The pictured child in Victorian philanthropy 1869-1908

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Abstract

This study sets out to investigate the nature of the Victorian child's standing in society using pictorial means. It takes the view that the picture, or visual image, has something important to tell us about attitudes towards childhood, and how children were regarded as a group, between 1869 and 1908. As a piece of scholarship, it is situated between the disciplines of art history and social history.

Little work has been done on the child's visual representation, and its contribution to the historical record. The rich visual material that forms part of the archive of Victorian philanthropy in general, and temperance in particular, remains largely untapped. The study is a response to this scholarly neglect, with the uses made by charity of the pictured child forming its central site of inquiry. Philanthropic images of childhood will be set in their pictorial context by reference to their appearance in other parts of the public domain.

The history of the relationship between adults and children has been called 'age relations' by one historian. This study will apply general and specific practical approaches, drawn from critical visual techniques, to age relations, leading to an interpretation of how Victorian childhood was pictured for its audiences. Images will be approached as pictorial puzzles, and priority will be given to those solutions which formed part of the historical record. The main analytical tool to be used is adopted from critical theory's notion of the metapicture. This acknowledges the capacity of the visual image to tell us about itself when viewed

in relation to other images. It will be combined with established art historical approaches to the picture.

The study discusses the range of contemporaneous meanings assigned to the picturing of childhood, and how the relationship between some of these meanings held significant implications for children's social standing. Its sustained approach to visual interpretation can be said to uncover the extent to which conflicting expectations were placed upon children by the sacrifice of the real to the ideal in adult notions of childhood.

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Author's note
Due to unforeseen processing problems, large gaps appear on pages 80, 117, 172, 183 & 246. Though unwanted, they do not indicate any loss of text.
HJP

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The love of my husband Jim has been like a rock throughout, as he has taken away financial pressure from me, and been patient with the uncertainties and frequent puzzlement which have accompanied such an undertaking at this stage of my working life.

INTRODUCTION

Picturing Victorian Age Relations

0.1 The study's starting point

This study starts from the premise that historical record can substantiate the relationship between the visual representation of children and childhood and the perceived status of the child in society.[1] It arose out of a curiosity and a growing concern that the depiction of children had not attracted scholarly attention to the same degree devoted to other social groups. Modern studies of the visual representation of such groups are available and they provided initial points of academic reference. They include the depiction of women, people of colour, people of a different sexual orientation and animals. Richard Dyer has drawn attention to the significant influence of images on the perceived status of any group in society in the following observation. 'How we are seen determines in part how we are treated, how we treat others is based on how we see them; such seeing comes from representation'.[2] In such a way, Dyer assigns a crucial role to the image in the creation of social standing. If his argument is accepted, it follows that collective regard for children is dependent in part on how they are portrayed. This makes the lack of current and past work on their visual representation even more worrying. This study is based on a belief that there is something important to be gained from looking at images of children and how they have been used. One of its aims is to alert scholars of visual culture to the subject's neglect of pictured

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[1] Children and childhood are inextricably linked together by current definition. *The New Collins Concise English Dictionary* gives the meaning of childhood as 'the condition of being a child; the period of life before puberty'. This definition suggests both a state and a stage.

[2] Richard Dyer, *The Matter of Images, Essays on Representations*, (Routledge: 1993), p1. This book deals in the main with gender and sexual orientation discourse in film images.

childhood, and to the possible implications of excluding children from similar levels of attention given to others.

No comprehensive study of the visual representation of the child exists, which might suggest either that children do not look markedly different from adults, or that such a difference has gone unperceived. In fact, for the last three centuries, children have not usually been represented as sharing the visual characteristics of adults. This study will show how, during the Victorian period, it was - and still is - a means of expressing concern about a child to say that he or she possessed an adult appearance, and for this to be a feature of his or her portrayal. Underpinning such commentaries has been the implication that the child has in some way been dispossessed of childhood. Children and childhood are usually treated by scholars as inextricably linked together in the Victorian era, prompting the picturing of childhood to become an essential part of the study's premise.[3] The historian Hugh Cunningham has observed that a '... sweetened romanticism was the dominant force in the way children came to be pictured in the nineteenth century'.[4] He attributed this to the impact of a growing belief that children *per se* were entitled to a childhood and to the influence of Wordsworth's ideas in particular.

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[3]The French family historian Philippe Aries has drawn attention to earlier visual treatments of the child which are undifferentiated from adults. For example, 'Medieval art until about the twelfth century did not know childhood or did not attempt to portray it ... it seems more probable that there was no place for childhood in the medieval world.' Medievalists dispute this. See p31 of his chapter 'The discovery of childhood' in Chris Jenks (ed.), *The Sociology of Childhood, Essential Readings*, (London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd 1982). The same book carries a chapter called 'The Image of the Child' by Peter Coveney. This discusses textual images of childhood and their centrality for nineteenth century writers. Coveney argues that their preoccupation with the childhood state and stage represented a reaction to the upheaval and dissolution of the century. See chapter five of this study for a discussion of the significance of childhood to Victorian adults.

[4] Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500*, (London and New York: Longman, 1995), p76.

0.2 The nature of the task

0.2.i A brief description and explanation of the study

This study sets out to establish what contemporaneous imagery can tell us about the standing of the Victorian child. Its task will be to evaluate the depiction of the child in widely different media settings within philanthropic activity and in relation to cultural context and childhood histories. It will be concerned primarily with what such representations were intended and believed to convey to their audiences, and will be based on the historical record of individuals and organisations making use of pictured childhood. The study will concentrate on the pictured child in philanthropic work because of its powerful impact on audiences past and present. Benedict Nightingale, a historian of charities, has written that '[n]o charity that has the opportunity of wringing the heart, or exciting our power complexes, with children is likely to miss it.'[5] Nightingale was discussing the general impact of the pictured child on potential donors in a late twentieth century perspective. This study concentrates on images of children and childhood in mid to late Victorian philanthropy and employs two very recent techniques, from art history and social history respectively.

The history of children and childhood in Victorian society has been chosen, although the thesis's precise temporal boundaries require some explanation. These have been set by key developments within young people's history, which has often been assigned a

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[5] Benedict Nightingale, *Charities*, (London: Allen Lane, 1973), p139. The charity Shelter, he continued, '... uses children, frail, pretty, beseeching - to prevent the advertisement's reader from arguing to himself that a gift will only perpetuate the fecklessness and irresponsibility of adults ...' He discussed Oxfam's history in relation to the pictured child's power to stimulate giving. 'Oxfam, too, has long exploited young suffering faces, and was once persuaded to withdraw some advertisements by the Charity Commissioners, who felt it was unfairly weighting an appeal that was, after all, for people of all ages.' p139.

lesser status, compared to other areas of scholastic interest.[6] This study pays close attention to images of children and childhood within an historical context, and is intended to be read as art history in active engagement with social history. As a consequence, the notion that all images fulfil an illustrative function for their particular period, without discrimination, is considered misleading, doing less than justice to both disciplines. Rather, the image is accorded an active cultural role upon the stage of Victorian charity, a role with its own identifiable, characteristic activity. This approach will be described in greater detail in relation to analytical methods.

The study is located in the gaps between the disciplines of art historical and critical theory, and social history. It will apply a technique, whereby images make sense when viewed in relation to each other - the metapicture - to a focused approach to adult-child relationships - known as 'age relations'. The application of the metapicture to age relations has not been attempted before. This thesis will use this as its main approach to the pictorial analysis of visual material which has been largely neglected by scholars. A much fuller exposition will now be given on what this study hopes to achieve and its means of doing so, starting with the nature of children's history, before moving on to pictorial issues.

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[6] The study period opens with the opening of the National Children's Home in London and closes with the 1908 Children's Act. The significance of these dates is explained in chapter three.

0.2 i Historical grounds

One recent summary of children's history has described it as a large and diverse subject area, and as generally unimportant to scholars in its own right.[7] There has been a tremendous growth in the literature on the history of children and childhood over the last twenty years, as Harry Hendrick makes clear.[8] Hendrick points out that the child's voice has been under-represented in the literature, which has looked at young people's history in relation to other concerns, such as the family, social policy and public health. It could be argued that this tendency of historians to approach this area only in relation to other topics has had the effect of cancelling out the subject's importance, when measured by recent growth in the field. Indeed, in seeking to engage with young people's history, this study touches on a subject area which, as Hendrick says, '... has yet to become a major focus of research either in terms of prestige or of popularity...'.[9] He cautions that the field is diffuse and difficult to summarise. He uses the notion of 'age relations', those sets of relationships existing between adults and children, to present literature which is very diverse in nature. This provides him with a lens through which the relationships between children and society can be understood. As a way of easing into this approach, Hendrick's term will be elaborated on to introduce this thesis as the pictorial analysis of Victorian age relations.

This study will further adopt part of Hendrick's working definition of children as people between babyhood and thirteen or fourteen years old. There are variable reference points for arriving at such a definition, which will be developed further when discussing

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[7] Harry Hendrick, *Children, Childhood and English Society 1880-1990*, (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p1.

[8] Idem. He presents most of the literature as 'age relations' between children and adults. The term also serves to encompass the many different perspectives on what constitutes the history of children and childhood.

attempts by adults to salvage childhood for the threatened child. (See chapter three, sections 3.2, 3.1.i and 3.1.iii.) References to babyhood will be restricted to those carrying the same meaning and connotations as childhood. Babyhood will not be discussed in this study as a state and stage of life separate from childhood. In the main, scholars have written about childhood as the preliminaries of existence, and of the child as a person in the process of becoming. As a consequence, the child in history has been defined by a deficiency of personhood. It could be said that this has contributed to the political characterisation of children according to their **lack** of significance, a negative distinction shared only with animals, when they are compared to any other social grouping.

Low levels of political acknowledgment do not equate with lack of influence in the field of age relations, however. In this sense, Hendrick is wise to issue the following warning: '... it will be useful to keep in mind ... that perceptions of children and childhood connect to adults as they search ... for something - be it knowledge, happiness, power, security, wealth, innocence, comfort of peace.'[10] This suggests that adults have tended to regard children as a guiding light to aspirational human activity.[11] As this study engages with histories of childhood in which - it will be argued - the image played an active part, it does so in an awareness of the reciprocal influence at work within a complex relationship between adult and child.

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[9] Idem.
[10] Ibid., p14.
[11] Hugh Cunningham has observed that 'Dickens's childhood heroes did much to fix in the public mind the idea of a child as both pitiable (Oliver Twist) and "fresh from God", as the embodiment of a force of innate goodness which could rescue embittered adults.' Op. cit, p74.

The social historian Hugh Cunningham guides the reader from outside the discipline through the complexity of age relations in a rather different way from Hendrick.[12] He doubts that the fundamental relationship between children and parents has changed over the centuries as much as some modern scholars have suggested. It is a relationship that has been subjected to widely differing interpretations, particularly in the response of writers in English-speaking countries to Philippe Aries' s 1962 text, called *Centuries of Childhood.*[13] Cunningham refers to childhood as a shifting set of ideas, notions that have ebbed and flowed in past centuries as well as in the present. Other writers have discussed these evolving concepts and given them titles, such as the natural or innocent child.[14]

Whatever such notions entail, they remain distinguishable from histories of childhood which have based themselves on children's recorded experience. Such testimonies that have survived remain problematic for historians in any case, depending on the extent of adult intervention in their production. While distinguishing between these two historiographical approaches, Cunningham pursues both in his study of childhood in

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[12] He uses three central interlocking themes: ideas of childhood, the actuality of adult-child relations, and the roles of philanthropists and states in regard to childhood.

[13] The original 1960 text was titled *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Regime*, which could be said to reflect more accurately Aries's preoccupation with the family. Aries also took up the earlier notions of Norbert Elias, that the distance between adult and child behaviour was inseparable from the march of civilization through history.

[14] The bibliography of scholarship dealing with such notions is multi-disciplinary and extensive. These include many such works, including Chris Jenks, *Childhood,* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996). This sociological text discusses the natural child, the social child, the Dionysian child, the Apollonian child. Hendrick himself offers further definitions (the romantic, evangelical, factory, delinquent, schooled, psycho-medical, welfare), the meaning of which evolved into sharp focus during the nineteenth century. He writes that '[i]n 1800 the meaning of childhood was ambiguous and not universally in demand. By 1914 the uncertainty had been resolved and the identity determined, at least to the satisfaction of the middle class and the respectable working class.' This useful, short overview is to be found in 'Constructions and Reconstructions of British Childhood: An Interpretative Survey 1800 to the Present', chapter two, Allison James and Alan Prout (eds.), *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood,* (London: Falmer, 1990). The passage quoted in this footnote is taken from page 36.

Western Europe[15]. My pictorial analysis of age relations has more in common with what can be called conceptual histories of the child, and rests on the assumption that ideas on what has constituted childhood have been the creation of adults.

Armed with such a distinction, it is possible to revisit Philippe Aries's classic text on childhood, despite its built-in assumption that the history of children and the history of the family are synonymous.[16] His apparent assumptions about the capacity of representations of children and childhood to encapsulate other notions - the family, life, death, the soul - will be re-evaluated within the pictorial evidence discussed in this study. It will be argued that such depictions articulated complex, perhaps contradictory adult concepts through visual discourse, making them uniquely accessible for contemporaneous audiences.

0.2.iii The controversial child in history

Aries continues to be unusual amongst scholars in giving attention to what can be called the pictorial dimensions of childhood. The nature and meaning of the topic still provoke lively and intense discussion in the form of textual discourse. Perhaps the most controversial contribution in recent years has been James Kincaid's study of present day power relationships which perpetuate, he argues, the abuse of children in a society

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[15] 'Both "children" and "childhood" appear in my title because we need to distinguish between children as human beings and childhood as a shifting set of ideas.' op. cit, p1. Cunningham argues that a romantic sensibility towards childhood dominated the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. In his view, this was probably at its height between 1860 and 1930.

[16] See Philippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962). Chapter two, 'The Discovery of Childhood', is particularly valuable, containing as it does many historical references to the representation of children and childhood. For example, the baby as a symbol of life itself, as the soul at conception and death.

devoted to the child's protection.[17] Kincaid's arguments will now be considered in more detail, since they present some salutary warnings and challenges for the principles which underpin the present study. This thesis sets out to examine the historical record to see what past relationship could be said to have existed between the pictured child and children's standing in society. It does so in the belief that an historical perspective may illuminate and draw attention to the possibility that the present low status accorded to childhood as a subject area in its own right may be contributing to a lack of clarity around the child's social standing. In this sense it acknowledges the possibility that neglecting the pictorial dimension of children's history could have social implications for the present and the future of childhood. Kincaid goes much further, almost suggesting that the Victorian past and the late twentieth century present are interchangeable.

Typical of this approach are his reasons for choosing to write about well-known child characters in Victorian fiction - including David Copperfield and Tess - alongside contemporaneous writing on child sexuality and aberrations in adult sexual behaviour. To combine these areas in such a way not only implies an erotic dimension to both sides of Victorian age relations, but also makes fictional constructs of the child party to the resulting relationship. His intention is to clarify the present in the light of the past, an aspiration with which this study has some sympathy. The obvious danger to any such enterprise from outside the discipline of history is one of retrospective selection of the recorded evidence to suit the argument. Kincaid encourages the reader to '... think of Victorian culture and Victorian constructions of children as shifting, various, and

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[17] James R Kincaid, *Child-Loving, the Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

mysterious ...', a justifiable appeal for respect for the complexity of the subject matter. He goes on to contrast the elusive uncertainties of the past with the rigidity he identifies in present day debate on childhood. If we can learn from the Victorians, he argues '... we have some hope of catching a glimpse of where our own unwarranted certainties come from.'[18]

This approach could be said to place an enormous burden on the historical documentation of Kincaid's chosen topics and the critical relationships presented between them. For example, his description of the growth in awareness of child sexuality seems intended to, but does not actually provide, a *de facto* bridge to the field of adult desire. Kincaid acknowledges historical evidence to the contrary when he notes that age was not a critical factor in contemporaneous attitudes to prostitution. Yet the very inclusion of such statements as 'childhood ended with the onset of puberty, of sexuality'[19], and his wish to get to grips with constructs of the child as non-sexual, suggests that he regards the connection between the two fields as unavoidable in some way. Having started out with praise of Aries in his attempt to address perceptions of the child, Kincaid does not provide evidence from the historical record for his linking of the scientific study of the child as a sexual being, on the one hand, and the nature of adult desire, on the other. Having assumed such a link, he calls it the 'erotics of loss'[20], which leads him to interpret the words of a writer, longing to be a boy amongst boys, as voyeurism. Despite having every sympathy with Kincaid's conclusions[21], his book

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[18] Ibid., p63.
[19] Ibid., p70.
[20] Ibid., p67.
[21] Who could disagree with Kincaid's belief that '[a] society ... which honors[sic] hitting and suspects hugging is immoral; one which sees hitting as health and hugging as illness is mad; one which is aroused by hitting alone is psychotic and should be locked up'.(p362) His solution remains controversial, when he

offers little contemporaneous evidence to confirm his view that Victorian readers found the cruelty to David Copperfield 'exciting'[22]; or that Dan Peggotty's boat - where David holidays as a child - was a 'centre of all pedophile reality'[23]; or that readers found the rest of the book - after David finds refuge with his eccentric aunt in Dover - was 'a sad falling-off' in narrative power.[24]. Of course, these are Kincaid's own readings of Dickens's book within an erotic interpretation. That he appears to assume a relationship between present-day interpretation and the perceptions of contemporaneous audiences without substantiating it represents perhaps the greatest weakness of his critical analysis. It is perhaps telling that Kincaid called his book *The Erotic Child and* [rather than in] *Victorian Culture*. If he had written about the erotic child in the nineteenth century, he would have been obliged to demonstrate that some Victorians did indeed engage with cultural representations of the child as objects of erotic as well as nostalgic contemplation. This study approaches the pictorial analysis of Victorian age relations with justifiable caution as a result and will, wherever possible, place the emphasis on what images of the child were taken to mean by their users and audiences.

0.3 The task

The main task of the study is to provide an analysis of the picturing of Victorian age relations in philanthropic activity. This could be phrased more simply as a response to asking what role was played by the visual representation of children and childhood in

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proposes '... a refiguring of the fields of being and of desire so that bodies and pleasures, released from power, would also be released from abuse and molestation'.(p386)

[22] Ibid., p308.

[23] Idem.

[24] Ibid., p309. Kincaid warns the reader in his opening passages that he will adopt various strategies to destabilise the monolith of present day discourse on child abuse. Maybe outraging the modern reader of Dickens is just such an approach.

charitable work. The impression that this visual material did not so much illustrate the work of philanthropy as participate in it, arose from studying the images themselves. The ways in which images interact with other primary source material is by no means straightforward.[25] Ray Parker hints at this in his history of English childcare.

> The imagery of child care is important because most of it was ... created for a purpose, albeit for different purposes by different interests. ... These images have their own history, related to the romanticised and sentimental views of childhood that were to become so common in popular Victorian novels ... .[26]

Parker is expressing a concern that such images exerted a compelling influence on the popular understanding of child care history, and that their influence could be misleading. The most prominent example he gives is the frequent portrayal of the orphan, which may mistakenly suggest that most children in care over the years have been parentless. Parker argues that this impression is not supported by historical record.[27] This study will show how Victorian child rescue campaigners were aware of, and used the emotional impact of, orphan status. They did so in an attempt to broaden the category of child brought into institutionalised care, to publicise their work to a sympathetic audience and to gain funding. (See 3.1.v)

Parker further suggests that while pictured childhood was assigned a range of philanthropic tasks, its nature and origins owed more to cultural traditions outside philanthropy than to the roles played within it. This is a major matter of concern to the

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[25] Here are just some of the factors to be considered: the origins of a single image; the nature of its reappearances and evolution through change; its similarity and difference when compared either to other philanthropic imagery or representations elsewhere in the public domain; whether it appeared with caption(s) and text and the evolution of this relationship through change; whether it was used in relation to one or several contemporanous events.

[26] Ray Parker, *Away from Home, a History of Childcare*, (Barnardo's, 1990), p1.

[27] For a more detailed discussion of Parker's concerns, see 3.1.v.

present study. In response, it will contextualise the pictured child in philanthropy by setting the scene for its appearance with earlier fine art treatments of childhood. It will achieve this in two ways; by describing the visual representation of the child in general and by orientating the reader towards how the issue of class will be handled in the main body of the thesis. It will also discuss, in detail, the depiction of children in charitable work other than childcare. In widening the field of inquiry into childhood by pictorial means, the study aims to circumvent Parker's warning that images of the child provide '... dangerous starting points for a history of childcare'[28].

Given the difficulties involved, why has the role of the pictorial child in philanthropy been chosen as a focus ? Prior to setting up the research programme, and in the course of a number of applied research projects, it became apparent that the visual representation of children and childhood appeared under the banner of many good causes.[29] Few of these were specifically dedicated to the support and promotion of children themselves as a group in society. In other words, it appeared as if present-day children did not necessarily benefit to the extent to which their portrayal was employed. Was this a matter of random alignment, or was it connected in any way to children's lack of political significance, and the comparatively small amount of scholarly attention given to their visual representation ?

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[28] Idem.

[29] Heather Paris, *A classroom evaluation of Learn Not to Burn, an information and teaching pack produced by London Fire Brigade*, commissioned by the Home Office and produced for and on behalf of the University of Central England in Birmingham, 1994. Other projects did not result in the production of a written report, but were undertaken while working for Lancashire Development Education Centre.

Preliminary reading suggested that these were questions which could be asked about both nineteenth and twentieth century childhood.[30] The research programme was set up to provide answers to these related questions, working on a clearly-defined period in children's history contained within two key dates.

This study will be primarily concerned with the visual representation of children *per se* as its subject matter. It is this kind of imagery which can be said to best engage with the standing of the child in Victorian society. Indeed, in approaching conceptual notions and perceptions of childhood, this large body of generic material is far more suitable for these purposes. This study could be described as seeking to analyse the picturing of Everychild - rather than Everyman[31]. The historical record of generic pictorial material it draws upon is as extensive as it is neglected. The primary sources drawn on by the study were chosen because they had not attracted much recent scholarship. In some cases, both visual and textual archives have been under-utilised. Published material on the work of the National Children's Homes is scanty, for example, particularly when compared to the attention devoted to certain aspects of Barnardo material.[32] Even in the latter case, little has been done on visual sources, either outside the photographic collection, or which does not relate to the documentation of past residents of the homes and the history of emigration. This study

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[30] The book which made a marked impression in this respect was by Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, *Children in English Society, Volume II, From the Eighteenth Century to the Children's Act 1948*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).

[31] Everyman was the title of a medieval English morality play in which the central figure represented mankind. The term is also used to refer to the ordinary person or common man.

