night, I never go to the office again, and if I don't go to the office again, you and I starve, and our children will be flung into the streets." (18)

From Mrs. Darling, Wendy gains a picture of feminine value completely dependent upon fulfilling her role as a mother, a role which in turn depends upon an investment of masculine capital through the act of marriage. More importantly, Mrs. Darling never expresses any dissatisfaction with her life or seeks to find fulfillment elsewhere. She, like Mrs. March in *Little Women*, creates an image of motherhood where a woman's personal capital depends upon

ensuring the comfort and happiness of her family through the sacrifice of her own comfort and desires. Wendy recognizes that Mrs. Darling's social capital depends upon her status as a mother, and Wendy attempts to replicate this social role and claim its capital for herself in Neverland.

Wendy's understanding of her own value extends beyond her mother and encompasses the social values which accentuate her inferior value as a little girl. On the night the children begin their adventure with Peter, Mrs. Darling finds them pretending to be their parents:

> She had found her two older children playing at being herself and father on the occasion of Wendy's birth, and John was saying: "I am happy to inform you, Mrs. Darling, that you are now a mother," in just such a tone as Mr. Darling himself may have used on the real occasion. Wendy had danced with joy, just as the real Mrs. Darling must have done. Then John was born, with the extra pomp that he conceived due to the birth of a male, and Michael came from his bath to ask to be born also, but John said brutally that they did not want any more. (17)

Barrie describes John's actions as "just such a tone as Mr. Darling himself would have used," and Wendy danced "just as the real Mrs. Darling must have done," implying a basic understanding of the social guidelines of gendered behavior. The Darlings give their children an idea of the roles they will perform as men and women in the future, and even at so young an age, John already feels that, as a boy, his value far exceeds that of his sister. His birth contains the "extra pomp he conceived due to the birth of a male," and when Peter compliments girls Wendy points to John and claims, "[he] just despises us" (39). Wendy already understands that in her world, the same world of the domestic novels, boys hold more social capital than their sisters.

Yet unlike Ethel May and Jo March, Wendy eagerly welcomes any opportunity to conform to social expectations. She wants to grow up because she believes her own value rests completely in her ability to be a mother-figure within her own home. Until then, she cannot attempt to accrue a sense of self-worth. Her only hope for finding value and respect rests in her

ability to become a mother, and as soon as she gets the opportunity she does so. Once in Neverland she creates her own home and family, not because she wants to perform the tasks and duties of a mother figure, but because she wants to feel a sense of importance and value which society denies her as a little girl.

Wendy's need to feel valued and important culminates in her decision to leave her home behind for Neverland. All Peter's efforts to persuade her to join him focus on how valuable she will be when she gets to pretend to be a mother to the Lost Boys:

> [Peter] had become frightfully cunning. "Wendy," he said, "how we should all respect you."
> She was wriggling her body in distress. It was quite as if she were trying to remain on the nursery floor. But he had no pity for her.
> "Wendy," he said, the sly one, "you could tuck us in at night."
> "Oo!"
> "None of us has ever been tucked in at night."
> "Oo," and her arms went out to him.
> "And you could darn our clothes, and make pockets for us. None of us has any pockets." How could she resist. (42)

Wendy cannot resist the temptation to find a sense of value and importance for herself, even if that value lies in pretending to be a mother rather than participating in exciting adventures herself. Barrie's sarcastic comment, "how could she resist," points out the irony of Wendy's temptation. Wendy should not want to pretend to tuck in boys, darn pockets, and sew clothes, yet the thought of these very things is enough to destroy her hesitation at joining Peter in Neverland. While John and Michael leave home for the opportunity to fight pirates and Indians, Wendy leaves for the opportunity to perform menial domestic chores in order to be respected and valued by men. Once in Neverland she achieves the domestic value she has hoped for, but only because she has Peter's help and authority backing her fantasy. Just as Ethel May and Jo March achieve personal capital with the help and support of masculine investments, Wendy's effort to find

personal capital on Neverland only succeeds because it is invested with masculine capital by Peter Pan.

As both *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* establish, a nineteenth-century girl's value in her domestic role depends on the patriarchal foundation of the home, which imbues her with a masculine capital she can claim as her own. Wendy's own journey to find personal value begins when Peter agrees to take her to Neverland and teaches her how to fly. Peter initiates her journey into finding value for herself and makes it possible with his guidance and direction. Just as Richard shows Ethel how to become a source of domestic virtue and Laurie shows Jo how to write, Peter initiates the journey on which Wendy can find value for herself. When Wendy and her brothers arrive in Neverland, they create a new set of domestic rules, established by Wendy's patriarchal domestic knowledge and enforced by Peter's figurative patriarchal authority. Peter, not Wendy, establishes the "game" where he and the Lost Boys have no adventures and pretend to be grown ups:

> It consisted in pretending not to have adventures, in doing the sort of thing John and Michael had been doing all their lives, sitting on stools flinging balls in the air, pushing each other, going out for walks and coming back without having killed so much as a grizzly. …For several suns these were the most novel of all adventures to him; and John and Michael had to pretend to be delighted also; otherwise [Peter] would have treated them severely. (102)

As a constructed mother figure Wendy becomes a source of domestic knowledge and provides an essential element needed to create a home for the Lost Boys. Yet Barrie credits Peter for initiating the new game, not Wendy. Wendy maintains the knowledge of domestic operations and procedures but Peter retains the authority to shape how Wendy's domestic dream becomes a reality. This articulates a society in which knowledge is perversely not a source of domestic and social authority but instead a price paid in exchange for a sense of self-worth. While *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* portray a society where domestic knowledge is a source of masculine

authority and men teach women their domestic roles, Peter holds no domestic knowledge and assumes his role as a patriarch simply because he knows he is supposed to dominate the action of the "game" as the masculine authority of Neverland.

Wendy plays to perfection her domestic role as a mother and wife to the Lost Boys and Peter, and succeeds in finding the value and fulfillment she yearned for at home. When John and Michael see the Lost Boys building a house for their sister, they respond in complete shock:

> "For Wendy?" John said, aghast. "Why, she is only a girl!"
> "That," explained Curly, "is why we are her servants."
> "You? Wendy's servants!"
> "Yes," said Peter, "and you also. Away with them."
> The astounded brothers were dragged away to hack and hew and carry.

Although Peter remains the foundation of her "home," Wendy assumes a domestic authority as a mother which inverts the power distribution between her and John and which confines him and Michael to her authority. She constructs a complete replica of her own life in England except she plays the part of Mrs. Darling, a valued figure of domestic muliebrity and an authority figure whose rules must be obeyed. In a world of fantasy and adventure, Wendy achieves the domestic role her youth denied her and feels at last that she has found a sense of value for herself. Barrie claims that, "When she sat down to a basketful of their stockings, every heel with a hole in it, she would fling up her arms and exclaim, "Oh dear, I am sure I sometimes think spinsters are to be envied!" Her face beamed when she exclaimed this" (99). Wendy loves pretending to be a mother because it gives her a sense of value. Although she spends her time cooking, cleaning, sewing, and knitting while the Lost Boys play carefree, she feels gratified because she is fulfilling the role that society has constructed her to fill and, in return, has found a sense of value and importance for herself. She finds, as the girls of *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women* do, that

her sense of personal capital depends on her ability to fulfill her predestined role in society, that of a mother and a wife.

Although Wendy maintains the authority to shape domestic operations and the behavior of her "children," Peter's lessons in patriarchal behavior come from John and Michael. They, not Wendy, are the ones who instruct Peter on how to behave as a father. John claims, "He didn't even know how a father does till I showed him" (133), and Michael claims his part by saying, "It was me told him mothers are called old lady" (135). Even though Wendy knows by heart the behavior of mothers and fathers, her gender prevents her from being able to instruct Peter on how to behave as her imaginary husband. John and Michael must step up to tell Peter how fathers behave because they, as boys, retain a sense of patriarchal authority from their lives in England which Wendy can never know. Even if Wendy did subvert the established chain of authority and attempt to tell Peter what to do, she would undermine the patriarchal values that domestic novels such as *The Daisy Chain* claim her constructed domesticity depends on. And as Wendy's value depends on maintaining the patriarchal structure of her home, she has every motivation to submit to Peter's will and reinforce it with unquestioning obedience. She works constantly to reinforce a sense of her own domesticity, and satisfy Peter's desires, in order to keep her fantasy alive. Barrie writes, "Really there were whole weeks when, except perhaps with a stocking in the evening, she was never above ground. The cooking, I can tell you, kept her nose to the pot" (98). Just as Ethel flees from temptation by reasserting her father's hold on her, Wendy reasserts her submission to patriarchal authority through her duties and holds on to the value she finds there, even if she must miss out on the splendor and adventure of Neverland and remain chained to her domestic duties.

Just as Ethel's pursuit of capital depends on the guidance and authority of men, Wendy's constructed role as a mother and the existence of her Neverland family depends upon Peter's willingness to participate in the game; the moment he rejects it, Wendy loses all the capital she has contrived for herself and becomes nothing more than a worthless girl. Peter's involvement in Wendy's fantasy determines its value. Yet he is, in a convoluted way, Wendy's own construction of patriarchal authority because she drives the creation of the Neverland family; Peter only supplies the capital required to create it. Barrie highlights Peter's authority over Wendy's fantasy one day when Peter comes home. He says,

> "I was just thinking," he said, a little scared. "It is only make-believe, isn't it, that I am their father?"
> "Oh yes," Wendy said primly.
> "You see," he continued apologetically, "it would make me seem so old to be their real father."
> "But they are ours, Peter, yours and mine."
> "But not really, Wendy?" he asked anxiously.
> "Not if you don't wish it," she replied; and she distinctly heard his sigh of relief. (137)

Wendy's idealized domestic realm only exists because Peter allows her to impose her rules upon it, and she recognizes his authority over her fantasy and his ability to end it if he pleases. She can only succeed in accruing capital for herself if Peter allows her to do so. His authority in Neverland rests in his ability to participate in adventures as a carefree, insolent boy, and though he enjoys pretending to be a father he can only do so as long as it remains make-believe. He remains the ultimate patriarchal authority, paradoxically reinforcing his own authority over Neverland in defiance of a patriarchal civilization while his masculinity simultaneously validates the patriarchal hierarchy of Wendy's constructed domestic realm and her successful pursuit of feminine value.

Wendy's attempt to construct a domestic realm where she can find value for herself parallels Yonge and Alcott's attempt to find literary value within the structure of a masculine literary patriarchy. Just as these feminine novelists pursue creative value by borrowing from the capital of masculine orthodoxy, Wendy pursues her own value in the male-constructed world of Neverland by borrowing from Peter's masculine capital. Though she finds a sense of fulfillment from the make-believe home underground, the constructed home only remains possible because Peter's masculine authority lends itself to its creation. The masculine literary hierarchy finances Yonge's creative work, Laurie's masculine presence validates the Pickwick Society's annual publication, and Peter's masculine capital subsidizes Wendy's construction of her own personal value. Any attempt by a woman to accrue social value only succeeds when it is invested with masculine capital and conforms to its example.