[32] The most recent publication on the work of the National Children's Homes is Terry Philpot's *Action for Children, The Story of Britain's Foremost Children's Charity*, (Oxford: Lion Publishing, 1994). At the time the research programme was undertaken, only a small part of the NCH Archive had been indexed and catalogued. The verbal guidance of the archivist led me to a rich and untapped source of NCH visual material. The Barnardo pictorial archive is large and well-established, including the Images photographic collection at Barkingside.

will break new ground in two ways. It will work with primary source material which has attracted little or no attention, and it will assign importance to its visual dimensions.

These neglected items include appeals booklets, collection boxes, concert programmes, annual reports and, above all, the under-utilised subscriber magazines. These provided an important means of communication between charitable workers for children, and their supporters. It is unusual for the visual material to be the main focus of scholarly attention in preference to the text, even when extensive work has already been carried out on philanthropic archives. A pictorial analysis of the images used in child saving should offer new insight into how adults set out to depict children when their stated purpose was to help them. Its freshness is anticipated as a direct result of assigning primacy of the image in this area of scholarly investigation, which, until now, has approached this important topic largely through the disclosures of the text.

Another essential component of the task has been to evaluate the pictorial characteristics and visual dramas enacted in imagery where children were not the main intended beneficiaries of philanthropic activity. The campaign to save the population from the ill effects of alcohol was chosen for this reason.[33] The visual representation of the child in the temperance movement opens up even greater unexplored areas for scholars than child rescue. Indeed, a recent, comprehensive review of the Victorian temperance periodical has revealed it as relatively neglected in every sense. This could be thought surprising in the light of the substantial scholarship generated by Brian

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[33] Children were recruited into the juvenile wing of the temperance movement, known as the Bands of Hope. The intention was to convince them never to start drinking, to take a lifelong pledge. As a body, children did not require saving from the effects of their own alcohol consumption. Indeed, it will be argued that their representation reveals their major role as active agents of change in adult behaviour. This is discussed at length in chapter four.

Harrison on the Victorians and drink.[34] How could the journals of the movement, now thought a vibrant tool of political and cultural influence, have been excluded?[35] When temperance images are considered, the neglect, if anything, is even more extreme. Indeed, it has been argued that only a handful of academics worldwide have produced work on the movement's visual material, none of it being lengthy or substantive.[36] The movement's illustrated tracts, lantern slides and published fiction have been passed over for attention in similar fashion; in some cases the scholarly neglect has been total.[37] The temperance periodical and the rich visual history of the campaign against drink offers much that is rewarding to scholars. This study can fairly claim to be one of the first to open up this pictorial territory.

0.4 Methods of engagement

It has already been stated that the study will apply analytical methods taken from art historical and critical theory to the pictures found in the historical record. Its main guiding principle is to contribute to an understanding of the child's standing in society by pictorial means. The analytical methods and approaches to be employed will now be described in some detail. These will combine well-established art historical methods

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[34] His best known work is *Drink and the Victorians, the Temperance Question in England 1815-1872*, (Keele University Press, 1994). Harrison described this revised edition of his 1971 book as '... my personal bridge from social to political history.' p14.

[35] I was invited to give a paper at the 1998 Annual Meeting of the Research Society of Victorian Periodicals in Vancouver. This meeting was affiliated to SHARP's international conference - the Society for the History of Authorship Reading and Publishing.

[36] J Donn Vann & Rosemary T Van Arsdel(eds.), *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society*, (Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1995). See the chapter on the temperance press by Olwen C Niessen.

[37] According to Livesey Collection archivists at the University of Central Lancashire, no work has been done on the tracts and little on the lantern slides. Lantern slide shows were a significant source of education and entertainment in Victorian communities, particularly in the eighteen eighties. See chapter four for more details. I was responsible for dating the temperance tract collection, which covers the years 1865 - 1909.

with those which have been given a more controversial treatment by an iconologist seeking to step outside aesthetic debate in his approach to pictures.

None of the methods has been applied to the vast majority of the primary source material in this study. The fine art images provide the exception to this, as one might expect. The same analytical methods will be used to establish the meaning of different versions of the same image outside, as well as inside, galleries and museums. These destinations included the workplace - through the temperance periodical - as well as the home, by means of the temperance wall paper, reproductions of popular images and mainstream pictorial journalism.[38] Indeed, it could be argued that for pictorial analysis of such diverse material to carry conviction, it must draw its strength from both traditional and modern techniques. In particular, the view has been taken that some of the critical approaches developed out of an engagement with today's image-saturated culture complement analytical techniques which were devised well before art history opened up its boundaries in response to the critical interest of other disciplines.

This study is concerned with the practical but complex matter of what images do, what job they appear to perform in society, the manner in which they can be said to achieve this. It owes most to one writer who set out to write a book on whether pictures could be approached as theory, and if they could be said to explain themselves in a manner distinct from the text. W J T Mitchell wrote of the possibility of 'the empirical history of spectatorship', or 'what people liked to look at, how they described what they saw, how they understood visual experience, whether in pictures or the spectacles of daily

life.' [39] In his use of words in this passage, Mitchell can be said to remove the layers of mediation between the image and its audiences and to rekindle the hope that the freshness of what pictures have done in the world is still accessible and can be retrieved.[40] In a similar way, Mitchell uses the term 'picture' rather than 'image' to recapture its practical reality. He calls pictures 'the concrete, representational objects in which images appear' and describes picturing as 'a deliberate act of representation'[41]. This study will follow the down-to-earth spirit of his book, *Picture Theory*, while - as Mitchell does himself - largely using terms in an interchangeable way in order to avoid a repetitious text. It will vary its use of the terms 'picture' and 'image' with the alternatives of 'depiction', 'portrayal' and 'representation'. At times these words will be assigned a specific meaning, but this will be indicated in advance on each occasion.

Mitchell's main aim was not just to describe the relationship between the cultures of readership and spectatorship - or word and image - but to explore how both were linked to 'issues of power, value, and human interest.'[42] Mitchell argued that deeply contested values were attached to both cultures, although he was concerned to show how both

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[38] The wall paper was a precursor of the modern poster, a method used to convey its message by *The British Workman*, an illustrated periodical that included temperance amongst its editorial priorities. See chapter four.

[39] W J T Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, (Chicago University Press, 1994), p21. Here, Mitchell is challenging the assertion by Jonathan Crary that no example of a nineteenth century observer can be located empirically. Mitchell says that the historical evidence is available, while agreeing that generalising from the individual to the social can be unsafe practice. He warns that '[t]here may not be any "true history" of this subject, only a rhetoric that mobilizes certain materials from the past in order to have an effect in the present'.(p20)

[40] While acknowledging the huge contribution made by the application of semiotics to visual analysis, Mitchell points out that it has brought with it '... a host of new figures or theoretical pictures that must themselves be interpreted'.(pp14-15 note) In another example of how theory can not be treated as culturally transparent and insubstantial, he sets out the use made by Erwin Panofsky and Louis Althusser of the figure of the greeting. To paraphrase hugely, he is arguing that one has to engage with the use made by the figure before one can grasp the nature of the figure itself.

[41] Ibid., p4.

[42] Ibid., p5.

visual and textual representation were linked to discourse through what he called relationships of power. In this sense he acknowledged both similarity and difference, pointing to the complexities of both spectatorship and readership. For Mitchell, both types of representation carried 'implications for ... the kinds of individuals and institutions formed by a culture.'[43] Too much can be made of the cultural divide between word and image - and Mitchell was very persuasive on this[44]- but of paramount importance to the present study is the extent to which visual representation has been an unidentified participant in unequal relationships of power involving children. Such relationships can be seen enacted both inside the picture frame and beyond its boundaries. For example, it will be argued in this study that it was more common for Victorian commentators to judge the depiction of childhood by the pleasure given to adult audiences, than it was for them to question the extent to which such images reflected the child's everyday life. Also, gendered and patriarchal assumptions were often made about the audiences for such representations.

Mitchell argued that Anglo-American culture is entering into an era dominated by the visual image and that this pivotal shift - which he called the Pictorial Turn - carried both problems and opportunities for scholars. [45] He situated the Pictorial Turn against

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[43] Ibid., p3.

[44] Mitchell points to the power-laden language that has been used to divide word from image. Man has been described as the speaking animal, while at the same time created in the image of his maker. The rest of us- women, children, savages, the masses- have been bequeathed the medium of the sub-human, the image. Unreasoning susceptibility to visual influence excludes us from the literate and the spiritual. This entrapment within cultural relationships of power and subjugation to the image is rehearsed and repeated in David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). Mitchell points out that despite its comprehensive sweep, Freedberg's massive study of the power of imagery considers mainly sexual and religious-magical- superstitious scenes, declining to engage with political or ideological issues.

[45] Mitchell takes the notion of the pictorial turn from the historical preoccupations of philosophers with pivotal notions at work in society. These have evolved through a preoccupation with things, ideas and words, the latest being the visual image. According to Mitchell, the attempt by philosophers to rid speech of the visual is a sure sign that the pictorial turn is taking place. This notion is to be understood as a way of stating the question, a posing of the dilemma, not as its solution.

the background of the second half of the twentieth century, which, he argued, saw a paradoxical combination of the proliferation of visual forms with a deep-rooted fear of the power of the image. He believed that '... we may find that the problem of the twenty first century is the problem of the image.'[46] For Mitchell, the image will continue to present a problem if pictures are approached as if they were texts, without texts being examined for their pictorial practice. This study sets out, like Mitchell, to get past the notion of reading a picture as if it were a text, but it will retain the image, not the text, as its primary site of investigation into the historical record.

Mitchell argued that the Pictorial Turn is opening up 'a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture', a process which carries implications for scholars which are still unfolding. If Mitchell was right to identify the present era as one preoccupied with the visual, then it followed that art history could now be called upon to 'offer an account of its principal theoretical object - visual representation - that will be usable by other disciplines in the human sciences.'[47] As Mitchell identified this challenge, it seems fair to expect that he would provide, at the same time, some analytical tools to meet it from his own substantial body of critical theory.[48] One of these has been selected for use in this study, one which asks what pictures tell us when they depict, or reflect upon, themselves. This has been taken up both as a tool and as a pervasive principle that infuses the whole thesis. This study is full of, and fundamentally about,

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[46] Ibid., p2.
[47] Ibid., p15.
[48] Mitchell devotes the final parts of *Picture Theory* on pictures and power to a discussion of what images do. The decision not to draw on these sections for a practical way of working with the job of the image was based, in part, on the extent to which it was mediated through a discussion of the writings of other theoreticians. This meant that before engaging with the image, it was necessary to evaluate the analytical tool selection of others. Mitchell brilliantly exposed this problem in his comments on semiotics- see his footnote 23. He engaged here with the work of Ernst Gombrich, Nelson Goodman and Michel Foucault. As indicated earlier, this study takes Mitchell's postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as its starting point.

the role of pictures in the history of childhood. Pictures are treated as part of the historical record and providers of information in their own right. The tool of visual analysis that permits images to reflect upon themselves is a notion which Mitchell called the metapicture.

0.4 i The notion of the metapicture

The notion of the metapicture says that pictures have the capacity to 'refer to themselves or to other pictures, pictures that are used to show what a picture is.'[49] The property of metapictures which has been adopted by this study is what could be called their inter-referential, rather than their self-referential capacity. This means those characteristics of certain pictures which *give life to each other*, even if, or because, they contradict each other or work on the difference between each other. This study has modified Mitchell's inter-referential tool somewhat, by giving rather more emphasis than he does to what images hold in common when compared to their difference. Since this is very much in the spirit of his approach to visual and textual representation, it was decided this would not result in undue distortion of his theoretical framework.

Mitchell gave a number of examples to demonstrate both the self-referential and inter-referential capacity of pictures. This study will make predominant use of the latter approach. Mitchell used a 1955 drawing in *The New Yorker Magazine* as an example of a metapicture that 'refers not to itself, but to a class of pictures that are generally understood to be different in kind from itself.'[50] This image *(0.1)* shows a life class

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[49] Ibid., p35.
[50] Ibid., p42.

model, posed in a manner reminiscent of Egyptian wall painting, in a raised position in the background. In the foreground, members of a life class - purportedly in ancient Egypt - are pictured as representing the visual world, using perspectival techniques.

The image works upon the observer's awareness of difference, of impossibility. Ernst Gombrich used the picture to hint at the difference, the otherness of the Egyptians, while Mitchell argued that it was a picture of the way we make pictures. He further pointed out that, for the image to be understood as a visual joke, the portrayal of perspectival measurement depended upon its contrast with popular understanding of Egyptian wall painting. This study will use a sense of mutual reference amongst pictures, alive to their similarity as well as difference in the examples which follow. Images will be discussed and analysed throughout the thesis within mutual pictorial reference systems and not in visual isolation or where the image is contextualised by text alone. The first image to be approached in this way - which could be said to endow it with the characteristics of a metapicture - is called 'Ugly Temper' *(0.2)*.[51]

'Ugly Temper' - which dates from 1889 - depicts two female figures, one an adult, the other a child, are depicted outdoors on a sloping, grassy surface between two background trees. A light patch in the sky runs behind the head of the woman and connects the upper branches of the tree on the left with the trunk of the tree on the right. It would be difficult to take issue with such a description, which could be summarised as a vigorous interaction between an adult and a child in a rural setting.

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[51] *Band of Hope Treasury*, July 1889, title page.

Thereafter, it becomes more difficult to state what is going on in this image, which surely relies to some extent on an interpretation placed by the observer on the nature of the relationship between the girl and the woman. The metapicture approach will be applied first.

There were many representations of women and children in rural settings in different places in the public domain, with by no means all of them depicting a mother and daughter. One artist whose work regularly appeared in Victorian periodicals and temperance publications was Birket Foster, whose woman and girl figures display rather more tranquillity than the image currently being discussed. The clothes of these figures in Birket Foster's image *(0.3)* also suggest a more modest station in life.[52]

Another frequent motif in this generalised type of representation was of the governess or the female charity worker with her charges, on a special day out into the country for city children. *(Image 0.4[53])* Whatever speculations can be made from information provided from the pictures alone, the one startling difference between 'Ugly Temper' and all close comparisons is the vigorous, if not violent, nature of the activity in which the two figures are engaged. It will be argued that the depiction of violence, or of its immediate effects upon the physique, were rare in the visual representation of the Victorian child. Some possible reasons for this will be discussed in chapter three.

Children being snatched from under the wheels of horse-drawn vehicles were more common, so was the depiction of the child fleeing from the police. *(Image 0.5[54]).* However, the child in such scenarios was usually male, not female, and invariably the

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[52] S C Hall, *An Old Story, A Temperance Tale in Verse*, second edition, (London: Virtue, 187(3?)), p3.
[53] *Band of Hope Treasury*, March 1879, title page.

setting was urban, not rural. For the time being, the emerging patterns of characteristic portrayal of childhood as a whole will be set to one side, to be taken up in later chapters.

What can be said, when the specific drama of 'Ugly Temper' is considered against other similar representations, is that its unique properties emerge from its difference. If this is accepted then it is also possible to see implications for a contemporaneous audience interpretation emerging. If no other depictions of a mother, governess, or charity worker carrying out an armlock on a small girl were circulating around the public domain, then it is unlikely that audiences would have put such an interpretation upon 'Ugly Temper'. It is possible, therefore, to grasp something about how this image engaged with contemporaneous understanding, by considering its pictorial context, its relationship to other images. This use of the metapicture approach can provide not only an interpretation of the drama within the image, but also informs the context for possible contemporaneous meaning beyond the picture frame.

This study has another advantage in adapting the metapicture approach, as it will discuss images from a range of media - painting, sculpture, printed graphics - and a diversity of primary sources - newspapers, periodicals, books, appeals booklets, subscriber magazines, souvenir programmes, lantern slides and collecting boxes. It is hoped that the richness of the visual material will give the images discussed an even greater opportunity to display their liveliness, similarities and difference. Most of them are not sophisticated drawings of the type analysed by Mitchell and utilised by other

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[54] Mrs A M Hall, *Boons and Blessings*, (London: Virtue, Spalding & Co, 1875), no page number, facing the start of the story 'Rest and be Thankful'. Artist is F D Hardy.

theoreticians. Seen in isolation, some can appear technically poor or as insipid, lacking in emotional power. Critical verdicts like these were also passed when such images first came to public attention. The tolerance of the reader of this study - to be ready to look at lots of pictures - is requested, since it is in relation to each other that they come to life, they reflect together upon their nature as an important component of Victorian cultural activity.[55]

0.4.ii From the image towards the text

The 'Ugly Temper' image also provides an example of the other main working method in the study. A brief visual interrogation of the image has taken place and, since its original location was within, and in relation to text, this material is considered as a second line of approach. No attempt has been made with any individual representation in this study to argue that the image makes sense of itself, in those cases when its interpretation is clearly dependent on the text. This should not be seen as a contradiction of the power of the metapicture, which, it has been argued, is a way of saying that the impact of a group of generic images can amount to more than the sum of their parts. When the texts of 'Ugly Temper' are incorporated into an understanding of its contemporaneous meaning, further ambiguities emerge.

The image was used twice to illustrate two different narratives. The earlier story appeared ten years earlier in the same journal, accompanying an image identical in every respect except for the caption. On this occasion, the words 'A foolish little girl'

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[55] Mitchell sums this approach up concisely when he observes that '... any picture or visible mark ...is capable of becoming a metapicture. Pictorial self-reference is ... not exclusively a formal, internal feature

appeared immediately below the picture. This immediately allocates misdemeanour or fault to the child for the observer, which makes the later caption - 'Ugly Temper' - more ambiguous by comparison. The earlier story describes how the child first cries, then screams, at the buzzing of bees and the appearance of a cow. The reader is told how the child's nurse 'tried to pacify her' and, when this failed to quieten her, 'seized the foolish little girl and carried her off still screaming.'[56] It is arguable that the image was intended to depict the moment of pacification, or the moment of forcible removal of the child by the adult. It is also possible that the image was not intended as a literal depiction of an adult action, but of the child's inadequacies. The story concludes that the child ruined her own day out in the country, that she 'contrived to turn into pain what would otherwise have been pleasure'.[57] Even here, ambiguity remains, since the pain referred to could have been not the physical pain of the child, but the emotional pain of the adult, forced into unnecessary strictness.

As suggested earlier, other pictorial influences, including images in the same magazine number, may or may not have contributed to audience interpretation. The later use of the same image may have been accompanied by a more ambiguous caption, but the story is just as categorical in its focus on the child's behaviour. The reader, is told directly what he or she is looking at; '... we see a little girl manifesting ugly temper, refusing to obey her auntie's requests, determined not to be restrained by a stronger will and arm than her own from running into danger.'[58] Again, this account cannot be accepted as a complete, homogeneous textual equivalent of the image's visual activity.

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that distinguishes some pictures, but a pragmatic, functional feature, a matter of use and context. Any picture that is used to reflect on the nature of pictures is a metapicture.' (pp56-57)

[56] *Band of Hope Treasury*, August 1879, p72.

[57] Idem.

[58] *Band of Hope Treasury*, July 1889, p62.

In both cases, the text refers to the child's imagined feelings, to her supposed internal experience. One could say that the image depicts not her activity, but the physical responses of the adult to what she has already done, *prior* to the moment of visual drama. So although the text tells observers they are looking at the child, the image depicts the action of the adult. If such an interpretation is accepted, then it becomes possible to admit that readers and viewers had the capacity habitually to interpret the nature of childhood through an visual articulation of the adult's responsibility to direct and protect the child. In short, the depiction of Victorian age relations - when interpreted through the image text relationship - might be said to rely on adult activity as a metaphor for children's behaviour in some cases. In response to this, Mitchell's observation is apposite, that a picture may be about itself *as well as* a great many other things- particularly when it stands in an ambiguous relationship with the text. Despite the new perspectives opened up by the metapicture approach, the ultimate pictorial ambiguity of 'Ugly Temper' cannot be finally resolved by the remaining historical record. Whose arm is around the child's neck is still a matter of conjecture. In this case, the visual analyst must be content with several different possibilities of meaning.

0.5 Approaches to meaning

Mitchell described his approach in *Picture Theory* as the ordinary language view of pictures, as a 'kind of applied iconology', which he regarded as 'the study of the general field of images and their relation to discourse.'[59] Perhaps he would agree with Michael Ann Holly when she argued that any scholar working on meaning in the visual arts owes

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[59] Op. cit, p4 and p36.

Panofsky a debt.[60] Panofsky himself had argued that iconology was the unavoidable component in establishing meaning - or what he called '... iconography turned interpretative ...' - when searching for it beyond the picture frame.[61] In a manner that could be said to anticipate the approaches of New Art History, he argued that iconological interpretation was essential 'wherever iconography is taken out of its isolation and integrated with whichever other method, historical, psychological or critical, we may attempt to use in solving the riddle of the sphinx.'[62]

Such a degree of difficulty entailed in the search for meaning between the image and its audiences is accepted, and an acknowledgment of its complexity has already been made in the earlier brief discussion of 'Ugly Temper'. In working in the space between art history and social history, this study adopts the approach that iconological meaning is primarily informed by recorded historical attitude and opinion. Its analytical commentaries upon the representation of children and childhood seek to establish what an image was believed to mean - what story it had to tell - at its own point in historical time. Holly quotes Panofsky as describing a work of art as a 'piece of history', one of the 'frozen stationary records from the stream of time.'[63] Although the idea that the image could be thawed to provide immediate access its contemporaneous meaning for audiences in all its freshness is very attractive, it can be said that Holly is right to make a distinction between the understanding of a work of art *per se* and the sort of cultural meaning which has been attributed to images in general.

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[60] Michael Ann Holly, *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History*, (Cornell University Press, 1984). Mitchell refers to the highly critical attention paid by Donald Preziosi to Holly's book and Panofsky's ideas, while maintaining the acute penetration of Panofsky's iconological approach to Renaissance perspective.

[61] Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, (Anchor Books edition, 1955), p32. The chapter 'Iconography and Iconology: an Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art' was first published as a paper in 1939.

The choice was made in this study to retain some usage of the levels of primary and secondary (or natural and conventional) subject matter used by Panofsky in his approach to meaning, although the main emphasis will be on iconological interpretation.[64] It was feared that to do otherwise would have produced a rather predictable discursive flow, forcing the reader to wait on each occasion for the inevitable piece of historical evidence. So a description will be offered of the image's apparent internal activity and, where known, attention will be drawn to pictorial elements carrying a particular resonance from artistic or literary sources.

0.5.i Solving the pictorial puzzle

Apparently Panofsky loved the work of Conan Doyle and drew a parallel between iconological interpretation of a picture - its historical and cultural thematic reference points - and detective work. This study tackles the nature of meaning in images from the point of view of solving a puzzle, and so finds Panofsky's parallel very appealing. The idea is adopted from James Elkins's paper comparing visual narratives in Renaissance painting and the impossibility of its modern equivalent.[65] Elkins describes

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[62] Idem.
[63] Ibid., pp169-170.
[64] Panofsky used these terms to distinguish between the description of formal visual elements and representation of the natural world on the one hand, and, on the other, those visual elements with a story or historical meaning attached to them by society. He regarded both carriers of meaning as descriptive, rather than reasoned, based on the classical derivation of the terms iconography and iconology respectively. Holly has argued that Panofsky's approach to meaning in the visual arts did not always work so well in practice in some of his writings. It has proved invaluable to this study all the same. Panofsky's idea that pictorial analysis needed what he called 'a subtler sensitivity, maturing over time' and that such analysis 'must be allowed to marinate', if not scientific, sounds particularly cogent. (Quoted by Holly on page 160) It could be regarded as the kind of observation that is based upon experience rather than passing academic fashion.
[65] James Elkins, 'On the impossibility of stories: the anti-narrative and non-narrative impulse in modern painting', *Word & Image*, Vol 7, No 4, October-December 1991, pp348-364.

two main responses to painting; seeing them as opportunities for meditation and pictures as puzzles. He further defines this as 'deductive' and 'associative' reading of the image.[66] In the case of deductive reading of the picture-as-puzzle, he says, '... we conclude - for sometimes intricate reasons, not fully known to ourselves - that a work of art is *hiding* something, that it contains or encodes some information, answer, moral or message'.[67] This could be expressed another way, as an attempt to find the solution to a puzzle. Elkins also warns against the dangers of intuitive iconography on the part of the reader, or viewer. While this risk is latent for every viewer, it is difficult to see how any picture detective could do more than to acknowledge and be aware that each wears the 'spectacles of culture', to borrow Pierre Bourdieu's phrase.[68]

Responding to images as if they were puzzles for the spectator has some other advantages for my purposes. It allows the study to picture the Victorian child and to analyse the nature of age relations as a series of pictorial puzzles. These made an impact upon audiences over a century ago, so their precise meanings for audiences have not always found their way into the historical record. This means that when only new solutions can be offered, they must be tempered by the awareness that it can never be known for certain how close they are to their originals.

Another advantage of responding to images of Victorian childhood as puzzles is the acknowledgment of their artifice, that blend of creativity and practical skill found in

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[66] Ibid., p354. One could argue that the weakness of James Kincaid's erotic framing of the Victorian fictional child came from an associative, rather than a deductive, reading of the texts. An associative reading permits greater freedom for the reader to construct his/her own frame of reference.
[67] Ibid., p355.
[68] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), p217. '... it can be said that the illusion of the "fresh eye" ... is an attribute of those who wear the spectacles of culture and

both the visual arts and the theatre. More than once, the image has been described as a player on the cultural stage with an active role. The sympathetic spirit of such an approach has been neatly summed up by Roland Barthes. 'Whether we deal with canvas, paper or wall', he wrote, 'we deal with a stage where something is happening ... once the scene is finished ... we remember: we are no longer what we were ...'[69]. Barthes's grouping together of actions upon a visual stage carries a powerful reminder that even if we do not know how it was achieved, the audience is changed by its engagement with what it has witnessed - or thinks it has seen. The visual enactment of childhood and the drama of age relations may have been witnessed differently by Victorian audiences. For modern viewers, it is necessary, perhaps, to establish at the outset whether the Victorians appeared to be watching the same pictorial play.

0.6 What is to follow

In an attempt to answer the question raised in the previous paragraph, the next chapter will speculate about artistic treatments of childhood themes prior to my period. It will make an evaluation of what the pictured child might have meant for Victorian spectators as a way of setting the pictorial scene for the following chapter, which analyses the role of the visual image in the philanthropic process. Chapters three and four will present the depiction of childhood in child saving work and in the temperance movement, setting out the pictorial roles assigned to the child, and relating these to the standing of Victorian children in society. Chapter five will open up and examine the visual representation of the other partner in age relations, the adult. It will assess the

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who do not see that which enables them to see, any more than they see what they would not see if they were deprived of what enables them to see.'

significance of childhood to both genders, but will place a particular emphasis on male pictorial roles in the child's world. The following chapter interrogates these notions of Victorian childhood found within philanthropy and asks to what extent the pictured child was regarded as fact or a fiction. The penultimate chapter will present the similarities in treatment of the pictured waif by both philanthropic and artistic practice. It will conclude that expectations that the pictured child formed part of a search for the ideal, led to the loss of the real, with attendant implications for both the picturing of childhood and its actuality.

[69] Roland Barthes, 'The Wisdom of Art', a 1979 paper published as chapter eleven of Norman Bryson's *Calligram : Essays in New Art History from France*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p166.

CHAPTER ONE

Sites of exhortation and indulgence: setting the scene for the Victorian pictured child

1 Introduction

As it unfolds, the study will discuss in detail the uses made by philanthropy of the pictured child during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. This chapter will consider whether spectators before this time interpreted images of childhood in the same way as their successors. This will be attempted as a way of offering the reader a pictorial context for the arguments which will follow in the main body of the study. A mapping technique will be used to speculate about what the pictured child looked like before 1869. This will be a sketch map only, to lay down some markers and indicate some boundaries. I am not attempting here to look at images in the same kind of depth that will be applied in later chapters. This sketch is offered so that the reader can orientate herself when she is looking at my images of child rescue and temperance. The chapter will contextualise what I have to say later in the main body of the thesis in two ways. I will try to show how the child was represented generally, and I will also set the scene for images of middle and working class children to guide the reader in the study's approach to class.

The resulting cultural bearings are intended to indicate whether my period can be said to represent a shift in the visual representation of children and childhood from what had gone before. There is good evidence to suggest that images of childhood tended towards a constancy of theme and content that is discernible in early Victorian painting,

that was sustained unmistakably throughout my period, and which continued into the twentieth century. Some reasons for this will be offered, based on recent historical perspectives.

In its visual sketch of key pictorial landmarks, this chapter will draw heavily on fine art imagery. Paintings already discussed by art historians are easier to write about than images which have yet to be acknowledged as part of the historical record. This selection of images is based solely on the accessibility of such secondary source material and will not be extended into the main body of the thesis. This decision was taken in order to redress the balance in the study towards imagery which has received little or scholastic attention, and away from fine art material which, in general, has received comparatively privileged treatment.

The chapter will turn first to representations of the needy child, based on the understandable assumption that the deprived child was the logical object of almsgiving and, as such, could be expected to feature significantly in philanthropic imagery after 1869. In this sense, neediness in childhood can be equated with material dispossession, and hence this section will describe how children of poor households were portrayed. The chapter will then outline how the picturing of class relations is seen as interacting with age relations. This is intended to guide the reader through this chapter and the thesis as a whole. This outline will preface a discussion of some examples of how middle class childhood was depicted, identifying those themes and aspects of content which were also characteristic of my period.

In particular, this part of the chapter will identify those early indicators of whether there was a difference between the visual representation of middle class and working class children. My research indicates that there were not significant differences of a class nature between them. That such images shared more - in picturing age relations - than they differed - in demarcating class distinction - is left sketched in only, to be set out in detail in chapter six. Instead, this chapter will describe how both types of images addressed common themes. These early images show a preoccupation with how children should behave; a sense that children from all classes had an entitlement to an acceptable childhood; and that childhood could be an inspirational notion for adults. The scene setting undertaken in this chapter opens up the likelihood that at least two types of neediness were at work in the picturing of Victorian childhood, one attributable to poverty, the other to the dependency of age relations.

1.1 Picturing the needy child

1.1.i Child street sellers and workers

The 1850s could be described as a significant decade for the needy child. When Henry Mayhew began his survey *London Labour and the London Poor* in 1851, he devoted a whole section to street sellers who were children. Mayhew based his accounts of their lives and experiences upon interviews with individual children in different occupations. All four volumes were illustrated, with images derived from original daguerreotypes, photographs and sketches. One such image *(1.1)* was titled 'The Orphan Flower Girl'. The girl sits on what appear to be stone steps, next to what might be a pillar or a pilaster of a building. Her feet are bare, but her shoulders are covered by a shawl. Mayhew commented that 'the girls are on the whole less ragged than the boys', but 'the most

disgusting parts of their persons ... is in their foul and matted hair, which looks as if it would defy sponge, comb and brush to purify it, and in the broken and filthy boots and stockings, which they never seem to button or garter'.[1] It is difficult to tell whether the hair of this particular flower girl is foul and matted, but it shows evidence of a parting – which suggests the use of a comb - and is drawn back in a bun. If this girl is indeed an orphan and not a runaway, it may have been Mayhew's way of indicating that her earnings were indeed from selling flowers and not from prostitution. Of girls who had run away from home, he observed that 'I did not hear of any girls ... having become street sellers merely. They more generally fall into a course of prostitution ...'.[2] According to Mayhew, girl street sellers could only sell (including themselves), while boys had the option to work as well.

It was claimed in the advertisement for Mayhew's fourth volume that 'the lives of London Street folk, workers and non-workers, are matters of mystery and uncertainty to the educated classes'.[3] This estimate of public awareness of what life on the streets was like - including for children - may be accurate, although it would not be the last time that ignorance on the part of the well-to-do for the plight of the dispossessed was asserted. The Royal Academy exhibition of 1874 contained many hundreds of paintings, but audiences were reported as gripped by the compelling content of just four social realist works.[4] It was reported that their interest took the form of horrified fascination for the realities of poverty of which they claimed to know nothing. In the

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[1] Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, 2nd reprint, (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1968), volume I, page 477.
[2] Ibid., p468.
[3] Mayhew, op cit., advertisement preceding introduction to volume IV.
[4] One of these paintings - *Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward* by Luke Fildes was protected by a police officer to hold back the crowds. The theme of *Casuals* was taken from an 1858 novel called *Paved*

light of such alleged ignorance, it is worth remembering that Mayhew's work was published two decades earlier, when *Bleak House* and *Oliver Twist*, both novels by Charles Dickens, were making their impact upon the public.

Most contemporaneous reviewers of *Bleak House* asserted that the character who influenced the reader most of all, moving him or her to pity and outrage at his plight, was Jo, the crossing sweeper. Jo made his living, like other crossing sweepers, from pedestrians, who tipped him for clearing mud and horse-dung from pavements and street crossings. It was a perilous occupation for the street child, who was at risk from adult sweepers and authority figures who suspected him of begging. John Callcott Horsley's painting of *The Crossing Sweeper (1.2)* also dates from the mid-fifties. At the centre of the composition is the figure of a young woman, who seems to be leaving church with an elderly gentleman leaning on a stick. She turns towards the boy crossing sweeper, who is offering her a posy. Her right elbow forms the angle between two strong lines. One runs up, through the handle of her parasol, up the church porch roof to the cross. The other descends through her right hand to the posy held in the boy's hand and down the line of his broom. In this way, church, donor, supplicant and occupation are connected. The question of whether the posy is a gift in exchange for alms is left open.

The crossing sweeper was a subject that was also painted many times by W P Frith. In his 1863 version *(1.3)*, the young woman and the boy sweeper share superficial similarities with Horsley's main characters. There are significant differences in

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with Gold, which was written by Augustus Mayhew, brother to Henry. This, in turn, was based on Henry's 1851 material.

composition and content. The young woman looks away from the sweeper, possibly to check for oncoming traffic. This could be the moment before, as opposed to the moment after, the sweeper has attracted her attention. There is no elderly gentleman, no church, and no posy. Instead of the sweeper offering a gift to his potential donor, he tugs his forelock as he offers his services. The *Art Journal* writer, in 1864, described Frith's sweeper as 'bright and intelligent, showing material which would work well in the hands of the schoolmaster, and which, properly employed, would turn out advantageous.'[5] The implication here is that sweeping crossings was not considered a proper occupation for a boy with potential. It also conveys the impression that the boy should be in the school room, not earning a living on the street.[6] The artist, Frith, recorded in his autobiography that his boy model was a dangerous sitter, who tried to steal his gold chain and key. Such suspicions, even if unfounded, convey something of the fear and apprehension felt by the well-to-do in relation to the poor, even if the impoverished were children.[7]

The seventh Earl of Shaftesbury was committed to other philanthropic initiatives to benefit needy children, as well as to his campaign against the employment of climbing boys as chimney sweeps during the 1860s. One of these was the London Shoe Black Brigade, which started in 1851. A painting of 1863 by William Macduff called *Shaftesbury or Lost and Found (1.4)* drew together many of these themes. It depicts a chimney sweep and a shoe black standing before an engraver's shop window. The

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[5] Quoted in Julian Treuherz (ed), *Hard Times, social realism in Victorian art*, (London: Lund Humphries & Mt Kisco, New York: Moyer Bell with Manchester City Art Galleries, 1987), from p64 of *Art Journal*, 1864, 'Selected Pictures: the Crossing Sweeper'.

[6] The issues of work, education and visibility on the street for the Victorian child are discussed in detail in sections 3.1.i - 3.1.iii of this study.

engravings on show emphasize that the painting was intended as a tribute to Shaftesbury's philanthropic work. Indeed, the shoe black is pointing out the earl's portrait to the sweep.[8] This painting could be said to depict the acknowledgment of needy children for the work of a campaigning adult who transformed their lives. It is not a portrayal of their need, or even of the moment when their need is responded to, but a reflection upon the response.

There is a sense in which the title of Macduff's painting could be said to refer to other types of need as well as material deprivation. Indeed, it makes it possible to speculate that what had been lost and found again through Shaftesbury's intervention was childhood itself. This point will be returned to later in this chapter. For now, one of the engraved paintings from Macduff's shop window will be discussed, dealing as it does with child poverty and the child who lacks a mother.

1.1.ii Orphanhood

Thomas Faed established his reputation as a painter of Scottish genre subjects with *The Mitherless Bairn (1.5)*, shown at the Royal Academy in 1855. The painting's title was taken from a poem about orphanhood.[9] The orphan boy in question stands on the right of the composition, as if he has just entered the open cottage door of a poor rural household. He stands with tattered boots and bowed head, before a boy, a girl and an

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[7] For a thorough discussion on the nature of middle class anxiety towards to poor, and its relationship to charity, see Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London: a study in the relationship between classes in Victorian society*, (Penguin Books, 1976).

[8] The other engravings in the shop window include versions of Thomas Faed's *The Mitherless Bairn*, Landseer's *Saved* and *The Shepherd's Prayer* and Millais's *The Order of Release*.

[9] The visual representation of orphanhood, and its significance to child rescue charities is discussed in detail in 3.1.v - 3.2.ii of this study.

elderly woman, who seems to be asking him to repeat what he has just said. To the left of this group, seated before an open interior door is a young woman - possibly breastfeeding a baby - and another child peeping from behind her. The presence of the young mother, separated as she is from the orphan by other children, could be said to emphasize his motherless state. She sits before the internal door, leading into the rest of the family home, while the orphan must negotiate the deafness of the old woman and the barrier of the two children who possess a mother. The magazine *Good Words* asserted at the time that the painting depicted an idealized incident from Faed's own childhood, when a vagrant claiming to be orphaned came into the artist's home. While the *Art Journal* disparaged the work rather than the character of the child crossing sweeper in Frith's painting, the magazine writer asserted that the orphan child in Faed's painting was a fraud. 'It afterwards came out that he was not an orphan at all, but the son of two sturdy tramps who were the terror of the district'.[10]

This commentary suggests that this needy child was considered a fraud, not because his poverty was questioned, but because he did not lack parents. The picture also contributes to this interpretation by the humble nature of the household setting. The boy may be poor, but the women and children would have little to spare in terms of alms to give him. They themselves already depict poverty, so disturbing the settled notion of wealth relieving material need. This image could be said to offer up two different discourses on poverty and the ways in which poor people dealt with it.[11] The

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[10] Quoted on p33 of *Great Victorian pictures, their paths to fame*, (Arts Council of Great Britain exhibition publication, 1978). *The Mitherless Bairn* was reproduced on p44 of *The British Workman* for December 1886. The picture accompanied the true story of an orphaned boy who walked to London, made his fortune, and used it to found a charitable institution. This journal made extensive use of Faed's work in support of a number of philanthropic causes, not the least of which was temperance amongst working men. For a description of the work of this journal, see 4.2 - 4.2.ii of this study.

[11] See 2.4.ii - 2.4.iv of this study.

family is shown as enduring privation with resignation, while the boy - according to the picture's title - is doubly deprived of material comfort and parental protection. It would seem that some observers might have viewed the boy's need with suspicion, that he sought to change his situation by deception. When the depiction of orphanhood is discussed in the main body of this thesis, it will become apparent that its implications were indeed highly charged and contentious.

1.1.iii The child's entitlement

Two further examples of images depicting the needy child confirm that neediness could have many aspects. One of the most well-known and popular fictional responses to the plight of child chimney sweeps was Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies*, published in 1863. Individuals had been fighting against the horrors of such work since the 1840s. The full title of Kingsley's book was *The water babies: a fairy tale for a land baby.* The main character, Tom, was not a baby in the modern sense, but a child old enough to climb chimneys. The first edition of the book was illustrated by Noel Paton, perhaps best known as a Victorian fairy painter. One of Paton's images depicts Tom as a water baby, being nursed by Mrs Doasyouwouldbedoneby *(1.6)*. Tom has been given the visual characteristics of a baby, and - like many of the other water babies - is sucking his thumb. This type of imagery seems at some distance from the brutalities of Tom's story and, indeed, it supports a textual description of life under water, an ideal life for a child even if it is a fairy story, the kind of existence for which a child might be expected to yearn. The text describes how Mrs Doasyouwouldbedoneby

took Tom in her arms, and laid him in the softest place of all, and kissed him, and petted him, and talked to him, tenderly and low, such things as he had never heard before in his life; and Tom looked up into her eyes, and loved her, and loved, till he fell fast asleep from pure love.[12]

This extract conveys the impression that Paton's image was meant to illustrate pure and unconditional love, the kind of love that Tom had never known and, at first, was unable to identify. It could be assumed that the reason why Tom is portrayed as a baby, both in the image and in the text, is to suggest that all children are born with an entitlement to such love, which the Victorians extended beyond babyhood into the notion of an acceptable childhood for all. The realities of childhood were that high rates of infant mortality and the horrors of baby-farming continued long after legislation was passed to protect child sweeps in 1864. These darker facts seem in marked contrast to childhood's continuing significance as the idealized stage of early life which it represented for many commentators.[13]

This divergence between reality and idea is hinted at in the catalogue entry for a piece of sculpture called *Master Tom*, by J Durham in the 1873 Royal Academy summer exhibition. The sculptor exhibited two pieces, both inspired by Kingsley's novel, the companion to *Master Tom* being *Miss Ellie*. The catalogue entry makes reference to the adult female who represented the antithesis to the loving mother figure in Paton's illustration. It quotes from Kingsley's text that ' ...when that tremendous old lady, Mrs Be-done-by-as you did, came to talk to him, he stuck his thumb in his mouth, and even

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[12] Quoted on p221 of *The beast and the monk, a life of Charles Kingsley*, by Susan Chitty, (Hodder & Stoughton, 1974).

called *her* an "ugly old thing" - but he grew horridly frightened when she threatened to send him to "the other end of nowhere" ....'.[14]

This female figure is very powerful and can transport Tom to a strange place, which, it is implied, does not exist. In other words, she can end Tom's life, which seems an extreme threat in response to rudeness about her personal appearance. Kingsley's suggestion that the misdemeanour of the child provoked the frightening threat of the adult is significant in the light of this study's interpretation of the pictured child, and in the temperance cause in particular. The main body of the thesis will describe how, on many occasions, the Victorians showed themselves capable of having one set of rules for adult behaviour and another for children.[15]

In the names given to the two women, Kingsley appears to distinguish between the way everyone would like to be treated – or notional behaviour as an ideal - and the cruelty that results from meting out only the treatment received – a reference to behaviour in practice. He takes the argument for putting the feelings of others on a par with one's own and applies it, in the passages quoted, to adult child relationships. It could be argued that Kingsley's book throws up examples of the complexity of Victorian age relations. Even the brief consideration I have given it here reveals struggles between the adult's wish to have a positive influence upon the child's world, while recognising the sufferings inflicted by adults upon children in reality. It also conveys a sense that some adult attitudes towards children could be inspirational rather than practical, while

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[13] See 3.1.iv of this study on cruelty to children and chapter five on the significance of childhood as a notion for adults.
[14] Royal Academy 1873 exhibition catalogue entry number 1542. Both *Master Tom* and *Miss Ellie* were shown again at the Academy the following year.
[15] For an extreme example of this, see section 4.4 and image 4.8 of this study.

hinting that children should be both loved and instructed. It could be said that these characteristics suggest a relationship of great subtlety and contradiction, with many aspects to it. No matter how the neediness of the child is defined, the visual and textual examples given so far point to its centrality as a feature of the relationship between children and adults, as a significant element of Victorian age relations.

The images discussed so far in this mapping exercise were approached initially with the understandable assumption that the needy child can be equated with the impoverished child. The art historian, Susan Casteras, has argued that between 1840 and 1900 scores of paintings at the Royal Academy depicted neglected, destitute urban children.[16] In one sense, orphanhood could be understood as exacerbating their poverty. However, the picturing of children without, or outside adult care and control, could be said to derive from other concerns and preoccupations. It was argued earlier that the two boys pictured in Macduff's painting, *Shaftesbury or Lost and Found*, may have regained their entitlement to childhood itself through charitable intervention. Even though no adults stand beside the children in the street in this image, their presence and influence are indicated by the engravings in the shop window.

Another painting from much later in the century also took a group of children without an adult as its subject matter. It was accompanied by a commentary which would seem to confirm that the notion of an entitlement to an acceptable childhood was an enduring one. *The Toy Shop (1.7)*, by Thomas Kennington, appeared at the Royal Academy in 1891. It was unusual in showing a group of unaccompanied children in an urban

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[16] See chapter 16, 'The gulf of destitution on whose brink they hang: images of life on the streets in Victorian art', by Susan P Casteras, in Treuherz, op. cit..

setting. The children are humbly dressed; the eldest girl holds the baby while a younger sister clutches her apron, sucking her thumb. Two smaller boys stand between this group and the toy shop window.

The writer in the *Illustrated London News* seems to have assumed that the children outside the toy shop lived on the streets and that the toys they looked at through the window offered them the sight of - for them - unattainable childhood. The reader was told that 'Mr T B Kennington is true to his love for street life and town arabs, of whom he gives an over-neat group before a toy shop ..., which supplies them with food for wonder and desire.'[17]

This comment may have been understood by audiences in two ways. Perhaps the pictured children were from an artisan's family, not the descendants of Mayhew's street sellers, and the critic was mistaken. If he was accurate in describing the children as over-neat for street children, then it is likely that Kennington was being criticized for insufficient use of the rags and tatters which many artists used as studio props and some critics hated. This hatred arose because they were believed to give offence to audiences by detracting from the soothing, palliative effect anticipated for this kind of painting. The practice of dressing up models in the ragged clothing of the street was used by artists as diverse as Luke Fildes and Dorothy Tennant.[18] Although the neatness of their clothes leaves the degree of poverty they experience as uncertain, the children in Kennington's painting are pictured as being denied both wealth and childhood. This is

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[17] *ILN*, May 23, 1891, p684. 'The Royal Academy Exhibition'.
[18] See 7.3.i of this study for a description of Dorothy Tennant's working methods.

achieved by depicting them as cut off from what seems to have been imagined they would like to possess.