When Wendy does attempt to leave the protection of Peter's masculine capital, she faces a set of destructive consequences very similar to those experienced by Meg March and Flora May. The moment she and her brothers fear they might have lost their real home forever, Wendy abandons her fabricated home and leaves with the Lost Boys to journey back to Neverland. Peter however, stays behind. For the first time in Neverland Wendy leaves her home without Peter's authority and masculinity to protect her. As a result, she and the other Lost Boys find themselves captured by Hook and dragged away to the *Jolly Roger*. Barrie writes,

> All the boys were plucked from their trees in this ruthless manner; and several of them were in the air at a time, like bales of goods flung from hand to hand. A different treatment was accorded to Wendy, who came last. With ironical politeness Hook raised his hat to her, and, offering her his arm, escorted her to the spot where the others were being gagged. He did it with such an air, he was so frightfully *distingue*, that she was too fascinated to cry out. She was only a little girl. (160)

Wendy finds herself violently appropriated by Hook yet entranced by his display of gentility, and Barrie blames her fascination on the fact she was young and enamored by Hook's civilized treatment. Hook's actions, however ironical, show he recognizes Wendy as a woman, and his sophisticated treatment of her both gratifies Wendy's vanity while appalling her with its propriety. Wendy's attempt to set out on her own, independent of Peter's authority, results in her fascination with Hook's manners, which in turn results in Hook's attempt to destroy Peter Pan and which almost destroys Tinker bell. Barrie makes a point to show Wendy's responsibility for Peter's brush with death:

> Had she haughtily unhanded him (and we should have loved to write it of her), she would have been hurled through the air like the others, and then Hook would probably not have been present at the tying of the children; and had he not been at the tying he would not have discovered Slightly's secret, and without the secret he could not presently have made his foul attempt on Peter's life. (160-1)

The moment Wendy leaves Peter's guiding authority and rejects her domestic role, she brings the threat of death and destruction not only upon herself but also upon the Lost Boys and Peter Pan. Just like her counterparts in *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women*, Wendy discovers the dangers that exist beyond the patriarchal protection of the home and the destructive potential that arises from attempting to defy it. Wendy's capture is a hyperbolic parallel to what Peter did to her when he brought her away to Neverland. She chooses then to remove herself from the patriarchal authority and protection of her father by leaving his home, just as she chooses to remove herself from Peter's authority in Neverland by leaving his home. Women depend upon masculine authority for their security in the world, and if they reject one source of masculine capital girls like Wendy risk being claimed by a new, more sinister, masculine authority and subjected to his whims and desires.

As the years roll by Wendy attempts to cling to the value she made for herself in Neverland and ignore the social pressures urging her to grow up. Barrie writes,

> For a little longer she tried for his sake not to have growing pains; and she felt she was untrue to him when she got a prize for general knowledge. But the years came and went without bringing the careless boy; and when they met again…Wendy was grown up. You need not be sorry for her. She was one of the kind that likes to grow up. In the end she grew up of her own free will a day quicker than other girls. (219-20)

Wendy ultimately submits to her prescribed social role because she understands that her value lies in being a grown up and mother rather than a little girl. Unlike Peter, whose value lies in his autonomy and youth, Wendy's value depends upon growing up. As Barrie says, "she was one of the kind that likes to grow up," because she needs to become a mother to realize her own social capital. Wendy tries to hold on to the value she gains from the one week she spends with Peter as his "wife" and "mother," yet when Peter forgets about her and denies her the opportunity to reclaim this sense of value she must submit to society and look elsewhere for a man to validate her feminine value. She, unlike Peter, resigns herself to her future and growing older in exchange for the fulfillment of being a real mother. Ironically, Barrie points out that Wendy "grew up of her own free will." For the first time, Barrie explicitly acknowledges that Wendy decides something for herself, yet she decides to "grow up," something that no child has any control over but Peter.

When Peter returns Wendy feels her first tinge of regret that she has lost her youth because she can no longer be what she once was to Peter, a make-believe mother. Like Ethel May and Jo March, she has become a woman and must sacrifice her childish escapades for a life confined within the walls of domesticity. Before, she could play at being a mother without being tied to social rules or transferring their patriarchal authority to those she cared for. She had not been thrust into domestic training or received an investment of patriarchal, social capital. Instead,

she was free to be invested in and constructed by Peter. Yet now, as a woman, Wendy can no longer play. Barrie writes, "Wendy did not know how to comfort him, though she could have done it so easily once. She was only a woman now" (227). As a grown woman Wendy no longer retains the ability to leave with Peter and experience the adventures of Neverland; she has her own husband to invest social capital in her and, as a mother, a level of social authority which both exceeds that of Peter and exists independent of him. Her newfound social capital means Peter can no longer use Wendy to authenticate his adventures. To do so would show his dependence upon a real mother, and credit his masculine capital to the social patriarchy he ran away from rather than the independent value system of Neverland he established and controls himself. His masculinity would no longer be autonomous and independent; instead, it would be a product of and subjected to the authority of a real, and powerful, domestic patriarchy.

Although Wendy knows she cannot be what she once was to Peter, a part of her, for the first time in *Peter Pan*, attempts to reject the structured role society has dealt her. Barrie writes, "She huddled by the fire not daring to move, helpless and guilty, a big woman…Something inside her was crying Woman, Woman, let go of me" (224). Wendy feels the same sad resignation both Ethel and Jo experience when they face an opportunity for adventure they must reject or the memory of abandoned dreams. Each woman is resigned to her fate, but each feels a sense of sadness that they can never be open to dreams and adventures again. Barrie says Wendy, "was not a little girl heart-broken about him; she was a grown woman smiling at it all, but they were wet eyed smiles" (226). Wendy understands the depth to which she is tied to her home and her family, and though once she would have risen up to fly with Peter to Neverland, she merely smiles a sad smile and remains tied to the home to which her body confines her.