It has already been suggested that the newspaper presented the painting to its readers as conforming to the usual expectation that children were drawn to childish things, while commenting that those pictured were too neat for their assumed station in life. This suggests a contemporaneous view that poor children were thought to have the same childlike desires as wealthier children. It could be said that if this picturing of poverty stopped short of rags and tatters for fear of offending its audiences, then some other device was required to show how these children were being deprived of childhood. One way of achieving this was to separate the children from the objects of their desire, by means of the glass of the shop window. The art historian Caroline Arscott makes a similar point in her analysis of Sophie Anderson's *No Walk Today* of 1856, where a wealthy little girl stares sadly out at a luxuriant natural environment from which she is cut off by glass and wood.[19]

In summary, prior to the opening of my period, the needy child was frequently pictured as experiencing poverty in a manner which was consistent with the aesthetic conventions of the time. This part of my scene-setting for the reader would suggest it would be wise to keep an open mind on whether the child's approach to dealing with his or her own poverty was always acceptable to adults. The needy child was expected to conform to standards of behaviour which did not necessarily take account of his or her needs. In addition to material deprivation, neediness could also derive from lack of

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[19] See Giles Waterfield (ed), Art for the people. Culture in the slums of late Victorian Britain, (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery), 'Sentimentality in Victorian Paintings' by Caroline Arscott.

adult attention, or from attention that was unwelcome to the child, in both fiction and real life. This view of children's needs appears to have drawn its strength from the notion of an entitlement to childhood. This notion was a lasting one, and portrayals of child street sellers and workers, as well as impoverished orphan children – who lacked this entitlement to differing degrees - continued to appear into the next century. Before turning to the representation of children who possessed it, some paragraphs will next be devoted to the class from which they came.

1.2 Age relations and class relations

In this study, the visual characteristics of class will be discussed as they contribute to my pictorial analysis of age relations. Without wishing to pave the way for a class analysis of the pictured child, an outline of my approach now follows. In effect, I will be adopting the view of the child rescue campaigner, Thomas Barnardo, that children can be defined as a class, as a distinct group in society. Barnardo talked of poor children as a class apart, but there are some good historical reasons for extending the general notion of class to children as a whole.[20] The historian Harry Hendrick has argued that the idea of childhood, and a growing belief in its importance, had so taken root in Victorian society that from 1880 onwards, it had taken precedence over '... all previous distinctions such as those arising out of divisions between the rural and urban worlds, the respectable and non-respectable working class, and the social classes themselves'.[21] While not describing children as a class, Hendrick argues here that

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[20] For a full description of Barnardo's position, see 6.1.i of this study.
[21] Hendrick, op cit., p12.

childhood as a notion broke down the defining barriers within and between classes in Victorian society.

Perhaps Barnardo's view is closer to that of another modern historian, Hugh Cunningham, when he argues that children constituted a separate and significant section of the poor. Even so, Cunningham goes on to discuss how Victorians came to believe that whatever projects they undertook to help poor children, they considered themselves to be acting upon concerns for the future of the nation as a whole. Children were seen as the key to the future, in a way that could be said to differentiate them as a class in their own right, or which transformed childhood into a notion that transcended existing social divisions. When the quoted views of Hendrick and Cunningham are taken together, this strongly suggests the possibility that age relations constituted a stronger influence than class relations at work in the creation of Victorian attitudes towards the child. Such a possibility supports the approach taken in this study that age relations provides the critical context for issues of class.

Class relations will not be ignored, but the use of its terms will follow Victorian definitions of class as determined by wealth, education and social station.[22] This will mean that when references are made to middle class or working class children, they could just as easily be called affluent or poor children, educated or illiterate children, or

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[22] For a straightforward summary see John Tosh, *The pursuit of history. Aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history*, 2nd edition, (London & New York: Longman, 1991), chapter eight 'History and theory'. However, the general issue of class and class relationships in this period has seen much recent debate and no set of views predominates. For arguments which question the centrality of class as an analytical tool see P Joyce (ed), *Class*, (Oxford University Press, 1995). For the case in its defence see N Kirk, *Change, continuity and class: labour in British society, 1850-1920*, Manchester University Press, 1996)

children from the upper or lower ranks of society. Such terms will be used as descriptive aids to refine, elaborate and broaden the scope of pictorial analysis.

One final point should be made about the implications of class facing any scholar of Victorian childhood. Eric Hopkins has pointed out that it is extremely difficult – if not impossible – to disentangle histories of the working class child from the lens of middle class perception. Contemporaneous accounts were invariably created by campaigners and commentators from a social station superior to the children under discussion. This means that initial definitions of both childhood and class came from the middle class. Hopkins goes further by pointing out that 'nearly all the materials available' for children's history 'must come from adult observation and experience.'[23] In his opinion, this is likely to be a far greater challenge and problem for scholars than the middle class nature of source material. In effect, Hopkins is acknowledging the precedence of age relations, like the historians quoted earlier, but on this occasion, he writes from a present-day research perspective. Hopkins argues that 'only the exercise of historical empathy allows an entry into the inner world of the child.'[24] It is clear from what he has written, and from the work of other historians, that this empathy should be extended to middle and working class children without distinction.[25]

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[23] Eric Hopkins, *Childhood transformed. Working-class children in nineteenth-century England*, (Manchester University Press, 1994), p313.
[24] Idem.

1.3 Picturing the middle class child

The mapping of earlier Victorian images of childhood can now be completed by taking poverty out of the equation, and discussing some examples of how the middle class child - as a child whose needs could not have been based upon material deprivation - was depicted. In common with images of the needy child, adult standards of behaviour for children emerge as a discursive theme.

1.3.i Notions of behaviour

The greater attention given by early nineteenth century artists to childhood themes meant that those who were not noted for such work also took up the subject. An example of this was Sir Edwin Landseer's *The Naughty Child(1.8)* of 1834. A child with golden curls and a mutinous expression stands in a corner. Her gaze is directed down to the floor, to the viewer's right. To the child's right is her broken slate, thrown down, apparently, in a fit of pique. She has been made to stand in a corner as her punishment. The painting was considered an innovative masterpiece when it was shown at the British Institute in 1834, for portraying the child as a little horror, rather than a little angel. It could be regarded as an early example of how the depiction of childhood offered a rare opportunity for discourse on the kind of behaviour adults wished to eradicate in children. Images which promoted the child as an ideal, or which were believed to stimulate amusement at their engaging antics, were much more frequent.

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[25] For a description of how the lives of middle-class children were regulated by adults – even control of their bowel movements – see Lionel Rose, *The erosion of childhood, child oppression in Britain 1860-*

Beyond the picture frame, this painting was not without its connotations of class and social station. The model for *The Naughty Child* was Landseer's own daughter, Lady Rachel Russell, whose mother was the Duchess of Bedford. The painting led to a rush of requests for similar depictions of their own offspring from the aristocracy. It is, of course, possible that *The Naughty Child* had a novelty value, which would have eventually diminished as its application became more common. Landseer's personal motives for choosing to paint his daughter as a naughty child lie outside the scope of this discussion. It is significant for my purposes as a marker of the importance attached by the affluent to desirable behaviour in the children of their own class. This is an important early marker for this study in sorting out the relative importance of meanings assigned to the picturing of middle class childhood and the needy child.

At least one historian has described my period as a time when Victorian society made a concerted attempt to transform the family lives and personal behaviour of the humbly-born child along middle class lines.[26] I would suggest that the struggle over how children should - or should not behave - is likely to have affected the pictured child as much as the real child. Two claims are being made here. The first is that the visual representation of childhood is likely to have reflected existing attitudes towards children and how they ought to behave. The second is that if the attempt to influence the nature of family life had its forerunners, then pictures would have been considered a more effective tool than text by campaigners in winning over illiterate audiences.[27] The proliferation of popular magazines and illustrated tracts, coupled with the availability of fine art in reproduction, might have increased the temptation to depict the working class

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1918, (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), chapter 22 'Upbringing in the upper-class home'.
[26] See Eric Hopkins, op cit..

child as adopting the desired behaviour of the middle class child. They would certainly have offered campaigners a wider range of opportunities. When a ragged boy was pictured as holding an umbrella over the head of a bedraggled flower girl, or offering her his only apple, as well as acknowledging the sickly sentimentality of such a scene, its use and re-use can also be interpreted as a rehearsal of middle class manners adapted for, or imposed upon, the impoverished.

The emphasis on adult notions of desirable behaviour is clearly articulated in the title and content of William Mulready's *Train up a Child (1.9)* of 1841[28]. This painting depicts a small boy being urged by his mother and nurse to give alms to three beggars. The child is frightened to do so, despite the reassuring presence of his dog and two familiar adults. Although children were frequently pictured in country settings, this environment does not appear altogether harmless. The combination of natural and human threats conspire to suggest the ways in which the child must be brave in confronting more than one fear at once. If the boy moves away from the beggars, water is close to his feet and behind him is a dark avenue of tall trees. As well as his fear of the beggars, this child is being encouraged to overcome his timidity - in an environment he does not control - in order to fulfil the requirements of his social station in bestowing the charity of the wealthy on the poor.

1.3.ii Outside Play

Far more typical of depictions of the child in rural surroundings was James Archer's *Summertime, Gloucestershire(1.10)* of 1860. Here there are no ominous trees and even

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[27] See section 4.2.i of this study.

the shadows have a benign quality. The atmosphere of safety is shared by Charles Robert Leslie's *A Garden Scene(1.11)* of 1840, even though one environment is created by agriculture while the other is the result of domestication. Archer's children are absorbed with wild flowers, while Leslie's model - his son - encourages a toy horse and cart with a whip. These children are engaged in harmless and industrious play in a tranquil, sunlit world that seems secluded, almost hidden from the viewer. Indeed, the child with wild flowers in her hair and the dog, almost suggest with their steady, level, unsmiling gaze that the spectator in the painter's position has intruded. By contrast, the smocked agricultural worker behind the hedge in the background is ignored. The children's indifference to him suggests that to them, he is part of the landscape, with the hedge a visual marker of the gulf in social station.

Both these paintings hint at the strong connection made between childhood and the natural world which began in the eighteenth century and endured as a Victorian cultural motif. The Cranbrook Colony of artists - which included Thomas Webster and Frederick Daniel Hardy - produced work from the 1850s onwards which linked life in the countryside and childhood. Towards the end of the century, the notion that urban children, or the children of the working classes, were entitled to experience the natural world as part of childhood gathered momentum.[29] The paintings just discussed date from before the campaign to influence the lives and habits of the poorer classes. The numerous philanthropic images from my period of rescued children being taken to the seaside and on country picnics make it reasonable to speculate that what the middle-

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[28] The title comes from the *Book of Proverbs*, chapter 22. 'Train up a child the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.'
[29] See section 3.2.iii of this study for a discussion of how the child was pictured in relation to the outside world.

class child in Archer's and Leslie's paintings enjoyed would later be depicted as the same entitlement for the children of the poor.[30]

1.3.iii Inside Play

Not all the work of the Cranbrook Colony depicted children outdoors. Thomas Webster, its leader, like William Mulready before him, made humorous reference to the village schoolroom in his paintings. Frederick Daniel Hardy specialized in painting scenes that showed children engaged in adult activities. *Playing at Doctors (1.12)* of 1863 depicts the home of a doctor whose children are trying their hand at making up medicines and testing for broken bones. The children's game is about to be discovered by returning adult family members, spotted by one child who turns her head towards them.

It is difficult to imagine the children continuing to play in this fashion beyond the point of their discovery, particularly if they have plundered their father's medicine cupboard. The child on the chair is closest to its illicit contents, and the suspicion that retribution may follow is emphasized by the overturned toy doll's cart in the right hand corner. It could indicate that the children have abandoned the toys of childhood and are tampering with the tools of a respected middle-class profession. *Playing at Doctors* could be said to represent not-quite-harmless play in a safe place. The picture contains features that seem to suggest that the children in such a comfortable home are only at risk from their own activities. Layered into an interpretation of this pictorial story for adult amusement

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[30] Image 0.4 is one of many.

are the elements of reproval and indulgence, misdemeanour combined with innocence, the enclosure of the secure home set against the dangers of adult life.

Few such undercurrents are detectable in Arthur Boyd Houghton's *Interior with children at play (1.13)* of 1860. The artist is said to have based such scenes on his own happy childhood. Even though one child carries a drum - a symbol of marching bands and of military life - and a doll lies discarded underneath the adult chair on which the children play, it would be difficult for the spectator to surmise that this enclosed, tranquil world is threatened in any way.[31] The little dog may gaze out at the viewer, but the children are absorbed in each other. It is not very clear what the nature of their game is, although it seems to involve touching fingers over the back of the chair. There are many Victorian representations of children grouped lovingly around their seated father. It is not over-fanciful to speculate that the chair connotes the children's father, and that they can be close to him through making it the site of their games. It is also possible to distinguish between the father's chair, a domestic object, as a place of safety, an appropriate place for childhood, and the tools of the doctor's trade as a symbol of the father's public life in Hardy's painting discussed above. Pill making equipment was not seen as part of the child's world, and can be said to intrude into its domestic location.

1.3 iv The child's world

The safety of the child and the fragility of childhood feature again in the most famous of the many paintings of childhood by John Everett Millais. *Bubbles (1.14)* was

exhibited in 1865-6, became well-known through colour reproduction, and would go on to feature in a Pears Soap advertisement in 1886. The model for *Bubbles* was the artist's grandson, and was given the original title of A *Child's World.* Perhaps no other painting provides modern spectators with such an accurate pictorial summary of Victorian notions of childhood. The bubble transforms light and colour on its fragile surface, its perfect shape impossible to sustain, its very existence threatened by every wind that blows. It cannot last for long and requires delicate treatment for it to survive beyond its creation. The bubble can be said to represent childhood itself. Like the bubble, childhood was something precious created by adults that they believed they had a responsibility to protect. The child's own capacity to create something beautiful and perfect - using adult pipe, bowl and instruction - is also acknowledged in this picture, and such a portrayal was rare indeed. Although the child was often pictured as graceful, endearing, engaging and amusing, - pretending to be an artist was a favourite theme - he or she was seldom represented as a genuine creative force.

The different degrees of control over the child's world assigned to children and adults can be seen at work in two more of Millais's pictures, *My First Sermon* of 1863 and *My Second Sermon* of 1864 *(1.15).* This paired treatment of subject matter shows a little girl seated in a church box pew. In the first painting, the child sits upright and awake, a feathered hat on her head and her feet resting on a cushion. In the second, her hat rests beside her on the pew, her legs dangle - the cushion having being moved - and she slumps in sleep. The paintings were intended to be understood as depicting the child's first and second experience of a church sermon. Its intention was to invite adult indulgence of the child's weakness, her inability to pay attention to adult discourse over

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[31] This painting has also be given the title *Childhood* by some historians.

a sustained period. Her first attempt is admired, her second is accepted as the inevitable consequence of her childish state. It was, of course, not unknown for adults to fall asleep during sermons. If the sleeping child's head had been propped against the shoulder of a sleeping adult, the pictorial narrative would have been very different. Millais's *Sermons* could be said to stress how children were expected to try and listen to their elders, but should also be forgiven for failing on occasions. As such, they are primarily depictions of exhortation and indulgence.

In much the same way as Millais's young daughter must have wilted during the many sittings for the paintings, the pictured child is not given the option of staying at home or leaving the pew. The point at issue was rather if she would manage to do what she was told. Even though she has little choice about the position in which she has been placed by an adult, she is still assigned the power to influence adult behaviour. It is recorded that when *My Second Sermon* was shown at the Royal Academy in 1864, the Archbishop of Canterbury made the following observation at the exhibition banquet: 'I have learnt a very wholesome lesson ... I see a little lady here ... who, by the eloquence of her silent slumber, has given us a warning of the evil of lengthy sermons and drowsy discourses.'[32]

This quote suggests the pictured child was assigned the capacity to give the adult a lesson, but it is significant that she does so in silence, by not communicating, by staying still. In the main body of this study, it will be seen how the helpless immobility, the mute appeal, as well as the gallant attempt to do the right thing, and the sheer prettiness

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[32] Quoted in Lionel Lambourne, *Victorian Painting*, (Phaidon Press Ltd., 1999), pp180-181. This wide-ranging survey has a chapter on 'Childhood and Sentiment'.

of the child is put to work in a good cause. The *Sermons* indicate to what extent this was inherited and adopted from earlier fine art treatments of childhood.

To summarize this contextualisation of how the middle class child was pictured, prior to the opening of my period, it is apparent that, like portrayals of the needy child, he or she offered the opportunity for instruction on different aspects of desirable and undesirable behaviour. The depiction of childhood was often assigned to rural settings, which were characterised primarily by their sunny, non-threatening nature. This notion of the child's ideal environment extended to depictions of children indoors, protected within the domestic sphere of family and fatherhood. The pictured safety of the middle class child could convey something of the precious fragility of childhood which was regarded as separate and untouched. Its preservation from taint was seen as the responsibility of adults. Finally, some depictions of the middle class child reveal the dependency of the child on the adult for creating such an environment while, at the same time, acknowledging the potential of the pictured child for influencing adult behaviour.

1.4 Conclusion

Three major themes have emerged from this sketch of how childhood was pictured before 1869. These were an adult preoccupation with standards of behaviour for children; the entitlement of the child to an acceptable childhood; and the extent to which childhood was an aspirational ideal for society at large. It has been argued that these themes were active in representations of the child from every social station.

Reference was made earlier in this mapping exercise to the framing by modern historians of my period as a time when the values and mores of the middle class were encouraged and imposed, where possible, on humbler families. This featured the trickling down of notions of desirable and undesirable behaviour in children to a marked degree. I have suggested that this might well apply to the picturing of children from all classes as a result. The entitlement to unconditional love was discussed in relation to the needy child, in the context of an illustrated fairy tale of the 1860s. The notion that poor children were cut off from a proper childhood featured in Kennington's *The Toy Shop* three decades later. If a desirable, separate, safe world of childhood was pictured as an entitlement for the middle class child, then it seems reasonable to anticipate that - under a form of cultural dissemination - the poor child would be depicted as sharing in this to some extent. This assumption will be thoroughly tested by placing the pictured child under the lens of the charitable relationship between donor and recipient.

Were images of poverty used by Victorian philanthropy as effective as the pictured dependency of childhood ? As a rough, general estimate, for every two impoverished children who were portrayed, charity made use of an image of affluent childhood. However, the latter was seldom repeated and adapted, and did not evolve over decades, in marked contrast to some pictures of the impoverished child. This study will argue that depictions of comfortable, secure childhood derived their significance and meaning from images of the poor child, and that philanthropy made full use of this visual partnership. Having provided the reader with a context for what I have to say in the main body of the thesis, I will now set out to justify this claim.

CHAPTER TWO

Picturing the Gift: the depiction of Victorian charitable relationships

2 Introduction

This chapter sets out to offer a general assessment of the role played by philanthropic imagery - or what will be also called philanthropy's pictures. One approach for scholars outside the discipline of social history is to set in place a historical framework, one which outlines the general nature and function of Victorian philanthropy. A comprehensive review of charitable history is neither necessary nor possible within the scope of the present study. Instead an introduction to the broader perspectives of charitable activity will be offered at the outset, which is intended to provide a context for the discussion of philanthropic imagery which follows.

.For the purposes of this study, the terms 'philanthropy' and 'charity' are treated as interchangeable.[1] David Owen's seminal work on English philanthropy makes a distinction between 'charity', to describe the relief of periodic distress, and 'philanthropy' as covering the activities of organised charities.[2]. Instead, the present study will use both terms fairly loosely, to sketch in the background to why a growing number of people came to believe that the alleviation of poverty by the state - rather

[1] Modern definitions of charity and philanthropy are framed by differing interpretations of what constitutes a charitable act and its role in wider society. The prevailing view of historians in the 1970s was that charity was a means of social control in the battle between classes. Historians of the 1990s - Frank Prochaska and Alan Kidd for example - now present both charity and philanthropy as an infinitely varied series of relationships within as well as between classes, part of the complexities of a model of the civil society. In other words, modern historical constructs now influence the issue of definition.

[2] David Owen, *English Philanthropy 1660-1960*, (London: Belknap Press, 1965). Many historians of charity draw on Owen's approaches and his material. In his volume on charity between 1815-1870, which reprints articles from critical journals on the issue of Victorian poverty, A W Coates describes Owen's work as the 'best available general survey of the subject', while criticising his pecuniary definition -"the benefactions of Englishmen" - as being too narrow.

than by private individuals and organisations - was both desirable and necessary.[3] This shift in perception is presented in the historical framework which opens the chapter. With this in place, philanthropy's pictures and their role in charitable activity will be examined. The primary aim of this section on philanthropic imagery will be to consider what its function might have been, and to re-evaluate its role. The third and final section will look again at the visual representation of poverty as an example of philanthropy's pictures. The connection that is popularly assumed between poverty and charity will be tested against a range of philanthropic imagery, including the pictured poor child. It will be argued that the images used by Victorian charity were by no means confined to representations of poverty. It will also become apparent that the pictorial record presented in this thesis should indeed be scrutinized for a possible correspondence between the dependency of the recipient in the charitable relationship, and that of the child in adult-child relations.

2.1 Victorian perceptions of charity

Well before 1869, the individual or family in dire need and unable to support themselves had two main sources of assistance. Help came from the state, under the provision of the Poor Law which was administered by local Guardians in charge of a Union, or in the form of charity.[4] The relationship between these two types of provision was complex, and varied between localities. This was because each Union was

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[3] This approach is based on, and owes much to, Derek Fraser's book *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, second edition, (Macmillan, 1984). In particular, see chapter 6 'The Growing Awareness of Poverty', pp124-145.

[4] By the middle of the nineteenth century, a huge amount of individual and organisational charity existed. There were three main types of organisation : the endowed charitable foundations (such as schools and almshouses), what were called 'associated charities' (which usually required a lot more active personal involvement) and self initiating charities of all kinds and sizes.

responsible for the relief of its own poor, with some districts being far more impoverished than others. Therefore the reliance upon philanthropy fluctuated from area to area. Also, the historical growth of charitable activity was piecemeal and unpredictable. Poor Law support from the state was offered both within the workhouse - known as indoor relief - and outside the workhouse - known as outdoor relief.[5] Outdoor relief had the advantage of keeping the family unit intact, and left individuals with a measure of dignity they often felt was lost on entering the workhouse. Although workhouse conditions had improved by 1869, the fear and loathing they generated in many cases remained as strong as ever[6].

Derek Fraser has argued in his 1984 study of the welfare state that prior to the 1880s, the experience of poverty was perceived as the responsibility of the individual. It was generally considered by the well-to-do to be the result of individual inadequacy and a sign of moral failure in the impoverished. The philosophical bedrock of self help underpinned the intervention of individual and organisational benevolence in response to events like flood and famine[7]. Most of the time, poor households were expected to

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[5] Gareth Stedman Jones describes how the exodus of wealth from the East End of London upset the operational balance between the Poor Law and private philanthropy in *Outcast London*. Prior to 1867, each Union in the capital was responsible for the relief of its own poor. In that year the Metropolitan Poor Act created a Common Poor Fund with varying rates of contribution for different Unions. Then the Act was amended in 1870 to leave Outdoor Relief with the Unions, leaving only Indoor Relief to be administered through the Fund. It was believed that indiscriminate almsgiving caused the level of pauperism to continue at a comparatively high level, exacerbated by unsustainable pockets of neediness created by the exit of the wealthy from poor districts.

[6] Peter Mandler suggests that one of the strongest reasons for this antipathy was fear of the threat of unauthorised dissection, should a family member die while an inmate of the workhouse. Mandler argues that the poor were otherwise prepared to accept aid which they found useful. See Peter Mandler (ed.), *The Uses of Charity, the Poor on Relief in the Nineteenth Century Metropolis*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990). The passage reads 'Assistance was usually shunned only when it was offered on terms that made it useless: indoor relief that reduced family income by precluding other sources, aid offered in a form that was not wanted (such as emigration assistance), or aid with highly unacceptable strings attached (such as family breakup, total dispossession, or the threat of dissection.' p20.

[7] For a description of the formation of three different types of organised donor groups, or 'benevolent societies', see Richard Tompson, *The Charity Commission and the Age of Reform*, (London & Henley:

take care of themselves and make provision against infirmity and old age. Motivated by Christian humanity or a sense of guilt, the comfortably-off would assist the poor with short-term problems considered beyond their control. As Fraser says, such help reinforced relationships characterised by inequality of wealth and the imposition of standards of personal attitudes and behaviour on the poor: '[t]he whole concept of charity presupposed a class of superior wealth with the means to dispense bounties, and in the Victorian period it equally presupposed a class of superior attitudes and values.'[8]

By 1869, serious doubts had arisen over whether charity was an effective means by which society could respond to a mixture of motivations. These included a fear of social revolution, a humanitarian concern for suffering, a wish to assuage guilt, the desire to impress socially, and the imposition of moral improvement at the bottom of the social pile. Two doubts were expressed; that charities were inefficient, and - despite their numbers - that they promoted rather than alleviated poverty. These doubts led to the foundation of the Charity Organisation Society in April of that year. Its initial title was the Society for Organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity. As the name suggests, the intention of its founders was to wage a moral crusade to eliminate begging and to reduce the chaos of indiscriminate almsgiving in London.[9] The Society believed that the enormous amounts of charitable relief raised in the capital were not reaching worthy recipients, but were encouraging multiple applications for funding

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Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979). This book is primarily a history of inquiry into charitable activity and the emergence of the Charity Commission.

[8] See Fraser, p128.

[9] The founders of the COS were Charles Bosanquet, Edward Denison, Octavia Hill and C S Loch, who served as the organisation's secretary between 1875 and 1913. John Ruskin wrote the draft for the organisation's first prospectus.

from the unworthy.[10] The Society's secretary, C S Loch, compared charities with lighthouses. They had not been "placed with care precisely on those points of the dangerous coastline of pauperism, where their lights will save from shipwreck the greatest number of distressed passers by."[11] His comment implied that there was still a role for charity, but it was not being delivered where it was most needed, and where it could provide most benefit.

By this time, therefore, the principle of short term charitable intervention coupled with long term self help was still intact. The Charity Organisation Society was brought into being by its comfortably-off and concerned founders to challenge the means by which this principle of charity was translated into reality. The Society undertook the investigative procedures which led to the making of pivotal decisions on who did, and who did not receive, charitable relief.[12] It had little funds of its own to dispense, and sought to regulate the charitable provision of other philanthropic bodies. Such an approach was often bitterly resented, both by potential recipients and by other charities.[13]

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[10] At the end of the 1860s, some calculations suggest, £2 million was expended annually in legal relief in London, compared to £7 million from private charity. The proportional comparison is telling, although there were contemporary variation in the estimated figures for private charity. See an article on 'Charity' by J G Fitch in *Fraser's Magazine* for December 1869, presenting his arguments against the confusion, unnecessary administration and misdirected funds in what he regarded as a plethora of private charities. Reproduced in Coates, A W (ed.), *Victorian Social Conscience : Poverty : Volume III Charity 1815-1870*, (Gregg International Publishers Ltd., 1973). Article commences p679.

[11] Quoted by Fraser on p130 from the *Charity Organisation Reporter* of 13 July 1882.

[12] For a full assessment of the Society's chosen role in differentiating between the deserving and the undeserving, see Robert Humphreys, *Sin, Organised Charity and the Poor Law in Victorian England*, (New York: St Martin's Press, Inc. Macmillan Press, 1995). Humphreys argues that the Society failed. At a more general level of argument, perhaps it was fated to do so, given the shift in public perception of both charity's role and the true extent of poverty.

[13] Dr Thomas Barnardo was an impassioned opponent of the Charity Organisation Society. He attacked the organisation, its way of working and what he saw as its negative impact on the poor, many times in the periodicals, subscriber magazines and reports of the Barnardo Homes. For a typical example, see *Night and Day*, 1882, volume VI, pp96-99, 'Who is to blame?'. Barnardo edited *Night and Day* and used the publication to describe child saving and other philanthropic work carried out by his own organisation and by others.

By the mid-eighties, with Charles Booth's studies of poverty in Tower Hamlets and East London, both operational model and its philosophical edifice had broken down. These studies (and the seventeen volumes of *The Life and Labour of the People in London* which followed them between 1889-1903) revealed that a third of London's population lived below the 'poverty line', one of Charles Booth's own concepts.[14] Up until that time, it had generally been supposed that the proportion living in dire poverty was nearer a tenth. It could be said that the realisation, on the part of the wealthy and concerned, that poverty confronted them with a much bigger, more intractable problem than many of them had hitherto believed, contributed to a change in attitude to charity's scope. It became obvious to them that a tenth of the capital's population might be assisted by charity through temporary difficulties, but a submerged third would require massive state intervention.

The eighteen eighties was an unsettling decade for the people of London in other ways. At this time, the campaign to rehouse the city's poorest inhabitants came to be understood less as a public health issue and more as a moral crisis. Alarm at the likely damage to the nation's moral fibre, resulting from the indiscriminate crowding of genders and ages together, took over from worries about how to provide sufficient accommodation for those on low or uncertain incomes.[15] As well as this worry, the comfortably-off came to realise that the nation was not assured of continuous economic

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[14] Charles Booth wanted to find out if statistics confirmed the horror suggested by images of poverty. He based his statistical calculations on the number of children. "The inhabitants of every street, and court, and block of buildings in the whole of London, have been estimated in proportion to the numbers of children, and arranged in classes according to the known position and condition of the parents of these children." Quoted by Fraser p271 from Booth's *Life and Labour* Vol II (1892).

[15] Peter Mandler suggests that the urban community self-help networks relied for their efficiency on households being tightly packed together. In his view, the manner in which the poor attempted to deal

progress. This reversal in national fortunes was known as the Great Depression, which Fraser puts between 1873 and 1896. These years saw increased economic competition from the USA and Germany combined with a failure to invest in industrial innovation. It was a time of very high unemployment, chronic low wages and underemployment, especially in the second half of the decade. In such an uncertain economic climate, the public view of the relief of poverty moved away from the personal relationships of private philanthropy and into the mainstream of public political discourse. Giving increasingly came to be understood as a public matter, although it is questionable whether people changed their view of what charity was. Even though charity's responsibility for the relief of poverty was perceived as smaller, its essential characteristics remained set in the public mind until the next century.

It can be said that both parties to the charitable relationship looked for benefits from it. From the donor's perspective, the possession of financial security offered the opportunity to one group in society to manipulate the behaviour of another group on the basis of meeting a very real need. Several modern writers have interpreted charity as a component of unequal social relationships, presenting it as the finger in the dike of social upheaval.[16] In different ways they have argued that charity was used as a stabilizing mechanism in society.

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with their own poverty implied a very different set of attitudes towards propinquity, when compared to the campaigners who believed overcrowding precipitated a moral crisis.

[16] '. . The British labouring classes . .were urged to be independent but denied the means of being permanently so, and charity was *in effect* . .an integral part of the practical system of social subordination.' Geoffrey Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75*, (Fontana Press, 1985), p158. Gareth Stedman Jones goes a step further than other historians in drawing on 1960s sociological theory of the social meaning of gift giving. Social control was one of three structural features, the others being sacrifice and a symbol of prestige. Ian Williams (1989), Benedict Nightingale (1973), Michael Chesterman (1979) and David Owen (1965) all situate charitable giving within national or international social and political frameworks.

This study approaches Victorian charity as a series of multiple relationships of power. This view is taken because - regardless of motive - philanthropic relationships were not negotiated, they were imposed. Peter Mandler summarises this succinctly when he argues that '... at no point did the forms in which charity was offered match the forms in which it was needed. The task of the recipients was to fit themselves into the positions required by the donors at the moment of transaction and then to apply the gift ... to their own real needs.'[17] This study does not subscribe to the social control model of charity, which offers only a means by which one class could be said to control another. There is plenty of evidence to confirm that charitable motives were complex and multi-layered, with people in all stations of society providing support to each other. Indeed, Mandler and others have argued that the metropolitan poor made discriminating use of charity as an income supplement, which they combined with networks of community self support.[18] This did not make the charitable relationship equal, nor were the roles freely interchangeable. Hence this study has settled on a discourse mid-way between social control and free-ranging post-modern narratives, one that approaches the charitable relationship as a relationship of power.

So far, charity has been discussed as a means by which poverty could be alleviated to varying degrees, bringing the benefit of greater social cohesion and stability for society as a whole. According to nineteenth century definitions, the relief of poverty was only one of four objectives assigned to charity. The others were the advancement of

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[17] Mandler, op cit, p2.

[18] See Mandler, op cit. This volume approaches charity from the recipient's point of view, how the working class used and viewed charitable offerings in specific settings. Some of the essays make the connection between the pictured child and charitable appeal, discussed in section 2.3 of this thesis.

religion, education and the general public interest.[19] All four can be viewed as being open to the incursion of unequal, imposed relationships, which dictated the behaviour of people who lacked power in society. This is not to suggest that any deliberate malice or megalomania on the part of the power-holders was necessarily involved. On the contrary, committed individual campaigners often set out to save souls and to do material good. No precise demarcation lines existed between the different heads of charity, with individuals campaigning on more than one front.

For example, Dr Thomas Barnardo started his career as a Plymouth Brethren missionary destined for China, became a ragged school teacher, and argued frequently in his editorial columns that child saving work was a cost-efficient way of ensuring the future of a healthy, stable, God-fearing nation. His contemporary, the Reverend T B Stephenson, observed that 'there is in the public mind a wide distinction between "religion" and "charity"' but that, in his view, 'all true charity is religious, and that religion, properly understood, embraces the whole field of charity.'[20]

The historian Ellen Ross argues that both parties to the Victorian charitable relationship could have been aware of its potential for hypocrisy, for the recipient 'taking the goods while faking either religion or gratitude'.[21] At other times, the covert elements of the relationship were exposed. Ross quotes from an 1883 account of '[a]

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[19] In the subscriber magazine for the National Children's Homes of 1873, the organisation's founder and magazine editor, the Reverend Thomas Bowman Stephenson, offered the following distinction. 'In this country there is in the public mind a wide distinction between "religion" and "charity". "Mission Work", is understood to be religious exercises for the benefit of the people - dealing, that is, not with the bodily, but the spiritual part of the man. Charity, on the other hand, is understood to deal with pauperism, insanity, disease, and various social ills.' (*The Children's Advocate and Christian at Work*, January 1873, title page article on 'The English Inner Mission'.) In the same year, 1873, Stephenson became President of the Wesleyan Conference.

[20] *The Children's Advocate and Christian at Work*, January 1873, title page.

Biblewoman going from door to door in Stepney ... being told sharply that "they were all honest people in that house, not hypocrites, and did not want any of our rubbish".[22] Historians, in the main, have provided histories of the giving party, with recent moves to approach charity from the recipient's perspective. This study is concerned with the pictured child in philanthropy and the thesis has yet to establish whether children can be found on both sides of the charitable relationship. For the moment, it can be safely assumed that adults were depicted in their different roles as power-holders, as well as supplicants.

The pictorial historical record shows church ministers, teachers, school board officials, nurses, police officers, charity workers, visitors, charity regulators, gentlemen and ladies as philanthropy's power-holders. The generic figures who made up the donor side of the relationship were rarely depicted alone.[23] Indeed, picturing the powerful party in the absence of the object of need could not be said to represent Victorian charity in any meaningful sense. This point will be expanded later in the chapter (2.3.i - 2.3.iv).

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[21] See Ellen Ross, 'Hungry Children: Housewives and London Charity, 1870-1918', Mandler op cit, p169.

[22] Idem. For extensive contemporaneous commentaries on the perceived dissimulation practiced by both parties to the charitable relationship see Coates, op cit. These include an analysis of the many different categories of criminal beggar - the Shallow Coves, Prigs, Palmers, Fire Lurkers, and Cadgers' Screevers to name only a few. On the donor side, one commentator observed that '[i]n the [charitable] committee there is invested an amount of authority and patronage exceedingly pleasing to small minds; and in many instances the patrons nurse the belief, which is sedulously instilled by the promoters, that they are meeting a great want and dispensing innumerable blessings.' p447.

[23] Portraits of named individuals, such as eminent campaigners and royal patrons, did appear in philanthropic imagery.

2.2 Pictures in Victorian charity

2.2.i Publicity

With the emergence of more and more benevolent societies, competing with each other for support in the public domain, it became necessary for each to project its message through a variety of media. Foremost amongst these were subscriber magazines, which simultaneously told members about each charity's activities and generated funds. It has been commented more than once that no matter how successful the charity claimed to be in its work, the pressing need for funds never seemed to diminish. Richard Tompson has described the magazines and other fundraising techniques as 'publicity'. 'The publicity attending benevolent societies was a basic part of their structure, and it was essential to their success. As they depended upon public support, so the public had to be made aware of the society's existence and it had to be encouraged to support the particular efforts of each group.'[24] Tompson's reference to publicity as part of the organisational structure of such societies could be viewed as significant. As well as stressing that the existence of the organisation depended upon donational flow, it hints at a campaigning role for publicity itself. It carried the same weight and responsibility as fundraising in philanthropic work. Indeed, fundraising and campaigning were fused together in the editorial pages of the subscriber magazines, as well as in more direct appeals material.

One of the appeals booklets published by the print workshop of Dr Barnardo's Home in 1872 reprinted an article from *The Morning Advertiser*, which puts Tompson's observation on publicity into a contemporaneous Christian perspective. 'In an age when society lives in public ... the instances are few in which Charity "lets not its right

hand know what its left hand doeth". Every worthy deed must have its paragraph. The Good Samaritan would be nowhere without a reporter.'[25]

2.2.ii Fundraising

Some fundraising techniques were more socially visible than others, an issue not unrelated to the question of motive for involvement in philanthropy. Brian Harrison has pointed to the range of social and material benefits accruing to those involved in philanthropic activity.

> The numerous charity balls, philanthropic dinners and *conversaziones*, the pretentious central offices, the pages of print devoted to lists of subscriptions, the elegant memberships cards - the very organisation of the philanthropic world itself (not to speak of the causes on which its resources were spent) all ensured that such redistribution of the national income as did take place in the nineteenth century gave pleasure to and even financially profited many of the not-so-poor before it finally filtered down to those in real need.[26]

This passage also argues that for all its conspicuous benevolence, the activities of the philanthropic world benefited the donors in the charitable relationship before the most needy recipients. This substantial dimension to the history of charity will be returned to later. The point being made here is the extent to which philanthropic activity was a matter of spectatorship for organisers and donors. Most visible of all was the charity dinner. Compared to this opportunity to associate with the great and the good - and to be reported as having done so - the donation of money in the street was essentially a private act.

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[24] Tompson, op. Cit, p70.
[25] Appeals booklet 'Nobody's Children', p39, Barnardo Archive, University of Liverpool.
[26] Brian Harrison, 'Philanthropy and the Victorians', *Victorian Studies* Vol 9 June 1966, p363. This article reviews David Owen's *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* of 1965.

Street collecting boxes were first introduced by the RNLI in the eighteen eighties. This is an example of individual donorship which could be linked to what William Rathbone called 'the impulse to give', rather than the wish to be seen to be giving. Putting money into a street collecting box did not offer donors the same opportunities for what could be called demonstrable philanthropy as the charity dinner. It constituted a private act of charity rather than a public show of support.

It might be thought that being on a list of charitable subscribers was essentially a private intervention in the philanthropic process. Unfortunately for the subscriber, this does not appear to have been the case. "When a name has once been printed on a subscription list, its owner becomes a marked man. He has joined, by his own act, the unhappy class to which an appeal can be made with some chance it can be met. From that day forward his persecution will never cease."[27] Thus *The Times* in 1880, seeming to either commiserate or mock the plight of the donor.

2.2.iii The impulse to give and the image

A picture emerges of charities competing for subscribers and supporters on the one hand, and a small pool of wealthy and influential donors on the other. This fails to reflect the complexity of reported donation, but repeated appeals for money were undoubtedly many and unrelenting.[28] What role did the image play in this scenario?

Very often it acted as an initial point or reference, a prick of conscience, between

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[27] Quoted from *The Times*, 1 July 1880 by Owen, p480.

[28] For example, Dr Barnardo often made editorial reference in several subscriber magazines to the importance of small donations, particularly from children. It is difficult to establish whether such small amounts of money did make a difference to the continuing work of child rescue. It is possible that large

charity workers and potential donors. Margaret Simey quotes William Rathbone, one of a Liverpool family of social reformers, on charitable giving: "... people give less in obedience to principle than under a sudden impulse of feeling, less to fulfill an obligation than to relieve themselves of an uneasy though vague sense of compunction."[29]

What Rathbone can be said to be addressing here is the critical moment just before an act of giving. What could it have been that stimulated the sudden impulse of feeling to which he refers ? Based on innumerable references to the sight of poverty and need, many of which will be included in subsequent chapters, I would assert that the stimulus was largely visual in nature.[30] Such sights, directly experienced, did not necessarily stimulate a wish to give, so much as a wish to be relieved of the obligation to give, according to Rathbone. If he was right, the challenge to charitable workers and campaigners would have been to present images to the public which found a balance between volition and compunction. This is not to suggest that the visual image was used as a conscious marketing ploy; such levels of image awareness belong in the next century. Campaigners did acknowledge that the sight of a child suffering had moved them to action.

Perhaps the most notable example of this was Thomas Barnardo's account of how his first waif, one Jim Jarvis, guided the doctor to a group of eleven boys sleeping rough on

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networks of people who were informed and engaged in his organisation's work was a more significant factor.

[29] Margaret Simey, *Charity rediscovered A study of philanthropic effort in nineteenth century Liverpool*, (Liverpool University Press, 1992), p82.

[30] Arguably, it is ironic that the emotional power of the image of the child - attested to by so many charitable campaigners - turns the tables on a writer like David Freedberg. Freedberg's book, *The Power*

a rooftop. Barnardo described this as his 'first impression of the woes and necessities of city waifs and strays'.[31] It was an experience which took him into child rescue work. When writing of this in the eighteen eighties, in the magazine *Night and Day*, Barnardo referred the reader to an image *(2.1)* of the scene, a few pages away from his editorial. The Doctor explained that the picture was for 'some who are equally unfamiliar with our work, and into whose hands these pages may fall' and was 'a faithful delineation of the actual scene, [which] may stimulate to deeds of pity, and awaken kind thoughts of sympathy for my "bairns"'.[32]

As well as its role as an initial stimulus to action, charitable imagery depicted other stages of philanthropic activity. It is arguable that some images went further by raising or rehearsing difficult issues. In this sense it could be said that the picturing of Victorian philanthropy engaged directly in charitable discourse. My assertion here is that such images are significant for what they did as well as what they depicted, that they participated in philanthropy as much as they described it. From the examples which follow, it should emerge that philanthropy's pictures did more than arouse pity or guilt as a precursor to a charitable act.

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of Images Studies in the History and Theory of Response, (1989) argues that children - along with the insane, women and savages - are susceptible to being fooled by the power of the visual image.

[31] *Night and Day*, 1881, p192. Barnardo explained how he was asked to stand in for a speaker at a moment's notice and spoke, without notes, of this incident in the eighteen sixties, which prompted him to begin his child rescue work.

[32] Idem.

2.3 The work of the image

2.3.i Picturing assessment and judgment

Pictured in a dark and scruffy room *(image 2.2)*, a seated woman with dishevelled hair reaches out her hand towards a tankard held by a young boy. In the boy's other hand is a pipe. Initially, it is not clear who is the intended recipient of either the tankard or the pipe. Both were potent symbols of what would today be called self-abuse for the Victorian temperance movement. The young boy is barefoot, his clothes are ragged and he is lightly clothed compared to the adults. The woman's hand might also be gesturing past the tankard to a gentleman, standing behind the boy from the spectator's perspective. The man is from a different social station than either the woman or the boy. In one hand the gentleman holds his hat, with the other he points towards the tankard. This seems to be the focus of the composition, attracting the hands of all the participants in the visual drama. What is being pictured here addresses issues of poverty, intemperance, and the link between the two.

The pictorial evidence rehearses these issues which must be taken into account in a question of judgment. It could be argued that the composition of the image suggests that the person making the judgment can only be the gentleman. He is above the level of the others, while they seem much closer to the suspect tankard. The light tone of his profile stands out sharply against the dark background, contrasting with the dark hair of the woman which is accentuated by the light wall. If she had been bathed in light and upright, while he was slumped in darkness, the ownership of the judgment would, perhaps, be more difficult to allocate.

This image appeared in *The Children's Advocate* for August 1873, with an accompanying text appearing on a separate page. The text supported an interpretation which identified the pictured woman as the mother of the boy, and that alcohol was the cause of her family's distress. If the spectator failed to connect the image with its text, the intemperance of mothers was a pictorial and textual theme treated elsewhere in the same issue of the magazine. The figure of a kneeling woman was included in the issue *(image 2.3)*, with her hands in a beseeching gesture, beside the base of a palace pillar. She 'has no friends; no character; no hope. Something of womanly is left in her still, and because of that, she hates herself ...'.[33] The text confirms that the kneeling woman is also a mother – like the woman in the judgment image. Married in her teens to a drunkard, she became intemperate herself as a result of his cruelty and life's hardship. It is possible that these two pictorial treatments of maternal intemperance could have reinforced each other in their impact made on the viewer/reader.