"It is all my doing": Peter and Masculine Capital in Neverland

While Wendy attempts to accrue value in Neverland by fulfilling her prescribed social role, Peter Pan plays the role of the "ideal boy" and the ultimate masculine authority of Neverland. *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* portray the ideal boy as clever, brave, and independent, who runs away from society to create his own sense of value and live under his own authority. Unlike the other adventure stories which depend upon multiple characters to create an image of ideal masculinity, Barrie quickly identifies Peter as the ultimate "ideal boy," and firmly grounds adventures as experiences accessible to boys rather than men. When Peter first meets Wendy, he explains to her how he came to be in Neverland:

> "Wendy, I ran away the day I was born…It was because I heard father and mother," he explained in a low voice, "talking about what I was to be when I became a man." He was extraordinarily agitated now. "I don't want ever to be a man," he said with passion. "I want always to be a little boy and to have fun." (35)

He explains his lack of a mother or family as a result of his own decision to never become a man. Unlike Wendy, who searches for a sense of her own value by submitting to her expected social role, Peter rebels against his and leaves society for Neverland, where he can live free of the obligations to which his gender confines him. He continues to validate the bravery, defiance, and independence identified in both *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* as traits necessary for success in any adventure, and Barrie uses Peter's authority over the Lost Boys to authenticate him throughout *Peter Pan* as the idealized example of masculinity on Neverland.

Barrie validates Peter's authority in Neverland by carefully distinguishing him as the most brave and fearless of all the Lost Boys. Peter remains the boys' primary source of security and strength, and they get scared when he is away. While waiting for Peter to return they each say, "'I do wish Peter would come back," though, Barrie writes, "in height and still more in

breadth they were all larger than their captain" (71). Physically, the Lost Boys all trump Peter yet he is the one they cling to when they are afraid. Similarly, Peter's virility earns him a sense of authority and power that demands the respect and obedience of his peers. Barrie claims the boys, "are forbidden by Peter to look in the least like him" (65), and says, "It was not in their nature to question when Peter ordered" (79). Peter maintains a physical and authoritative separation from all the other Lost Boys; he uses his own authority to accentuate his masculinity and superiority to other boys as if it were a product of nature. Peter contains so much power over the other boys that he controls their very identities. Barrie writes, "Peter never quite knew what twins were, and his band were not allowed to know anything he did not know, so these two were always vague about themselves, and did their best to give satisfaction by keeping close together in an apologetic sort of way" (66). Just as all domestic knowledge must be attributed to Peter in order to maintain his patriarchal authority, the Lost Boys' knowledge must remain less than or equal to that held by Peter. If it ever exceeded his knowledge then they would be responsible for undermining Peter's capital as a man. The twins therefore attempt to deny their physical being and erase their identity as twins because Peter does not understand their physical existence. Just like Wendy, they must credit Peter with knowledge he does not possess in order to keep his constructed masculine capital intact. The Lost Boys' limit their own knowledge in order to maintain Peter's role as an paragon of masculine authority and the source of the masculine capital which drives Neverland's adventures.

Most important to the validation of Peter's masculine authority is his bravery in the face of danger and the joy he finds in every adventure. When the Lost Boys lie sleeping and are about to be caught by pirates, Peter alone recognizes their danger and prepares them for the approaching battle. Barrie writes,

> It was well for those boys then that there was one among them who could sniff danger even in his sleep. Peter sprang erect, as wide awake at once as a dog, and with one warning cry he roused the others…"Pirates!" he cried. The others came closer to him. A strange smile was playing about his face, and Wendy saw it and shuddered. While that smile was on his face no one dared address him; all they could do was to stand ready to obey. (109)

Peter alone recognizes their danger and greets it with a smile. The boys crowd around him, and wait, "ready to obey." He and none other can "sniff danger even in his sleep." In Peter's presence, no one enters into an adventure without his guidance and acquiescence. Every boy's will is subject to Peter's wishes. When they attack Hook, Barrie claims all the other boys faced him in fear but one. He says, "There was one who did not fear him: there was one prepared to enter that circle" (118). Barrie characterizes Peter as the authority of every adventure. He alone recognizes danger, greets it with a smile, faces it unafraid, and emerges victorious from the struggle. When Peter faces death, Barrie claims,

> Peter was not quite like other boys; but he was afraid at last. A tremour ran through him, like a shudder passing over the sea; but on the sea one shudder follows another till there are hundreds of them, and Peter felt just the one. Next moment he was standing erect on the rock again, with that smile on his face and a drum beating within him. It was saying, "To die will be an awfully big adventure." (123)

Even when Peter faces his own death, he remains undaunted. Here, the lack of knowledge Peter showed with both Wendy and the Lost Boys becomes the source of his ability to show courage and strength in the face of death. He does not understand death, and this allows him to see it as the beginning of a new adventure rather than what it really is: an ending.

As the ultimate example of masculine virtue, Peter's authority extends outward from his band of Lost Boys to encompass the entire island of Neverland. Just as Jim creates his own identity as a man as an independent authority over Treasure Island, Peter exerts his masculine authority over Neverland, shaping and molding its resources to suit his whims and desires as its

hero. The island is the physical construction of children's dreams and adventures, and Peter, as the ultimate figure of adventure, embodies its heart. When Peter returns to Neverland Barrie writes that the entire island stirs when it senses his presence:

> Feeling that Peter was on his way back, the Neverland had again woke into life. We ought to use the pluperfect and say wakened, but woke is better and was always used by Peter. In his absence things are usually quiet on the island…But with the coming of Peter, who hates lethargy, they are under way again: if you put your ear to the ground now, you would hear the whole island seething with life. (64)

With the mere proximity of his physical presence Peter brings Neverland to life. Peter's autonomous masculine authority not only finances adventures but makes them possible in the first place. He holds the masculine capital which supports the island's existence, and since there is also no constructed mother figure to enforce his patriarchal authority in his absence, no male clout remains in Neverland to support or initiate any adventures. Everything is put on hold until the source of masculine capital returns and begins reinvesting its value into the island.

Life in Neverland appears to rely on Peter's physical presence, but ironically Peter's capital depends on the submission of the island's inhabitants to his constructed, masculine fantasy. Peter's masculine authority is validated by the respect he receives from every creature of the island. The mermaids refuse to talk to everyone but Peter, who Barrie writes, "chatted with them on Marooners' Rock by the hour, and sat on their tails when they got cheeky" (106). Similarly, when Peter falls asleep on a fairy path Barrie claims, "Any of the other boys obstructing the fairy path at night they would have mischiefed, but they just tweaked Peter's nose and passed on" (93). The Lost Boys, the Indians, and even the Pirates acknowledge Peter as Neverland's patriarchal figure. Yet his authority only exists because the island chooses to acknowledge his self-constructed masculine capital and uphold it. Peter depends upon the efforts of Wendy, the Lost Boys, and the island itself to uphold his constructed virility by willingly

participating in his fantasies and authenticating his authority. Even Barrie contributes to upholding Peter's authority in Neverland. Rather than correcting Peter's faulty grammar and pointing out another example of his deficient knowledge, Barrie changes his own grammar to suit Peter's preferences and uphold Peter's constructed masculine capital within the story.

While Peter plays the part of the heroic adventurer in Neverland and acts as a force of masculine virtue, Captain Hook fulfills the role of the evil foe, challenging Peter's authority and breaking the codes of adventure Peter enforces. He embodies the same distorted masculinity represented by Silver in *Treasure Island*, a distorted vision of patriarchal authority tainted by his defiance of established order just as his physical body is tainted by his iron hook. Neverland operates under a code of "good form" or fair play, and this unspoken code of etiquette regulates every adventure on Neverland and is embodied and enforced by Peter. According to Blake, "on [Neverland] form is a way of life…and its presiding spirit, Peter, is good form, a kind of embodiment of the play spirit" (170). When describing the battle between the Indians and the pirates Barrie claims that the unspoken code of conduct was "so well known to Hook that in disregarding it he cannot be excused on the plea of ignorance" (152-3). Masculine virtue operates on principles of justice and decency, and by rejecting those principles Hook, like Silver before him, undermines his own masculine authority and power. Silver's masculine authority was undermined in Jim's eyes by his duplicity and treachery, and Hook's masculine authority in Neverland is undermined by his conscious rejection of the "good form" which regulates and structures individual actions on Neverland and validates men as heroes.

In conjunction with his defiance of the Neverland's rules of behavior, Hook's presence in Neverland represents a rejection of the patriarchal order of British society. Barrie makes it a point to note that, "[Hook] had been at a famous public school; and its traditions still clung to

him like garments" (175). Hook attended the British institutions which imbue young men with a sense of value for tradition, and thus for established patriarchal authority (175). Yet Hook's current role as a pirate undermines everything that society once taught him to love and respect. As a man, Hook is confined to the rules of civilization and the consequences of their rejection. Boys, like Jim Hawkins and Peter Pan, can escape the restraints of society without rejecting civilization completely, yet men cannot completely escape their duties without themselves being rejected by society. Hook's presence in the world of adventures is a denial of his assigned role in society, another violation of natural order on top of his refusal to submit to the code of conduct under which Neverland operates. Barrie claims this defiance of both his role as a man and a sense of value for "good form" is,

> A claw within him sharper than the iron one; and as it tore him, the perspiration dripped down his tallow countenance and streaked his doublet. Ofttimes he drew his sleeve across his face, but there was no damming that trickle. Ah, envy not Hook. (175-6)

The pirate refuses to succumb to both his prescribed duties as a figure of mature masculinity as well as the established principles of fair play under which the island of Neverland operates, and because of this he assumes the only role left, that of Peter's nemesis, a figure of evil that must be destroyed to purify the corrupted virtue of Neverland.

In contrast to Hook, Peter respects and values decency and fair play. He reigns as the paragon of masculine authority in Neverland and becomes its unspoken enforcer of "good form." Ironically, though Peter rejects the society which attempts to confine him to a legacy of patriarchal order, he chooses to obey the order that regulates and controls the adventures of Neverland. Yet Peter's obedience to the rules of adventure do not require sacrificing his autonomy in any way, and therefore he can follow them without compromising a sense of his own independence and power. Peter always follows the unspoken guidelines of the island's

adventures, regardless of the cost or risk, and while Hook's continual violations of fair play and "good form" identify him as twisted and evil, Peter's respect for it contributes to his image as the island's heroic figure. By obeying the rules of adventure, Peter actually enhances his virtuous, heroic image without compromising any of his masculine autonomy.