There is one further interpretative layer which could be added to this multiplicity of meaning. *The Children's Advocate and Christian at Work* was the main subscriber magazine for the National Children's Homes This child rescue organisation was founded in 1870 by the Reverend T B Stephenson and two colleagues. Stephenson did much of the editing of the magazine, and was also a strong temperance campaigner. If the reader thought about 'the cause' in terms of a reason for child deprivation and suffering, then the answer which was provided here was the capacity of alcohol to destroy the home through maternal intemperance. In this case, the pictured child was doubly at risk, from loss of his mother's care and protection through incapacity, and from contamination by drink and tobacco. If the word 'cause' was interpreted in

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[33] *The Children's Advocate*, August 1873, p136.

another way, to mean a good cause, then the image could be said to address the significance of child saving work itself. If this is accepted, then this particular pictured child becomes far more than an onlooker, an observer of adult interaction. From this perspective, the boy may have been placed to one side of the composition, but he actually represented the dramatic centre of the image.

2.3.ii Picturing the parties to the charitable relationship

Charitable and philanthropic acts were usually depicted – almost by definition – as involving at least two people, the donor and the recipient. Where both parties were pictured, their numbers were occasionally unrestricted. Such an image *(2.4)* is taken from *The Children's Advocate*; filling the title page of the January 1875 issue. Its cutaway composition was a popular choice for philanthropic images, often offering the opportunity to compare a scene of utmost need and deprivation with its opposite. Each discreet half of the image rehearsed a theme which was revisited many times over. Such themes might be presented together or apart. This composite image depicts the comfortable family above, at home before the fireside. The mother stands in the background, a small child in her arms. She looks over the shoulder of the seated father, who reads to the daughter and the son. Below, the shivering brother and sister huddle together against the railings in the snow, and are revealed in the beam of the police officer's torch.[34] The figures of the boy, girl and man are roughly in alignment in the two parts of the image. This could be said to accentuate the absence of the mother figure from the street scene. There were no female constables, although gentlewomen

[34] Some charities did employ nightstaff to search for children sleeping rough or who were in difficulties. However, this rescuer closely resembles a police officer. See images 5.10 and 5.11 of this study.

were pictured in the public role of visitor on behalf of a charity. Instead of the domestic comfort which the mother and her young child represent, some kind of feral animal cowers in the right foreground of the street scene. The two halves of the image are joined by the bright windows, the light coming from indoors.

This device almost implies that the comfortable family are the other side of the very windows shown in the bottom part of the image. If this is accepted, this might have heightened the sense of urgency for viewers that deprived children could be huddled outside their very own homes. This type of comparative image was particularly prevalent around Christmas time. Visually assembled are most of the *dramatis personae* of the charitable process; object of rescue, rescuer, and donors. To this could be added the threat of the snow and the harsh environment, the safety of the family home. The lower section of this image depicts the moment of discovery, prior to rescue. This in itself could be described as the depiction of an action, one made by a representative of compassionate authority. This part of the picture deals with the people for whom the appeal is made. At one level, it could be said that this is being done for the children, but perhaps this is only one part of the visual drama. The appeal is also being made to support the action of the police officer, and, by implication, the work of the child saving charities. The comfortable family are not being asked to rescue the children themselves - which is why they are separated from the discovery perhaps - but to support others to do so.

It is not too fanciful to suggest that the comfortable family are reading *The Children's Advocate* aloud, since this was something encouraged by its editor. This is how a charity might have wished them to find out about the horrors of child deprivation. Not

through the negative impact of being accosted in the street by street children, but by embedding the child at risk in an account of what each charity was doing to improve children's lot. In a very subtle way, this image depicts the work of a child rescue charity, as a mediator in the relationship between potential donors and intended recipients.

2.3.iii Picturing salvation

Moving on from the moment of discovery, the next representation *(image 2.5)* takes the dramatic action a step further towards rehabilitation, and does so by emphasising again the significance of the charitable organisation. The salvation of the child will be achieved through its intervention. This image appeared on the front cover of the *1888 Annual Report for Doctor Barnardo's Homes and East End Juvenile Mission.*[35] In the case of this organisation in particular, the annual report was an active document, campaigning in the child rescue cause. With its content and caption, this image encapsulates the point made earlier in this chapter, that charities were at pains to demonstrate the success of their work to supporters, while, at the same time, stressing how much more there was to be done.

The moment of reaching safety is depicted, when the door is flung open to the clamouring children and they are welcomed inside. The children are like wraiths, like shadows in a night of bitter cold. They are the needy, about to assume their new role of charitable recipients. They are pictured in their moment of transition, from danger to safety. They have ceased to represent the object of rescue and are about to become the

subjects of salvation. It could be argued that although the pictured child looks very much the same as in the composite image discussed earlier, the content of each representation provides two different pictorial contexts and hence, two different meanings. These children look the same, while they could be said to represent the pictorial difference between the charitable work of rescue and that of salvation.

The woman is not pictured as a rescuer, either in this image or in many others. The task of discovery and rescue was habitually assigned to the pictured male adult. She is the nurse/carer, the institutionalised mother for the children. It could be said that this image confirms this differentiation of roles by pictorial means alone, telling the spectator that the pictured woman is neither rescuer nor saviour. Her clothing is as dark

[35] The sale of annual reports also raised money for charities.

as the night out of which the children have come. Her face hangs in the darkness, like the children's upturned faces. By contrast, out of the light come the words assigning the identity of both rescuer and saviour to Dr Barnardo. Everything that is light in tone in this image refers to the charity and its work; even the light that falls on the children comes from the same source.

This very simple image, though crude in execution, deals with complex themes. It extends the work of one children's charity from rescue to the possibility of salvation. It depicts the arrival of the children at the door to the Home and the re-establishment of family and domestic comfort through the representation of the House mother.

2.3.iv Picturing more than one stage of philanthropy

So far, the visual representation of separate stages of charitable activity have been discussed. It was rare for one image to picture philanthropic work in its entirety. This explains perhaps why the next image to be discussed has a comparatively complex structure. This advertisement page *(image 2.6)* is from from the December 1901 issue of *Highways and Hedges* (the retitled *Children's Advocate*). It combines several images in one and shows three stages of philanthropy, deprivation, institutionalised persecution, care and rehabilitation. The spectator is likely to look first at the top left hand corner, to the street children; then the eye travels down and right to the depiction of Oliver Twist, asking for more in the workhouse. This is set alongside an appeal for more by the charity from its supporters. It is likely that few readers would have been prepared to deny Dickens's fictional child victim. The implication of this pictorial

appeal by the charity was that spectators would be unable to deny their role in saving the Oliver Twists of the twentieth century.

The depiction of Oliver in the workhouse is taken from the front elevation of the collecting box when closed. This would have been the aspect seen by those individual donors who dropped coins into the box. There is some symbolism in the mechanics of collection, which could also be said to be depicted here. When the box was in use for collection, the object of appeal was open to view. With the task of philanthropy completed, the box full, and the children saved and cared for, Oliver disappears under the flap and the Home's Christmas Dinner is revealed inside. By collecting for the National Children's Homes, the spectator could be said to make the images of deprivation and persecution disappear, replacing them with the depiction of institutionalised care and celebration. As this was described as a 'novel christmas box', it is, perhaps, not stretching the point too far to imagine the image of the Christmas Dinner in the Home sitting on the festive dining table of the hard-working collector.[36]

The viewer's attention is likely to be engaged next with the nurse and the well-fed children in her care in the Home. It finishes its visual journey inside the image with the collecting box, depicting the enormous Christmas party to be enjoyed by the rescued children. Here is another image within an image. Anyone putting money in the box would have been dropping coins into the representation of happiness, or as close to it as a child without a family could get. In a similar way, the appeal is inside another appeal. The plea to help the children to find happiness lies inside an appeal to fill up the collection boxes.

To summarise the argument thus far, I have attempted to show how visual imagery played an active, campaigning role in the philanthropic process, as well as representing the relationships between the different parties engaged in charitable activity. Charitable imagery did not only act as a stimulus for action but also represented that action at different stages of philanthropy. This section will conclude with some exploratory thoughts on the sequential nature of charitable work that seem to emerge from study of its visual representation. Indeed, it is possible to go further and consider what light this approach sheds on the revealed relationship between charity, the pictures it used, and the spectator.

2.3.v Exploratory thoughts on philanthropy, the image and the spectator

A tentative analysis of the picturing of Victorian philanthropy at this early stage might be said to reveal two fundamental defining characteristics, one of which appears to construct the other. The first concerns its nature as a visual entity, which could be described as a story told in pictures, moving from a fixed beginning to an equally determined end. The depicted stages, or narrative sequence, run as follows - the object of rescue at risk or in danger; the discovery by the rescuer; the transition to salvation and safety; the payment of moral debts; the good life as reward. Each piece of visual material in this study could be assigned to a stage in this process, although mistakes can be made if the interpretation of meaning is hasty or superficial.

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[36] *Highways and Hedges*, December 1901, p269.

Further, it is arguable that the audiences for this material, copious as it was, would have recognised the assigned stage, with or without textual intervention. Through their exposure to so many retellings of the same pictorial story, they are likely to have been able to understand the depicted moment in relation to other renderings of the same stage, and through the frequent picturing of other stages in philanthropic work. Put another way, it might even be possible to argue that audiences for philanthropy's pictures used the spirit of the metapicture approach, without being aware they were doing so. They could have made sense of one picture by linking it with others. Certainly, the influence of other pictorial and cultural reference points cannot be ruled out.

This exploratory assertion is based on a very practical assumption. Spectators were potential participators in philanthropy, as donors and campaigners in the charitable relationship. If they had not understood - or believed they understood - the implied relationships between images of need, of rescue and its social and spiritual benefit, the whole rationale for philanthropy's pictures would have crumbled, and charity would have lost a vital means of displaying its work, raising funds and attracting support. To augment Brian Harrison's remarks quoted earlier, unless the work of charity had a recognisable, familiar public face, it would be lost in a crowd. So many philanthropic organisations were trying to win public support for their particular cause. In such a competitive arena, it could be said that the communicative power of philanthropic imagery helped create charity's public face.

2.4 Picturing poverty and philanthropic imagery

The images discussed so far have introduced the notion that Victorian charitable activity was pictured at different stages, which may or may have included the impoverished child as an object of need. Indeed, it has been argued that very similar depictions of poor children could have different meanings depending on their pictorial context. It is already possible to say that that philanthropy's pictures involved considerably more than a pathetic appeal to Rathbone's 'impulse to give'. The relationship between philanthropic imagery and the visual representation of poverty will now be considered in some detail. The social commentator Charles Booth questioned the extent to which the representation of poverty reflected its reality. He expressed his opinion in graphic terms.

> The lives of the poor lay hidden from view behind a curtain on which were painted terrible pictures : starving children, suffering women, overworked men ; horrors of drunkenness and vice, monsters and demons of inhumanity ; giants of disease and despair. Did these pictures truly represent what lay behind, or did they bear to the facts a relation similar to that which the pictures outside a booth or some country fair bear to the performance or show within ?[37]

In this passage, Booth wanted to know whether reports of sensational hardship were typical of the sufferings of the poor in general, or if the picture painted of poverty was lurid, exaggerated and grotesque. He did not underestimate the power of such reports as a stimulus to action. "In intensity of feeling and not in statistics lies the power to move the world", he said.[38] Booth was concerned to move the world in the right direction with the support of statistics, as a counterbalance to the strength of feeling aroused by reports of extreme poverty. His use of the term 'terrible pictures' was

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[37] Quoted by T S and M B Simey, *Charles Booth : Social Scientist*, (1960), p64. Requoted in Fraser, op. cit, pp135-6.

metaphorical, but this study will now take it literally, in exploring the relationship between pictured poverty and philanthropic imagery.

When discussing the use of 'terrible pictures' of the impoverished child, particular use will be made of the collection of essays edited by the historian Peter Mandler, to which a number of references have already been made in this chapter. These essays aim to consider charity from the recipient's point of view, and those recipients included children. Lyn Hollen Lees calculates that women and children formed the majority of London paupers, with children making up 37% of the city's total population on some sort of relief in 1870. This proportion had fallen to 30% by 1900. In approaching charity as a form of income augmentation for the poor, Mandler's book raises some tantalizing points, about the impact of the sight of the poor child and attitudes towards childhood within a context of imposed morality and values upon the poor. All of these are highly pertinent to this thesis.

2.4.i The needy child

The measure of poverty which has been adopted in the essays is the receipt of relief. It has been calculated that the proportion of children on outdoor and indoor relief in London decreased faster than the proportion of children in the city's population in the late nineteenth century.[39] Such a comparative decrease could not be attributed to child mortality or fertility rates, both of which had declined. There was no significant change in family size before 1900. It would seem that the likelihood of the impoverished

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[38] Ibid., p136

Victorian child receiving relief declined by nearly a third between 1870 and 1900. Lees argues that '... the decline in aid to children probably indicates a substantial shift in welfare resources away from the young to the old during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'.[40] In other words, there is no reason to assume that poor children were any less needy, although institutional fulfilment of that need, in the form of relief, declined.

2.4.ii The look of the needy

In seeking to obtain aid to supplement household income, Mandler describes the contortions, in both behaviour and appearance, which the poor were obliged to undergo. Mandler presents this 'theater of charity' as a question of supplicants meeting the expectations of philanthropists, in order to get what they wanted out of the charitable relationship.[41] His reference to theatre implies that the charitable relationship could take the form of fabricated drama, with the parts taken by the would-be recipients approaching melodrama and bathos. His observation is not so far removed from Booth's reference to a painted board outside a fairground, with lurid exaggeration required in both cases. The reason for creating such a 'terrible picture' in the theatre of charity was very different, of course. Mandler concludes that since only those who looked desperate received aid, all supplicants set out to look desperate. The necessity to adapt the look of poverty to the expectations of the givers was confirmed by an account of the Harding family, who lived in poverty in the eighteen eighties and nineties. "The whole thing was having your poverty well known to the people who had

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[39] See Lynn Hollen Lees essay 'The Survival of the Unfit: Welfare Policies and Family Maintenance in Nineteenth Century London' in Mandler, op. cit.

the giving of charity' ... 'If you wasn't poor you had to look poor ... But you had to be clean and that was easy - soap and water didn't cost a lot of money".[42]

2.4.iii The look of the impoverished child

So far, it has been argued that while children received declining amounts of relief in comparison with adults, it was still necessary for adult applicants for philanthropy to distort their appearance, to look desperate but clean, in order to make the charitable relationship work for them. Mandler believes that there was something about the Victorian child pauper - the very sight of children in dire need - which exercised what Booth might have called a powerful influence on the emotions.

In the struggle between the donors to impose their own behaviours and values upon the poor in return for aid, only a particular type of child - the orphan - was not expected to conform to the rigours of the charitable relationship. 'In Britain', Mandler argues 'all but orphans were deemed to be victims of their own improvidence and in theory entitled only to the most meager dole administered in a penal workhouse.'[43] In other words, if Mandler's view is accepted, the child who appeared to have no parents was not expected to undergo the contortions required of other applicants for aid.

Indeed, it would seem that there was something about the look of the impoverished child *per se* which aroused strong and positive feeling amongst social campaigners.

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[40] Ibid., p75.
[41] Mandler, op. cit, p15.
[42] Quoted by Ellen Ross in her essay 'Hungry Children: Housewives and London Charity, 1870-1918', in Mandler, op. cit., p173.
[43] Ibid., p13.

One writer has argued that such a sight generated the philanthropic provision of school meals some thirty years before the measure reached the statute book. '[I]t was compulsory education, exposing hundreds of thousands of children, many ragged, barefoot and hungry, daily to public view', argues Ross 'that generated the charitable offering of children's meals on a massive scale years before the 1906 Education (Provision of Meals) Act regularized and funded these proceedings'.[44]

2.4.iv The intended appeal of the pictured child

Child welfare campaigners would periodically describe the nature of the impact that they believed the pictured poor child had upon audiences. One such description accompanied a flower girl *(image 2.7)* depicted in the pages of *Night and Day* in December 1883.[45] Philanthropy frequently pictured this type of child street trader. This child holds a basket of flowers in her right hand and offers a bunch in her left straight out to the spectator. Her large, wide-open eyes also look directly at the possible purchaser and the viewer of the image. Her figure leans slightly away from the vertical lines of the background. She does not appear unduly haggard, dirty, stressed or desperate. This does not seem to square with either Booth's 'terrible pictures' or Mandler's suggestion that the poor were forced to look desperate to receive relief.

Innumerable such flower girls and street sellers appeared on the walls of the Royal Academy and in reproduction at this time, by artists such as Mulready and Frith.[46]

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[44] Ibid., p176.
[45] *Night and Day* was a periodical edited and produced by Dr Barnardo. It carried items on child rescue work and philanthropic activity by other organisations.
[46] See discussion of my images 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4. Some fine art examples include Thomas Kennington's *A pinch of poverty*, 1891; A E Mulready's *London Flower Girl* of 1877; also Mulready's *A London Crossing*

Saccharine treatment of the pictured flower girl was very common, and it is difficult to grasp that philanthropy intended this particular rendering as the picturing of poverty. The caption hints at her neediness by referring to her 'plaintive' voice and 'pleading eyes'. This image does not seem to portray poverty but it was indeed used to draw attention to it. The accompanying poem is eleven pages away from the image. It tells us that this child's bright blue eyes have been 'robbed of childlike gladness' because she will be beaten by her mother if she fails to sell all her bunches[47]. The reader is told that the child is 'pinched and wretched in the wintry air' and ends with an appeal to 'Give the overflowings of your cups of blessing / To these little wand'rers who so need a friend.'[48] Barnardo's clear belief was that the plight of this pictured poor child would appeal to those who wanted to help street children. It is worth noting here that the poem leaves unclear whether the child and her mother were homeless or not. The wandering referred to may have implied street selling, not an itinerant life.

Barnardo returned to the theme of what pictured poverty for the child meant to audiences in 1888, with an image *(2.8)* showing a boy beggar and his younger sibling in the snow. Both children are barefoot and linked by a broom, the handle of which may, or may not be broken. The broom suggests that the boy is a crossing sweeper, a precarious occupation for very poor children.[49] This image seems straightforward enough, depicting as it does two impoverished children outside in inclement weather. The anticipated reaction to this image was not pity, however, but fear. The

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Sweeper and a Flower Girl of 1884. The latter painting was inscribed on the back in the artist hand: 'London Flower Girl and Street Arab – mutually giving and receiving aid – they set each other off like light and shade'.

[47] *Night and Day*, December 1883, p128, 'The Flower Girl'.

[48] Idem.

[49] The broom was a means of making an income for very poor children, so whether or not it was broken could have been very significant.

accompanying editorial was very direct about the possible negative reaction to the picture of the boy beggar and his brother or sister. 'May I guess at what you might say? You might say: "That picture ! of course I know what it means. That is a cad. He is begging. He begs if he thinks he can get something from you; when he sees it is no use, he calls out 'Toff! Toff!' and throws stones after you."'[50]

This article was written for a child audience, but - as frequently happened with philanthropic publications - there is a sense that what was being said was directed at parents and guardians as well. A later passage goes on to say that '... we have in our midst even grown men and women who never have a truly sympathetic thought for their suffering fellow creatures'[51]. The reader is told that the picture was drawn to encourage sympathy and empathy with those who suffered, and the article ends with the readers encouraged to remember the work of the Children's Homes 'which embody the sympathy of all of us'. Here is another example of an image which pictured children, but which was intended to represent the work of charities set up to help them.

From the last two examples discussed, it is possible to say that the pictorial record does indeed confirm Ross's view that the look, or the representation, of the impoverished child was viewed as a stimulus to charitable activity, but it also raised and addressed other, more complex issues. These issues will be disentangled and discussed in the next two chapters, which represent the core of this thesis.

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[50] *Bubbles*, (1888?), p195, 'On the Growth of Sympathy'. *Bubbles* was a annual for children with beautifully-coloured illustrations, produced by Barnardo's own publishing house. Although this article is signed by 'Frank Fingerpost', it is very much in Barnardo's own distinctive, passionate style.
[51] Idem.

One further critical element in Mandler's analysis of child supplicants, which takes the potential of the pictured child on to a different plane from an object of pity, must be mentioned here. He argues that the child was an ideal character in the theatre of charity, behind which could be hidden those needs and behaviours less desirable to the power holders in the charitable relationship. If the poor had something to hide from the donor or the charity worker, '[t]he best way to do this was to hide behind the ultimate natural dependent, the child'.[52] Certainly, audiences were not expected to object to the representation of the flower girl discussed above, even if the boy beggar aroused hostility.[53] If Mandler is right, then the pictured poor child represented not only his or her own poverty, but the needs of the poor in general. That the adult poor could not represent their own poverty and still obtain aid, can be attributed to the imposed, unequal relationship of power imposed upon them by the power-holders through the dispensing of charity. Mandler's use of the word 'dependent' may yet prove to be double-edged in its application to this study, since it has yet to be shown that this could be said to refer both the dependency of the poor on the generosity of the rich, as well as the dependency of the child upon those adults who created and nurtured his/her world. His use of the word 'natural' might prove equally significant, if the view is taken that the role of the pictured child in the philanthropic drama was, by its very nature, believed to be less artificial, and therefore, more authentic, more trustworthy. Mandler has created a picture of the theatre of charity where the consummately presentable, natural, acceptably needy child played a key part. Just what the pictorial record tells us about the Victorian child in the philanthropic drama will be considered next.

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[52] Mandler, op. cit, p22.
[53] See section 3.1.i of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

Saving Nobody's Children: pictured childhood in child rescue work 1869 - 1908

3 Introduction

Was there anything special and different about the way Victorian philanthropy depicted childhood when children were made a charitable priority? This question will now be answered by reviewing how children were pictured in imagery which was specifically dedicated to their interests; when child portrayal, ostensibly, furthered the cause of childhood. It would be impossible to unravel the contemporaneous meaning of such images without first providing some kind of historical and cultural context for childhood outside philanthropy. This context will be provided in the form of a thematic framework capable of giving access, where necessary, to histories of childhood.[1] The chosen themes are population, occupation, education and family. Each theme and its visual treatment will be discussed in turn. With this framework in place, the picturing of childhood in the work of child rescue and child saving will be examined in detail. This imagery will be discussed in relation to some adult attitudes towards children in mid to late Victorian society. The chapter will end with some conclusions on the limitations placed on pictured childhood, both by its use in child rescue work, and by the role played by child representation in this particular type of philanthropy.

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[1] In his review of literature on the history of children and childhood over the last twenty years, Harry Hendrick identifies five different approaches: the common-sense view of children's progress; oral history perspectives; the policies of childcare; a nuanced, critical, Foucaltian view; his own view of age-relations. See *Children, Childhood and English Society 1880-1990*, (Cambridge University Press, 1997). In order to gain a general sense of childhood in its social and cultural context, some use has been made of the progress histories, as they seem to chart the historical landmarks of adult-child relationships most simply for readers outside the discipline. In terms of theoretical approach, of course, this study attempts to provide a critical visual dimension to Hendrick's age-relations model.

3.1 Histories of childhood

Perceptions of charity and child care do appear to have shared the same trend towards public responsibility and away from personal prerogative in mid to late Victorian society. The shift in the relief of poverty away from private philanthropy and towards public arena, described in the previous chapter, is largely echoed in the development of approaches to child welfare between 1869 and 1908. The historian Hugh Cunningham has described the transition in the following terms:

> a period of child rescue lasting from about the middle of the nineteenth century for some thirty years, and a more ambitious and far-reaching child-saving period from the 1880s onwards.' '... In the period beginning in the 1880s there was a tipping of the balance in action on behalf of children from philanthropy to the state, and a growing involvement of professionals and experts in the task of saving the children.[2]

Cunningham here describes a process of institutionalisation for child welfare which began in the eighteen eighties, with a more sophisticated network of child-saving services assuming the mantle from earlier, more individualistic rescue campaigners. Harry Hendrick has taken this further, by concluding that not only care provision, but childhood itself, '... was in very large measure legally, legislatively, socially, medically, psychologically, educationally and politically institutionalised.'[3] His description of the shift as one of institutionalisation could be said to convey the patchwork nature of Victorian society's preoccupation with childhood. The state took an increasing interest in children as the nation's investment for the future, while working alongside what would now be called the voluntary sector. It would be fair to conclude that, in general, the child shifted from being an object of personal attention to one of organisational preoccupation for adults, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

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[2] Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500*, (Longman, 1995), p137.

In tracing how this shift occurred, a framework of themes has been chosen to guide the reader through some of the histories of childhood which chart the action taken by adults on behalf of children. Their customary pattern will be followed of discussing - in turn, if not necessarily in this order - children as a proportion of the population, their diminishing role as wage earners, their increased access to schooling, in their family life and welfare. This study is primarily concerned with discernible attitudes and perceptions rather than the recorded actions of social history. These historiographical themes will therefore be approached for what the facts reveal about adult views of the child. It will be argued that the status of children in society, in terms of how they were regarded by adults, remained largely unchanged. So, although it will be acknowledged that the child came to be seen as more of a state asset than a parental possession in legal, social and political terms, it will be asserted that his/her well-being remained conditional upon adult favour.[4] This assertion is made because there was little detectable movement in the belief that children were, as a group, politically non-existent and inactive, inhabiting a special world created by adults.

In 1894, the NSPCC review of its work over the previous decade made this powerlessness very succinct: "children were nobodies to the State. They were entitled to what their native force as children could win from their parents : that was all."[5] This quotation is used by the historian Pamela Horn, who goes on to suggest that the

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[3] Hendrick, op. cit, p15.

[4] The treatment of children as a group in the public domain showed marked improvement, particularly in their protection in the workplace, from mid-century onwards. By comparison, child stealing only became an indictable offence in English law for the first time in 1814. Prior to this, only those against whom it could be proved that they stole the child *for his/her clothes* could be punished. (Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, *Children in English Society Vol II From the eighteenth century to the Children's Act 1948*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).

NSPCC's concept of the child as a citizen found expression in the 1889 Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, which 'gave youngsters clearly defined rights in relation to their parents or guardians.'[6] It will be argued that the development of children's rights was not accompanied by a sea change in attitudes. It could be said that the philanthropic imagery dedicated to their cause shows that children as a group were indeed nobodies, not only to the state, but even to adults who cared passionately for their welfare. It will be argued that depictions of rescue and rehabilitation represented a collective childhood largely characterised by passivity and dependence. Such characteristics could be said to confirm the underlying unequal power relationships between children and adults as well as the particular suitability of childhood as a subject for philanthropic imagery.

3.1.i Children in the population

Historians of childhood have provided both numerical and proportional information about children in the population. Pamela Horn calculates that '... throughout the Victorian years about one person in three was under the age of fifteen. .' and estimates that the vast majority of them lived in towns.[7] Expressed another way, almost a third of the country's total population was composed of urban children. Charles Booth's 1889 study of poverty in London, and similar investigations elsewhere, concluded that a third rather than a tenth of urban populations lived below the poverty line. As children shared the poverty of their parents, it seems reasonable to deduce that a third of urban homes were impoverished, although it is difficult to be certain how many children grew

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[5] Quoted by Pamela Horn, *The Victorian Town Child*, (Sutton Publishing, 1997), p208.
[6] Idem.

up on the streets of the nation's cities. Many of them were defined as paupers through their registration for poor relief. In January 1898, it was calculated that some 240,000 children received indoor and outdoor poor relief, with a further 1,896 who were 'boarded out' outside their home Union. For the purposes of this study, recorded numbers - however inaccurate - are not as important as what was seen and believed to be the case. Oral histories have shown that children and their families were aware of the relationship between the appearance of poverty and social standing: '... clothing was a clear pointer to social standing, and boys with much darned shirts would nonetheless be encouraged to wear a celluloid collar and tie to school...'.[8]

Frederick Greenwood made a similar point in the *Illustrated London News* for 1892 in an article entitled 'Workhouse Humiliations'. He condemned the impact of workhouse dress on 'poor little workhouse girls', saying it resulted in 'bitterly suppressed girlhood'. He then elaborated on his understanding of the link between relative social status and dress codes:

> of course, I do not suggest that the children of the workhouse should be decked out like the child of the suburban villa, as some will say I do; but I am sure no harm would be done - I am sure good would be done - if these poor children had the innocent inexpensive pleasure of a little variety ... .so as to be remotely like the other little girls whom they met on the way.[9]

Frederick Greenwood seemed to be arguing for the right of the pauper child to look more like, but not identical to, other children from more affluent backgrounds. He also assumed a connection between girlhood, personal appearance and a sense of well-being.

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[7] Ibid., p3.
[8] Ibid., p10.
[9] *Illustrated London News*, February 20, 1892, p235. 'Workhouse Humiliations' by Frederick Greenwood.

However his remarks are interpreted, much evidence suggests that there were large numbers of impoverished-looking urban children with a degree of visibility which adult observers seemed to find disturbing.[10]

The question of children's visibility was further connected to their location, and to what can be called the zones of childhood. The adult discomfort just referred to could be attributed to the sight of children in the street, rather than in school or in the family home.[11] It could be said that the shock caused to adults arose from the sight of children - or their visual representation - in the wrong zone. So far, it has been argued that ambivalence and qualification informed attitudes towards the street as a suitable location for childhood. So it could be said that the issue of children's visibility as a group was emotively charged in a manner which could not be revealed by population study alone. If this is accepted, then the historian Philippe Aries's notion of childhood as a form of quarantine in family and school, in waiting for adult life is too neutral in approach for this study's purposes.[12] Although his work discusses the visual depiction of childhood, it deals primarily with its subject matter rather than uses and responses. Modern historical treatment of the child population seems to pursue a separate and distinct discourse from the contemporaneous meaning assigned to the pictured child. It

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[10] In her chapter on 'Middle Class Children', Pamela Horn draws on oral histories to argue that professional parents often trained their children to accept 'spartan living conditions'.(p21) It is fascinating - but to be expected - that this feature of life for the middle class child is totally absent from philanthropic imagery, as this chapter attempts to demonstrate. Child rescue workers would claim *in writing* that wealthy children were harshly treated but the purpose of their *visual* representation was to provide contrast and stimulate the conscience. In her chapter on 'Rescue and Reform' Pamela Horn quotes Elaine Hadley's comment that it was not "the rags and hungry eyes' that stimulated philanthropic initiatives but a vision of the "jaunty clothing and chop-house feasts" of the undeserving young delinquent.(p184) The visual evidence of this study suggests that fear of out-of-control juveniles was very real, but does not substantially support Hadley's alternative view.

[11] See my discussion of images 2.1, 2.4, 2.8, 3.3, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.2, 4.4, 4.9, 4.10, 4.12, 5.9, 5.10, 5.16, 5.17.

[12] See p397 of Philippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962), the conclusion of his chapter on 'School and the Duration of Childhood'.

will be argued that this also occurred with other themes running through histories of childhood.

3.1.ii Children at work

One zone where children became markedly less visible was in the workplace. Horn expresses this in fairly neutral terms and related it to general '... changes in the attitude towards children themselves during the second half of the nineteenth century. Gradually society moved away from an emphasis on the importance of their economic role ...'.[13] By 1869, substantial legislation and changes in employment practice had occurred - industry by industry - which restricted the employment of children, either under a certain age, or altogether. The 1871 Census of population revealed that (officially) less than 1% of children between five and nine years old were in employment; with 32.1% of boys aged ten to fourteen in paid work and 20.5% of girls. The comparative figures for this age group in 1901 were 21.9% of boys and 12% of girls. The official figures suggest a fifty per cent drop in children in paid work, although their numbers in unregulated workshops remained uncurbed into the nineties.[14] In 1890, the Berlin international congress on juvenile employment agreed twelve as a minimum working age for factory children. However, Britain did not comply with this until the turn of the century. In the year of the congress, only Italy had a lower age of factory child (nine years) than Britain.

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[13] Horn, op. cit, p10.

[14] Lionel Rose argues that children were exploited at work, at home and in school, and views the drop of child workers and the advent of comprehensive schooling from 1870 with some cynicism. For Rose, the piecemeal improvement in the entitlement of all children to some education can be seen as a means to contain children, to regulate their behaviour under controlled conditions and to produce more malleable

With the attention given by reformers and legislators to the appalling working conditions of child factory workers prior to 1869, it would be easy to overlook the recorded pattern of paid child labour in the 1870s. Even in 1871, almost three times as many boys under fifteen worked in agriculture as in the cotton industry, while nearly twice as many girls were domestic servants rather than cotton operatives.

Significantly, this is not reflected in depictions of children at work. When the philanthropic representation of working children is examined in greater detail, images of young male farm labourers and young female domestics are conspicuous by their absence. Instead, there are innumerable child street traders or salvaged boys in training to be tailors, carpenters and, above all, shoe blacks.[15] These images fall into two categories, both to do with visibility. Either a child was depicted as working on the street in an occupation that aroused adult horror or disapproval, or the child was shown working at a trade bestowed by the child rescue workers/child savers. Both types of representation seem to have arisen out of an intent to influence philanthropic audiences, and neither could be said to reflect the actual recorded patterns of paid child work.

In this respect, it is not without significance that the 1889 Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act - a piece of welfare law, not occupational legislation - curbed the work of

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citizens of the future. See *The Erosion of Childhood Child oppression in Britain 1860-1918*, (Routledge, 1991).

[15] See 6.2.ii of this study and my discussion of images 6.2 – 6.9, 1.4, 3.5. Horn argues that training as a shoeblack did little to prepare boys for worthwhile work in later life. In her view this explained the fading away of the shoeblack brigades.

street children under sixteen (girls) and fourteen (boys) respectively.[16] From this brief consideration of children in the workplace, it could be concluded that there was little relationship between the occupations portrayed, and those employing, children. As with children in the population, contemporaneous visual treatments of child workers appear to have pursued a separate discourse.

3.1.iii Children and schooling

As the numbers of children in the workforce fell, their entitlement to schooling rose. This schooling was neither full-time nor free. Pinchbeck and Hewitt have described the Education Act of 1870 as an attempt to make the education of the poor a national duty. The voluntary Ragged School system had been in existence since the 1840s to offer schooling to the poorest children, but Lord Shaftesbury, who was closely associated with this movement and with the reform of factory conditions for children, was opposed to compulsory education. He believed it constituted an infringement of parental rights and would encourage dependence on the state. The 1870 Education Act aimed to provide elementary schooling for all, a goal finally achieved in 1880 for children under ten years old.

The education provision had to dovetail with existing half-time provision for young workers, a highly complicated system which puzzled parents who wanted their children to join the legal workforce. Lionel Rose has given an example of the system's complexity: 'the 1870 Education Act gave school boards permissive powers to make

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[16] The exceptions to this were theatre children, not protected until 1903. This issue will be discussed in chapter five of this study, when aspects of Carolyn Steedman's ideas on the child as the object of the adult

education compulsory to any age up to 13 in their districts, but they could allow part-time or full-time exemptions from the age of 10 where the local learning age was set above 10.'[17] Rose goes on to chart the legislation governing schooling provision until the next century, with compulsory schooling for the under-tens in 1880 extended to the under-twelves in 1899. Both Rose and Horn discuss the conditional status of childhood itself in relation to entitlement to, or enforcement of, a national school system. Horn points out that only the public schools had a school leaving age of eighteen, while Rose draws attention to the influence on the education provision of employers, who came to expect literate and numerate recruits to the workforce. Although any thorough discussion of Victorian educational reform is extremely complicated, it has been considered sufficient for the purposes of this study to conclude that economic and social imperatives did help shape children's entitlement to education. The philanthropic picturing of childhood education often made nostalgic reference to pupil mischief in the schoolroom or substituted the child rescue campaigner for the teacher of the street waif.[18] As with images of child workers, these representations did not reflect recorded reality so much as present a series of pictures which guided the viewer along the path of contemporaneous attitudes towards childhood.[19]

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gaze will be considered.

[17] Rose, op. cit, p108.

[18] Dr Thomas Barnardo first taught in a Stepney Ragged school before starting his East End Mission in 1866. He is depicted in the schoolroom with 'Our First Arab' in the pages of *Night and Day* in the 1870s. The same image funds its way into temperance magazines - *Onward* of 1877 and the *Band of Hope Treasury* of 1878.

[19] For some examples of images picturing pupil mischief, see *The British Workman*, 1892, p40; *Highways & Hedges*, 1897, p70; the *Band of Hope Review*, 1893, p28. For the charity worker as teacher, see *Dr Barnardo's Annual Report* for 1874-5, pxxiv; Barnardo image archive negative D40 (nd), Barkingside; *Band of Hope Treasury*, February 1873, title page.

3.1.iv Children at home

With reducing numbers of children in the workplace and increasing numbers in some form of compulsory schooling, the remaining acceptable zone for children during the eighties and nineties was the family home.[20] A strong relationship existed between levels of child welfare in the home and legislative reform for the protection of children. Protection was required against parental abuse and cruelty from those paid to provide childcare.[21] 1870 saw the formation of the Infant Life Protection Society, which worked towards the registration of carers. This parliamentary legislation was enacted in 1872 in the Infant Life Protection Act. Following the formation of the Liverpool Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in 1883, and the national organisation in 1889, Mundella's bill was introduced in parliament on behalf of the NSPCC. Mundella presented the case that "... children have very few rights in England ... and by this Bill I am really only anxious that we should give the same protection that we give under the Cruelty to Animals Act and the Contagious Diseases Act for Domestic Animals."[22] The first Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act of 1889 made a distinction between wilful cruelty and neglect or ignorance. It removed parental rights from irresponsible parents. By 1891, the Custody of Children Act prevented these same parents from reclaiming their children, either for the purposes of work or money.

In 1895 the NSPCC received its Royal Charter, which incorporated two main objectives: to prevent the public and private wrongs of her [the country's] children and

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[20] See my discussion of images 1.12, 1.13, 2.4, 3.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4 & 8.2.

[21] Pinchbeck and Hewitt give an account of the relationship between parental neglect and carer cruelty in chapter XX 'The prevention of cruelty and neglect', including the incidence of baby-farming, when 60-90% of unwanted children met their deaths, according to an 1872 Select Committee Report. Sometimes this would benefit parents in the form of insurance money as well as the removal of an unwanted mouth to feed.

[22] Quoted by Pinchbeck and Hewitt, op. cit, p625.

the corruption of their morals; to take action for the enforcement of the laws for their protection. This Charter acknowledged the working relationship between a voluntary enforcement agency and the state legislature in the field of child protection. By the first decade of the next century, it was fully recognised that the State was responsible for the health and efficiency of its child members, not least because it benefited from their well-being. As well as setting a juvenile justice system in place, the 1908 Children's Act took away poverty as a defence against the charge of child neglect. Parents and guardians now had to make provision for their children or procure relief for them under the poor law provision. Failure to do so would result in them being held liable for cruelty. Children had now achieved the legal status of a state responsibility when their parents failed to care for them. Their rights to protection had advanced considerably, but they continued to be rights granted and administered by adults on their behalf. This was often carried out with great compassion and benevolence. The attitude of the Reverend Stephenson, of the National Children's Homes, attests to this.

> Children are necessarily dependent on others. They are intended to be so, just as truly as the vine is intended to be dependent on wall or tree.' ... 'The child's nature is affected for good or for evil by the character of those from whom it has received its ideas, and drawn its mental spirit and nourishment.' ... 'The great problem of modern education is - how the children may be snatched from the vicious influence of their natural association, and surrounded with such ennobling and purifying influences as will mould their character according to the divine ideal of what children and men should be. ... This is our work at the Children's Home.[23]

Philanthropic organisations played a substantial part in picking up the work of childcare when parents and the state failed children. Only the NSPCC was given an investigative

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[23] *The Children's Advocate*, September 1872, title page. This passage also suggests that Stephenson saw the work of child rescue as a form of moral education, or corrective education. Children were blank sheets, or the *tabula rasa* on which adults would devise and inscribe the citizens of the future.

enforcement role and sometimes child rescue and child saving organisations strayed beyond the notional bounds of their remit.

3.1.v Child history and imagery

In the brief discussion of each childhood history theme, it has been argued that contemporaneous images did not necessarily provide a visual documentation of recorded fact. Rather, they seemed to follow separate and discreet paths. This divergence has been commented on before. Roy Parker has pointed out that '[p]opular impressions of child care history have been shaped by compelling images' and has alerted scholars to the dangers of assigning a neutral, reflective role to such representations.[24] Parker gives two examples of the dangers involved, one concerning the type of child in need, the other relating to the chosen and preferred moment in the saving process. He argues that popular understanding of the history of childcare draws on the regular depiction of orphans, who actually constituted only a small minority of children in care.[25] Many children were described erroneously as orphans in order to gain admission into care. They would be described as 'orphaned in one parent', a sad contradiction in terms. Put another way, it could be said that the needs of children, and even the nature of childhood itself, were changed, perhaps distorted, by the workings of philanthropy.

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[24] Roy Parker, *Away from home A History of Child Care*, (Barnardo's, 1990).

[25] Parker argues that images of childcare should be critically distanced from histories of childcare and that their own cultural history should be acknowledged. While agreeing that such images do not 'illustrate' child care history with any accuracy, they do merit closer and considered attention for the role they performed in the philanthropic process. He finds such images to be simplistic in intent and sentimental. It will be argued that both of these assessments are open to challenge, particularly when images which evolved and re-appeared over decades are scrutinised carefully..

This study agrees with Parker in his identification of this distortion, personified in the representation of the orphan. It could be said that the street waif and the abandoned child were pictured in very similar ways. It will be argued that in pictorial terms the repeated appearance of the child alone in philanthropic imagery confirmed its *de facto* power to appeal. Subsequent sections of this chapter will describe and analyse the recurring image of the solitary child in detail. Roy Parker also describes the different ways in which children at risk would move through the child-saving process. He points out that the depiction of one type of intervention only was - and is - preferred by child-saving organisations. As well as being picked up from the streets by rescuers, children might also be referred by individual child saving supporters through local networks, or through other organisations[26]. Referral seems to have amounted to subterfuge in cases where Homes would not accept any illegitimate children, or more than one child born out of wedlock to the same mother. Although such incidents seem full of pictorial potential, they were seldom depicted in philanthropic imagery. The picturing of the solitary child, in desperate need of rescue and at the point of discovery, dominated the cast of visual characters. In his history of child rescue, Terry Philpot has referred to Parker's work and confirmed that collection, or rescue, was largely replaced by referral (principally to the Poor Law Guardians and the NSPCC) from the 1890s onwards.[27] Yet again, it will be seen that the picturing of children and childhood in child rescue work did not constitute so much a passive reflection of recorded reality as an active and partial instigator of viewer response.

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[26] In particular by Poor Law Guardians to Catholic agencies.
[27] Terry Philpot, *Action for Children*, (Lion Publishing, 1994), p30.

3.2 Images in child rescue work

It is these images *in* child rescue work - rather than *of* child rescue work - that will now be discussed. Roy Parker makes a useful distinction when he states that 'in order to be *saved*, children had to be *rescued* from the degradations that were distorting their lives as well as denying their spiritual salvation.'[28] This distinction implied the sequential nature of child rescue work, where the child was identified as being at risk, was found, rescued then rehabilitated. This study will now look at the role played by the pictured child in the work of two organisations, the National Children's Homes and Dr Barnardo's Homes.

The Children's Home was founded by the Reverend Thomas Bowman Stephenson and two friends, with their first Home opening in Lambeth, London in 1869. Dr Thomas Barnardo started his work in 1866 with the Juvenile East End Mission and opened his first Children's Home in Stepney Causeway, London in 1870. Both set about finding donors and subscribers to support their work, initially through subscribers magazines and annual reports. As their work progressed, they organised appeal booklets, concerts, lantern lectures, dinners and street collections. All of these activities generated a body of visual imagery and accompanying text. Each man retained a close editorial interest and control over this material, until colleagues took over the role at the turn of the century.[29] Their approaches to representing the work of child rescue had both similarities and differences[30]. Not all the imagery used depicted children and childhood. In the case of Stephenson in particular, there were depictions of far-away lands, steamships and sailing boats, peoples and cultures, biblical scenes. There were

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[28] Parker, op. cit, p16.
[29] Stephenson retired in 1900 and died in 1912; Barnardo died in 1905.

images drawing on popular perceptions of childhood, such as fluffy animals and Christmas scenes, often accompanied by moral tales. (*Image 3.1)*

Writing in the January 1872 edition of *The Children's Advocate*, Stephenson explained that

> soon after The Children's Home was established it was found necessary to create a periodical medium of communication between the Home and those who were supporting it with their prayers and their money ... it shall be sold through the ordinary trade channels, and appeal to the public at large. Observe the pictures will not be forgotten. In every number there will be several woodcuts; and by arrangements we have been fortunate to make, many of them will be by the best artists.[31]

He returned to the theme and expanded upon it in January 1875.