As the enforcer of fairness and virtue in Neverland, it remains Peter's task throughout *Peter Pan* to confront and conquer the deviant Hook and restore Neverland's established order. His reinforcement of Neverland's values not only offers him another adventure to enjoy but also confirms his own authority as the island's supreme masculine authority. When the two finally confront on the *Jolly Roger*, Barrie writes,

> For long the two enemies looked at one another, Hook shuddering slightly, and Peter with the strange smile upon his face.
> "So, Pan," said Hook at last, "this is all your doing."
> "Ay, James Hook," came the stern answer, "it is all my doing."
> "Proud and insolent youth," said Hook, "prepare to meet thy doom."
> "Dark and sinister man," Peter answered, "have at thee." (194)

In a speech reminiscent of that made by Jim Hawkins' to Silver on Treasure Island, Peter takes credit for Hook's future demise and validates his superior masculine authority on Neverland, as well as the rules of fair play under which the island operates. When the two face off at last, Peter emerges the uncontested figure of masculine virtue in Neverland and the enforcer of its established paradigms of behavior. He sets out to reaffirm his value as a man and confirm his authority in Neverland, and unlike Wendy he can claim that value for himself, independent of any external investment of capital.

Peter Pan reinforces the existence of the same unattainable ideal of mature masculinity present in the adventure stories of *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island*. When the Darling children decide to return home after discovering that their mother might not wait for them forever, the Lost Boys thrill to the unknown just as Tom and Huck thrill to thoughts of adventures as

respectable robbers. Barrie claims they, "were dejected, not merely because they were about to lose [Wendy], but also because they felt that she was going off to something nice to which they had not been invited. Novelty was beckoning to them as usual" (148). Just as Tom persuades Huck to return to civilization by tempting him with grander adventures, the Lost Boys are tempted by the thrill of the unknown and Wendy's romanticized stories. Yet when she brings the Lost Boys home with her they find themselves in the same state of disillusioned boredom foreshadowed by Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island*:

> Before they had attended school a week they saw what goats they had been not to remain on the island; but it was too late now, and soon they settled down to being as ordinary as you or me or Jenkins minor. It is sad to have to say that the power to fly gradually left them…In time they could not even fly after their hats. Want of practice, they called it; but what it really meant was that they no longer believed. (217)

The Lost Boys submit to the will of social order and find themselves molded into the respectable men Peter feared he would become. They go to work everyday, returning to a family at night, never to feel the thrills of an adventure again; Barrie claims they are "done for" (220). The Lost Boys' fate verifies an image of a society where women and children remain completely dependent upon men for survival, yet this state of dependence confines men to the home and restricts their ability to participate in the adventures which established their sense of masculine capital to begin with.

The only boy who escapes this fate is Peter, for Peter refuses to fall under the trap of civilization and give up his autonomy as an adventurer. Peter, more than any of the other Lost Boys, recognizes the restraints and obligations encompassed in the act of growing up. His patriarchal authority in Neverland never becomes anything more than a game, for if it had he would have lost his ability to rule and indulge in the adventures of Neverland. He would become no better than Hook, vainly attempting to deny the duties society has already bound him to

fulfill. When Mrs. Darling attempts to persuade Peter to join their family, he emphatically denies her offer:

> "I don't want to go to school and learn solemn things," he told her passionately. "I don't want to be a man. O Wendy's mother, if I was to wake up and feel there was a beard!"
> "Peter," said Wendy the comforter, "I should love you in a beard"; and Mrs. Darling stretched out her arms to him, but he repulsed her.
> "Keep back, lady, no one is going to catch me and make me a man." (215)

Peter never wants to deal with "solemn things" or experience the confining duties of manhood. He wants forever to be a carefree, adventurous boy, ruling over his own kingdom of Neverland completely independent from all authority but his own. Peter chooses to remain forever in the adolescent ideal of adventure; he, more than Tom Sawyer or Jim Hawkins, understands the disillusionment of mature masculinity hinted at in *Treasure Island* and chooses to fight against its hold over him instead of choosing to fall for its temptations. Peter's refusal of domesticity supports his characterization as the echelon of masculine capital and ideal boy; he alone contains enough capital to resist the authority of society. Yet rather than praising Peter's escape from social strictures, Barrie portrays him as a tragic figure forever excluded from experiencing the validating power of a mother's love. Even Peter cannot, as Blake rightly notes, "quite get away with being an eternal boy…for even Peter has mysterious bad dreams and cries in his sleep" (176). Peter's subconscious acknowledges his isolated and unloved state in his bad dreams. He already lives within a world of fantasy, and only in the dreams within the fantasy can he acknowledge the dark truth, that he does feel the void of a mother's love, a void that no adventure can ever fill or satisfy.

Even in *Peter Pan* the constructed mother figure remains a necessary part of validating a boy's masculine capital by welcoming them home from their adventures. Wendy's presence on Neverland augments Peter's masculine virtue by contrasting his masculine strength and bravery

with her feminine weakness and fear. When Wendy and Peter find themselves stranded on a rock, Barrie describes a scene where, "the girl had fainted and lay on the boy's arm," a picture of Wendy as utterly dependent upon Peter as her source of strength (122). When a kite appears and can bear one of them away from the rock, Peter nobly sacrifices himself so that Wendy, "a lady," can be carried to safety:

> "Let us draw lots," Wendy said bravely.
> "And you a lady; never." Already he had tied the tail round her. She clung to him; she refused to go without him; but with a "Good-bye, Wendy," he pushed her from the rock; and in a few minutes she was borne out of his sight. Peter was alone on the lagoon. (122)

Even though Peter manages to escape, Wendy's presence adds a dramatic effect and makes Peter into a hero. Similarly, when Wendy and the Lost Boys are kidnapped by the pirates, Peter thinks only of his role as rescuing Wendy rather than freeing his loyal band from Hook's clutches. Peter thinks, "Wendy bound, and on the pirate ship; she who loved everything to be just so!" and cries, "I'll rescue her!" (168). The thought of Wendy's rescue, not the Lost Boys', motivates Peter's sense of adventure because rescuing Wendy is what will make him into a hero. The act of saving someone who cannot save themselves adds a sense of nobility and grandeur to the venture, and Wendy augments Peter's virility by giving him a weaker, feminine figure to save and support with his strength. Her weakness validates his masculinity and the more Peter risks for Wendy, the more capital he accrues as a hero.

Just as Wendy's presence enhances Peter's masculine virtue, her role as a mother figure raises the level of adventure the Lost Boys experience as well. The pirates recognize the Lost Boys' lack of a mother figure as a fundamental weakness in the armor of their youth. Before Peter returns to Neverland, Hook sits plotting to kill the Lost Boys by taking advantage of their motherless state. He plans to,

> "Return to the ship…and cook a large rich cake of a jolly thickness with green sugar on it. There can be but one room below, for there is but one chimney. The silly moles had not the sense to see that they did not need a door apiece. That shows they have no mother. We will leave the cake on the shore of the Mermaids' Lagoon…They will find the cake and they will gobble it up, because, having no mother, they don't know how dangerous 'tis to eat rich damp cake… Aha, they will die." (77)

The success of Hook's entire plan depends upon and arises from the knowledge that the Lost Boys have no mother to guide them. Mother figures hold authority over their children, guiding them to what is right and wrong, and in the absence of such guidance the Lost Boys present a vulnerable case until Wendy arrives. When she does, Hook cries, "The game's up, those boys have found a mother" (113). Wendy's arrival in Neverland gives Peter and his loyal boys a new sense of power over the pirates because they no longer are missing a key piece of the puzzle to complete them as adventurers. The pirates feel all is lost until Smee suggests that they steal Wendy for themselves: "It is a princely scheme," cried Hook, and at once it took practical shape in his great brain. "We will seize the children and carry them to the boat: the boys we will make walk the plank, and Wendy shall be our mother" (114). The pirate's focus shifts from destroying the boys to stealing their newfound mother. Wendy becomes a valuable commodity in Neverland, the last piece of the puzzle who can care for the adventurers and miss them when they are gone. Both Hook and Peter fight for Wendy's ability to authenticate their masculine capital, yet Peter emerges the victor and wins Wendy for himself. Peter's ability to defeat Hook's claim to Wendy as a source of authentication parallels the way Jim Hawkins' masculinity trumps that of all the men on Treasure Island. Peter wins Wendy for himself and in doing so sanctions the authority of a boyish, masculine capital over the mature masculine capital society wants to force him to settle for.

Barrie repeatedly validates mothers as the last missing piece boys need to fulfill them as adventurers. The Lost Boys especially recognize the void Wendy's presence fills in their adventurous lives. When they first meet her, the Lost Boys say, "A lady to take care of us at last!" (81). Even on an idealistic island of adventure such as Neverland, the Lost Boys recognize that they are missing a fundamental complement to their masculine virtue as adventurers: a mother. Peter Pan, though he refuses to admit it to anyone, feels the same void in his own life. Though he enjoys "ecstasies innumerable that other children can never know," Barrie emphasizes that there will always be "one joy from which he must be for ever barred," a homecoming to a mother's love (211). For a while Peter successfully fills the void of a mother by bringing Wendy to Neverland. When she cooks and cares for him, and plays the role of a mother, Peter finally gains a glimpse of the sense of value and love he misses out on in his solitude. Yet Peter can only subject himself to a mother's love when it is the construction of his own imagination. He can never subject himself to the love and authority of a real mother, because to do so would be to abandon Neverland for a life where he must grow up and leave his adventures behind him.

Fortunately for Peter, Mrs. Darling takes pity on his motherless state and proposes a plan to help support his adventures:

> She made this handsome offer: to let Wendy go to him for a week every year to do his spring cleaning…this promise sent Peter away quite gay again. He had no sense of time, and was so full of adventures that all I have told you about him is only a halfpenny-worth of them" (217)

By agreeing to let Wendy leave with Peter for one week a year to do his spring cleaning, Mrs. Darling gives Peter a compromise which incorporates women into his adventures just enough to validate him as a heroic adventurer. Although Peter remains barred from the joy of a mother's love, he maintains a tie with the constructed mother figure of his imagination, and in doing so

maintains his prestige as the masculine archetype of the adventurer. When Wendy becomes too old to join Peter on his adventures, her daughter takes her place as the validating source of Peter's masculinity, allowing Peter to continue his adventures unconfined by domesticity yet still tragically devoid of real love and companionship.

Barrie's own literary style speaks of the masculine literary authority both Twain and Stevenson rely upon in their writing. Throughout the text of *Peter Pan*, Barrie's narrative voice interjects to offer its opinion on the action or to take credit for manipulating the plot, all of which points out to the reader that they are being told a story rather than watching something as it unfolds. Barrie, "repeatedly reminds us that [the story] is pure dream, or game—arbitrary, conventional, made-up" (Blake 173). When Tinker bell first speaks, Barrie addresses the children reading his book and claims, "You ordinary children can never hear it, but if you were to hear it you would know that you had heard it once before" (29). On another occasion, he acknowledges manipulating the plot, saying, "Let us now kill a pirate, to show Hook's method. Skylights will do" (69). Each moment of literary self-awareness weakens the tale's reality and emphasizes its reader's distance from the action. Barrie maintains a tight control over the story itself, cutting in and manipulating its progress to fashion it to his narrative will. The action of the story follows his narration, rather than his narration following the action. His presence as *Peter Pan*'s author never disappears from the plot of the story.

Though Barrie's control over the story's plot speaks to a tradition of masculine authority within literature, Barrie's self-aware narration also undermines to a certain degree the principles of masculine patriarchy that form and regulate the domestic and adventure stories discussed in Chapters One and Two. He, more than any other writer discussed within this paper, acknowledges the presence of patriarchal biases in his society. Rather than overlooking or

ignoring the value a mother brings to the home, Barrie makes a point to emphasize how her love is abused and ignored by her children throughout the novel. When he returns to Mrs. Darling while her children are on their way home, he writes,

> It seems a shame to have neglected No. 14 all this time; and yet we may be sure that Mrs. Darling does not blame us. If we had returned sooner to look with sorrowful sympathy at her, she would probably have cried, "Don't be silly; what do I matter? Do go back and keep an eye on the children." So long as mothers are like this their children will take advantage of them; and they may lay to that. (201)

Barrie points out that Mrs. Darling's children are taking advantage of her love and devotion to them by going off to enjoy their adventures. As adventures remain the domain of boys, Barrie's comment reads as a vague recognition of the way this value system uses women for its own gratification. Though he does not refute the established order, he admits that he recognizes its constructed prejudices and makes a meager attempt to make-up for it by making a mother's eternal love the most poignant theme of his story. Barrie even goes so far as to express his own appreciation for Mrs. Darling when he writes, "Some like Peter best, and some like Wendy best, but I like her best" (205). Barrie's ironic and self-aware narrative voice acknowledges the presence of masculine patriarchal values and vaguely attempts to balance them by emphasizing the importance and value of a mother's love. He understands the gendered economy that deeply intertwines the domestic capital of the mother with that of masculine authority. Mrs. Darling needs Barrie, the man investing his masculine capital into *Peter Pan*, to love her best in order for her capital in the story to hold its weight, just like Peter needs Wendy to love him best in order to maintain his constructed masculine authority in the tale.

Despite this awareness, Barrie's narrative voice still falls far short of achieving a literary lens through which young girls find a sense of autonomous self-worth. His awareness of the restrictive and unequal nature of the gendered economic system of value contrasts with its

presence within his novel and implies that Barrie also, in a way, remains tied to its authority. Even as an author, he follows the same structure of finding value as a man paralleled by both Tom and Jim in their adventures. He begins his tale with Mrs. Darling, escapes from her and domesticity to write the adventures of Neverland, and returns to her at the end of his adventures, when the tale must come to a close. He depends upon Mrs. Darling to structure and authenticate the capital he created in writing *Peter Pan*. She brings his project full circle, opening it by becoming a mother and closing it by authenticating Barrie's own adventure, writing the tale of Peter Pan.

More important than Barrie's self-conscious submission to this gendered, economic system is the way it becomes a game within the novel. Wendy and John play at being their parents and fulfilling their gendered roles, and Peter and Wendy play at being a mother and father of their own home in Neverland. The economic system of social value is trivialized and twisted into a set of rules which must be followed to participate in a "game" and have "fun." Rather than being portrayed as a subjection to a crippling and unequal economic system of gendered values, a boy and girl's conformity to their gendered social roles takes on the air of an innocent coming-of-age story and naturalizes a legacy of social patriarchy. The games make playing at being a woman, isolated to domestic chores and the home, seem like the natural desire of every girl rather than her only option for accruing a sense of personal capital in society, just like it implies that every boy wants to run away from the patriarchy of the home and fight pirates when their only alternative is to stay at home and lose their masculine capital like Sid from *Tom Sawyer*. Rather than a structured social system it might be possible to find value outside of, this gendered, economic system becomes an unavoidable, natural state of order.

Conclusion

Both domestic novels and adventure stories find a place in James Barrie's *Peter Pan*. Wendy experiences the same confining nature of domestic muliebrity and sense of dependence upon masculine capital for self-worth that both Ethel May and Jo March experienced in *The Daisy Chain* and *Little Women*. Peter conforms to the same standards of masculine capital, running away, autonomous independence, and dependence upon a mother-figure for validation, which were outlined by Tom Sawyer and Jim Hawkins in *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island*. Yet more than the others, *Peter Pan* willingly acknowledges the influence of this economic system over the actions and characters of its plot. Barrie points out its influence and recognizes its unequal parameters, but still reinforces its hold over his story. He views it as a game whose rules he must abide by in exchange for a sense of childish fun. Yet this sense of "fun" and "games" Barrie associates with this gendered economy highlights its dangerous implications for all readers of these stories, young and old alike.

This economic value system saturates these five classic children's tales, and disguises itself, under the façade of puerile innocence, as a natural system of social order. Rather than acknowledging the dangers associated with a social system that defines someone's social capital through prescribed gender roles, the creators of these stories utilize these gendered guidelines to structure and order their fiction. Their readers embrace the gendered, economic rules within these stories in exchange for a fun-filled fantasy where rules appear, for a time, to be broken. Though these stories create the illusion that prescribed social restrictions have been escaped the plots always return to the home and society at the end of the adventure and reinforce the gendered economy's power over their characters and even over their authors. The escape remains a fiction, just like the stories themselves. Presumably few readers, if any, question why Wendy

wants to be a mother and leave her home to tuck in boys she has never met, or why boys want to run away to become pirates and robbers. Instead, these novels work because readers take these things at face value and ignore not only what they are saying about the social capital of boys and girls, but more importantly, what they could be implying to the boys and girls who read them. Ultimately, we must be aware of the implications of such a gendered economy and its legacy within children's literature. Rather than accepting these stories' claims about the value of boys and girls as natural or unavoidable, we must work to teach children a new type of social economy where their value exists independent of their gender and its prescribed set of social obligations.

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