> We hope to give ... the fathers and mothers and children of happy homes ... month by month, "Facts and Incidents" which will advocate the claims of the orphan and neglected children of the land far better than any arguments. ... The very little ones will not be forgotten ... and to these we hope to appeal by our pictures, even before they read the words.[32]

This would certainly seem to indicate that the purpose of a subscriber magazine was to provide a means by which the work of child saving could be communicated to existing and potential supporters. From the beginning the image seems to have been given a job to do, although it would be wrong to assume too quickly that adult readers read the text

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[30] Stephenson drew on the work of a wider number of artists compared to Barnardo, whose main artist was called A Pearse.
[31] *The Children's Advocate*, January 1872, p1.
[32] Ibid., January 1875, p2.

while small children looked at the pictures. Extensive use was made of visual material for both adult and child audiences[33].

Both Barnardo and Stephenson relied pictorially on the representation of a ragged street child, a boy alone, throughout their period of editorial control. These representations were called Nobody's Children and The Orphan Boy respectively. It will be argued that, essentially, they were one and the same generic image. Both could be said to have drawn on the same pictorial features to create the effect anticipated and desired by their users. Even when substantially modified, these features were sustained over decades. Taken together, Nobody's Children and The Orphan Boy could be said to have a joint pictorial life history. This is a little like saying that a person's appearance may change substantially over a lifetime, but it is still the same person. An analysis of the two representations which made up this image, and its life history over a forty year period will be offered, before elaborating further on its features and themes.

3.2.i Nobody's Children

The reference to Nobody's Children first appeared as the title of an appeals booklet produced by Barnardo in 1872. This was only one of many occasions on which Barnardo linked together the unease and concern which he and others expressed for children without adults to care for and protect them, with his work for street children. Not all children to be found on London's streets lacked parents and a home. It seems reasonable to assume that Barnardo linked homelessness and orphanhood together

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[33] For more detail on the role played by periodical images for adult audiences - including non-readers - see 4.2-4.2.ii on editorial approaches by *The British Workman*.

because of his early experiences of what he called waifdom. The Reverend Stephenson recorded in the National Children's Homes magazine how Barnardo had been unable to save a boy called Carrots. Carrots was abused by an alcoholic mother who made contact with him only when she needed money for drink. Barnardo found him sleeping rough, but did not have room for him in the Home. The boy froze to death in his barrel.[34]

The appeals booklet called *Nobody's Children* was published in the same year as Stephenson's account of Carrot's death. It carried the following subtitle; 'what is being done to save the arab children of our great city to which is added a chapter on the waifs and strays of London Streets', 'with two excellent photographs taken from life.' If the title of the booklet is adopted for the image itself, then its evolution can be traced, through variations in medium, composition and minor content to 1905. The same fundamental visual features of Nobody's Children as an image were repeated and sustained in Barnardo Home material throughout this time.[35]

The frontispiece photograph *(image 3.2)* to the booklet shows the single figure of a child of indeterminate gender in an empty non-specific space, which probably was Barnardo's photographic studio[36]. A horizontal background line runs behind the child

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[34] See *The Children's Advocate*, April 1872, p3 for Stephenson's account of this experience. No blame was attached by Stephenson to Barnardo for Carrot's death. Barnardo only had five places in his Home to offer when he was faced with seventy three urchins sleeping in boxes and barrels. It is more likely that in telling Carrot's story, he intended to shock his readers with the vulnerability and risk of the street child's situation and the pressure that all child saving charities were under to take children in.

[35] With modifications, 'Nobody's Children' appeared in material from 1874, 1875, 1883/4, 1885/6, 1886/7, 1887/8, 1894 and 1905.

[36] Having retrieved children from the street, brought them back to the Home for delousing, a bath and a bed, it was Barnardo's habit to redress them in their rags for his celebrated - some would say infamous - 'Before' snapshots. These, with accompanying 'After' photographs played a role in his publicity for the Home's work. This study is primarily concerned with drawn and painted philanthropic images, although

at waist level, indicating that he (his gender was given in the text) is lying on the floor, propped up on his right arm, the other arm lies on his folded legs, which emerge from his rags. The child's head is slightly bent and he seems to gaze to his left, down to the ground beyond his knees. A heavy, reinforced horizontal line runs some distance above his head, further emphasising he is on the ground, below, fallen.

This is not an image of sharp or dramatic contrasts, the greatest darkness being in the eye sockets, the upper horizontal line and the shadows beneath the rags around the waist. This photograph was intended to represent all that was worst about the street child's previous existence. It was accompanied by a poem, which described all waifs as unwanted and homeless. 'They have no home: the hare has its form and the fox its burrow / but they make a form or burrow where they can - / they are Nobody's Children.' While the text seems to suggest that street children had less home life than wild animals[37], the picturing of the waif was selective in its visual treatment of child abandonment. In common with fine art treatments of such themes, audiences were thought to share an aversion to depictions of true horror. Most children depicted as at risk and inviting physical or moral rescue were barefoot and ragged, although few were shown as emaciated and dirty. Whatever their accompanying texts described, most representations of vulnerable children in child rescue work pictured them with rounded limbs and clean faces.

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reference will be made to the 'Before/After' photographic material in discussing the Barnardo Arbitration case of 1877 and his attitudes to visual fact and fiction in chapter six.

[37] Although the overall implication was that street children were beyond comforts of any description, one possible interpretation suggests that the wild animals chosen for this text could have carried their own meanings for audiences. The fox was the hunted prey of the leisured middle classes; it was not hunted for food. The hare could be eaten as well as hunted for sport by working people. The interpretation then

Material which was based closely on photographs taken on admission into the Home could retain some vestiges of the children's poor physical condition. On one occasion, Dr Barnardo instructed his artist to produce an engraving *(image 3.3)* from the original which would be 'a vivid and lifelike picture of this boy'[38]. Barnardo's instructions seem to have been followed in most respects. The ragged child was pictured still slumped over his knees. It could be said that there was one discrepancy. The sharpness of his partially-revealed shoulder blade has been softened between photograph and engraving. This study has uncovered only one published portrayal of an emaciated child. *(Image 3.4)*

Fine art treatments of poverty, particularly impoverished children, tended towards the picturesque when artists sought favourable critical acclaim. Quite apart from artistic intention, fine art and philanthropy's pictures could be said to have shared a similarity of anticipated viewer response. Although some charitable images were more heavily used than others, depictions of the ragged, lonely child were equally in evidence in galleries, newspapers and appeals material.

Before following the subsequent history of how Nobody's Children were represented in Barnardo fundraising, much can be learned from the companion photograph in the same 1872 booklet. This photograph *(image 3.5)* was intended to depict the saved child as a complete contrast to the pictured child at risk. This image is contained within the same roman window contour. The darkness of the top horizontal line has gone and has been replaced, in terms of tonal effect, by the garment that rests on the knee of the child. His

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shifts to a sense that street children moved outside class categories in becoming homeless, a further suggestion of their social marginalisation.

head and torso is now positioned above the dark area of the picture, and so could be taken as suggesting that the child has risen above what previously oppressed him. He now sits upright and looks into the camera lens, and so, at the spectator. The arms and hands are active, in use, as the young tailor starts work, seated in the traditional cross-legged pose. The rags are gone, the feet are covered, all conveying the impression of a working apprentice lad. The photograph was called 'The Delightful Present' and readers were told that this was the same boy who had been pictured as representing Nobody's Children. The reference to hunted wild animals is repeated in the accompanying quotation: 'should we not gratefully praise the Lord for being permitted to rescue / from the snare of the fowler, and lead into paths of faith and hope, / boys such as the one whose happy face greets you above ?' The wild animal has been turned back into a child through Christian salvation.

The boy pictured in the delightful present could be seen as representing the opposite of the child in the dreadful past through a series of pictorial polarities. Horizontal stance opposes vertical and upright; active and employed has replaced passive and useless; respectable clothing has been substituted for rags over nakedness. The averted gaze has gone, as the boy in the present looks directly into the eyes of the spectator. Those essential pictorial features of the solitary, ragged child, present in so much pictured childhood, are further confirmed by their opposites in this case. These oppositions could also be seen as a paradigm of the child rescue process itself, as the lost, aimless, cowed, unhappy being was transformed by the rescuer into someone who appeared saved, upright, happy and active.

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[38] *Night and Day*, 1881, p7. The engraving appeared on the title page with the caption 'Crouching on a doorstep in Flower and Dean Street'. The original photograph appeared in 1871, with the caption 'Lost!'.

The defining characteristics of Nobody's Children next appeared in Dr Barnardo's *Annual Report* of 1874-5 on the work of the East End Juvenile Mission. On a page headed 'A Midnight Discovery and its results', the reading subscriber was shown a child sleeping in a doorway. *(Image 3.6)* His pose is now completely horizontal, the head rests on the arm, though the lower torso, knees and feet are very reminiscent of the 1872 photograph. This child is definitely outside, sleeping without covers, dressed in rags, hemmed in by stone blocks and the foot of a door, all of which reinforce the smallness of the child and the power of hostile surroundings. The area of greatest tonal contrast is the dark triangle above the child's head and the pale pavement beneath it. This could be said to add to the sense of oppression within the picture. This depiction is called 'On the streets ! "Sleeping out"'. It was repeated in 1874, with the caption 'Ye have done it unto me'.

With minor modifications to the background, the same image became the front cover illustration of the *Annual Report* for 1883-4 and was given what is arguably its most revealing caption, "Naked, and ye clothed me". This Biblical quotation could be said to provide the link between Barnardo in the role of rescuer and his vocation as God's servant.[39] On a less allusive level, the reader was offered a caption which did very little to describe what was going on in the image. It referred to an act which had happened

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[39] Having been agnostic in his teens, at seventeen Thomas Barnardo converted to membership of the Plymouth Brethren, a little known form of evangelism with American origins. His fiery sense of doing God's work on the streets and in everyday life did not always sustain him when encountering aggressive and importunate street boys. In her 1987 account of Barnardo's work, June Rose quotes from the biography written, in part, by Barnardo's widow : "the boys so annoyed me, gathering round me in the streets that I lost patience and had all I could do to keep from striking them with the walking stick. If I had, it would have killed my work with the Lord, so I left it at home after that." Quoted on p26 of *For the sake of the children Inside Dr Barnardo's : 120 years of caring for children*, (Hodder & Stoughton, 1987). A similar reaction to street children in the flesh is told of the Reverend Stephenson, in *A man for all children The story of Thomas Bowman Stephenson*, (NCH, 1968).

elsewhere, outside the pictorial boundary. The act of clothing could have been intended as both literal and spiritual. Above all, whether carried out by a deity or a representative of redemptive power, this picture does not depict the act of rescue. There is no rescuer figure, rather the viewer is presented with the object of rescue. This becomes a critical factor when concluding whether the discourse enacted in the image of the solitary child is one of rescue or saving.

At this stage it could be said that the pictured ragged child alone represented the object of the act, not the activity, whatever its fundamental nature. Again, the caption drew attention to the idea of a child without clothes, while at the same time suggesting that the action of rescue and salvation had already taken place. The image meanwhile, presented the spectator, as on other occasions, with a ragged child sleeping rough - before any kind of enactment had occurred. The visual drama was concerned with what Barnardo called 'the raw material with which we work' on many occasions. It could be assumed that since the depicted child was not naked in a visual or literal sense, that his/her emotional and spiritual nakedness was being implied. The caption puts words into the mouth of the child, a passive, helpless creature. With caption and image performing quite separate functions, the paradigm of child rescue emerges once more, with the child depicted as the victim of deprivation, acknowledging the salvation provided by the adult rescuer. This particular caption did not appear again, while this version of Nobody's Children made one final appearance in *The News* for 1905, when that newspaper reviewed Barnardo's work on his death.

Nobody's Children underwent considerable changes during the eighties while the fundamental features already described remained recognisable. An 1886 version

(image 3.7) shows the pose was reversed and the head was tilted back. Again, a dark area oppresses the child's head. The eyes are closed, perhaps in death rather than sleep. The change of head position, combined with the appalling weather, suggest a fatality rather than exhaustion. In the absence of rescue, the child is depicted as dying on the street without the benefit of spiritual salvation. There are many Barnardo portrayals in both text and image of the rescued child converted to Christianity on his deathbed.[40] The young heathen was usually male, while a young girl would often plead his cause, would intercede with the authorities and put the case for his innate worth. This version of Nobody's Child includes the word 'wrecked' within its borders, perhaps suggesting that a life has been ruined in a spiritual as well as a physical sense. The same treatment of mortality themes reappeared in the Annual Reports for 1885-6 and 1886-7, with the caption 'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, Bless the Lads !'. Its next reappearance was in 1887-8, as a front cover illustration for an appeals booklet entitled 'Saved from a Crime'. A further revised version appeared on the inside front cover of the 28th Anniversary Programme in 1894. Whatever the variation of visual detail or the redemptive allusions of its many captions, it could be said that the picturing of the solitary, ragged child served as a constant reminder to the spectator of the raw material of child rescue work.

It has been argued so far that Nobody's Children was an image intended to represent not only the object of rescue but also the perceived plight of the endangered child. This pictured child was alone, passive, useless, lying down, ragged, with gaze averted, outside, dwarfed by surroundings and threatened by the elements. A central claim of

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[40] A chapter of Philippe Aries's *Centuries of Childhood* is devoted to the depiction of children and childhood in western visual art. Aries describes how the child image was used to represent the soul,

this study is that these were the essential features of the pictured child which conveyed a sense of childhood on the brink of disaster, requiring philanthropic intervention. They alerted the spectator to the conversion of the loved child, cared for within the shelter of the family into a nameless individual who was set apart from society. The isolated child was then depicted as excluded - as Roy Parker has observed - as a precursor to the act of rescue.

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human spirituality and the breath of life itself. At the moment of conception as well as death, a figure of a naked child would be depicted as hovering near the adult mouth, about to enter or depart for ever.

3.2.ii The Orphan Boy

The Reverend Stephenson made use of the isolated child image as frequently as Dr Barnardo. The image *(3.8)* of the Orphan Boy first appeared in the magazine of the National Children's Home - *The Children's Advocate* - in 1880[41]. The Orphan Boy possessed the longevity of Nobody's Children and many, if not all of its resonances. It was re-used repeatedly, particularly as the front cover illustration for the annual reports of the National Children's Homes. By comparison, this image of the street boy alone does not evolve through several permutations. Rather, it will be argued that The Orphan Boy made sustained visual reference to issues of class and wealth and was intimately concerned with spiritual salvation. This boy is separated from the wealth of the indifferent middle class passing by, using the lamp post as a pictorial device. He is also cut off from the Christian singing inside the school house by the railings and a high window. He cups his ear towards the sound of salvation. The Orphan Boy is outside, literally without, without home, family, religion, warmth and love. The light streams down from the room above, a visual motif used repeatedly in both Barnardo and Stephenson material, associating Christian enlightenment with the warmth of the home fire and the light of dinner candles.

This boy is ragged and barefoot, while he is depicted as clean, with rounded limbs. His sweetish, stylised features, with one eye attached to a single line for a nose surmounting a cupid's bow mouth, were found repeatedly in representations of children in charitable imagery and places in the cultural domain. Both Barnardo and Stephenson went to some lengths on occasions to explain in their editorials how images of children were 'taken from the life'. This seems quite difficult to accept at face value, so problematic

that it requires careful disentanglement to unravel fact from fiction, the real from the ideal.[42] An attempt to unravel these complex matters in more detail will be made later in this study. With its lack of specific, individual identity and what might be seen as its indiscriminate popular use, the face of the Orphan Boy could be called a representation of universal childishness. Such an emblematic, symbolic treatment, could be said to take the Orphan Boy beyond a representation of his class and even his station in society as a dispossessed child.

It was previously suggested that the horizontal pose of Nobody's Children marked the pictured object of rescue out as passive and overwhelmed by circumstances. The upright, active stance of the Orphan Boy might seem to contradict this. He is depicted as listening to the sound of Christian hymn-singing, so there is a sense in which the picture keeps open the hope of his salvation. Unfortunately, the accompanying poem, called 'Safely Home' guided the reader to the death of the child. In this case, 'home' and 'safety' referred to an afterlife in a Christian heaven. The words of the last two verses rehearsed a fatal drama which was not substantiated by the image.

Ere dawned another Sabbath day,
The orphan boy a dying lay,
Yet full of joy was he:
And lying on his wretched bed,
"I have no fear of death," he said,
"For Jesus died for me."

And when the children sang their song
About the glorious blood-washed throng,
White-robed and undefiled;
His spirit passed from earth away,

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[41] *The Children's Advocate*, March 1880, p36.
[42] See chapters five, six and seven of this study.

To dwell with Jesus Christ for aye,
Thrice happy orphan child.[43]

One possible resolution of the contradiction between the boy's active stance in the image and his death without rescue in the text was that it was believed his salvation would come through the act of listening to the Christian message and committing himself to Christ. For the users of the Orphan Boy, physical rescue was thought to be impossible, but his spiritual salvation was accomplished. The contradiction could be said to depend on a perception that rescue and salvation were indivisible. Indeed, the distinction between saving souls and solving social ills was strongly rejected by the Reverend Stephenson. He observed that they were so divided in the public mind, but he argued that '... all true charity is religious..' and '... that every thing in a true man's life is part of his service to God.'[44] If Stephenson's observations on the public perception of child rescue work were accurate, then this placed his repeated use of the Orphan Boy in a contradictory position between user and viewer. According to the beliefs of its user, it suggested the success of child rescue work, since the religious objective was achieved. If the general public did indeed make a clear distinction between the rescue of the body and the salvation of the soul, then this offers a plausible reason why the pictured Orphan Boy was required to keep open the possibility of physical rescue. It will be argued in later chapters that this was not the only way in which the charitable image would be given a different job to do from the text, a demarcation of labour which was of fundamental significance in the picturing of Victorian age relations.

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[43] *The Children's Advocate*, March 1880, p36.
[44] *The Children's Advocate*, January 1873, title page.

3.2.iii Children Outside

Not all depictions of children outside were threatening to the well-being of the child. It has already been suggested that where children were depicted as being in need, or the apparent implication was that the securities of childhood were under threat, the likely location was outside. This outside was of a particular kind. It was the outside of unforgiving surfaces, of rain, snow, wind and cold, of darkness, of unknown threats. By contrast, many philanthropic images of the child outside conveyed the impression of a far more benign environment. Compared to the lone street child, wealthy children were depicted going out to post a letter, bowling hoops under Nanny's watchful eye, getting their shoes blacked by a respectful boy shoeblack, or bestowing charity on less-fortunate children. So it could be said that there were two separate discourses to the outside, one of them dangerous, the other benign.[45] Each had its own discreet visual features, although they were occasionally depicted side by side, in the form of a cutaway illustration. The result of mixing elements from these separate discourses could be to cancel their impact, or convert them into the opposite visual narrative. This was the case when the idealised child was brought back across the threshold of home and into the arms of an equally sentimentalised mother. In one image *(3.9)* the arm of the child breaks into the area of the picture which portrays the snow and cold of winter.[46] Although her arms are bare, she wears boots, ribbons and a pinafore. Her body is exactly framed by the window lintel and she is securely supported by her mother's body within the safety of the home environment. The overall impression

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[45] A further division can be made between the significance of the urban and rural environments for readers and audiences. Rescued children were depicted enjoying trips to the countryside and the seaside organised by the Homes. These images carry echoes of pastoral idylls and look forward to the Mcmillan garden school of the 1890s, the Open Air Schools beyond and the Settlement summer camps of the next century. For a description of one campaigner's attempt to re-create the countryside in the town for impoverished children, see Carolyn Steedman, *Margaret McMillan 1860-1931,* (Virago, 1990).

which this representation seems to create is that of a child experiencing the benign outside because she does so from her mother's arms while remaining indoors.

Another type of conversion takes place between the visual features of the two outsides in images which seem to pass the danger on from children to animals. The December 1874 issue of *The Children's Advocate* showed a well-dressed girl in a large stone doorway, feeding birds as the snow falls. *(Image 3.10*[47]*)* This does not appear to be a picture with danger implicit in its content, so much as a portrayal of childlike charity. Certainly there is no danger to the child, even though the same stone portico, heavy door, doorstep and snow all appear repeatedly in portrayals of children at risk. The accompanying poem, on the facing page, was allegedly by a nine year old reader and this text indicates that the threat came from the child, towards the sparrows.

So goodbye, my dear birds
Give heed to my words
And I'll pity you every day
But if you are rude
And play with your food
I'll take it all away.

It is most likely that the child in the text was the conduit for a moral lesson, who was presented as having learnt that good behaviour was rewarded with food and survival, bad behaviour was punished with withdrawal of food and threat of death.[48] Her 'lesson' is reproduced as an example to readers from which children were expected to learn.

Those unable to read would probably have received two lessons, one from the image,

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[46] *Highways and Hedges* (as the *Children's Advocate* was renamed in the late eighties), November 1896, no page number, relates to story on page 252.
[47] *The Children's Advocate*, December 1874, p183.

the other from an instructing adult. The image would have encouraged the act of charity to the weak, while the conditional nature of survival dependent upon good behaviour might have been read aloud by the more diligent parent. This image is typical in its depiction of the rescuer or the persecutor figure (in this case, a combination) as standing above and leaning towards the rescued or victim figure. Pictured philanthropy tended to differentiate the rescuer from the persecutor only by the wearing of a uniform or the garb of a gentleman. The picturing of children as rescuers will be discussed in detail in the next chapter of this study. (See 4.5.i - 4.5.iii)

'Nellie and the sparrows' is also typical of representations of rescue in so far as the child far exceeds the birds in size and scale. The rescuer or persecutor was nearly always larger than the rescued or the victim. In the rare depictions of children helping other children in distress, the differentiation would be re-established by positioning the rescuer above the rescued, on a higher step for example. The visual dramas of rescue could be said to habitually assert or confirm the superiority of the active adult in caring for the helpless child. In the rare absence of an adult rescuer, superior social station would often be substituted in the confirmation of unequal relationships of power.

3.3 Children beyond salvation

In discussing the picturing of childhood in child rescue work, this chapter has concentrated so far on images which could be said to present the child as a suitable case for salvation. I have attempted to demonstrate which visual features were essential to

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[48] Although this child is portrayed as being kind to animals, there are plenty of philanthropic images which show children teasing, dressing up or admonishing their pets. The same scenarios were to be found

this kind of picturing, and which gave distinctive, identifiable meaning to the whole. By and large, children were depicted as the passive objects of rescue. This non-active, requisite state had its conventions, which could be clearly observed when children failed to observe them for a variety of reasons. The remaining images to be considered in this chapter relate to two breaches of passivity by two girls, and their picturing by philanthropy.

This section of the chapter revisits observations made much earlier (3.1.i) about the particular significance accorded to the appearance of poor female children now that it can be situated in the context of the child's primary role as the object of rescue. It is rare to uncover evidence of a poor girl who actively sought to create her own role in the work of child rescue. It is to be expected, perhaps, that the story of such a girl would be framed by the agendas of adult (largely male) philanthropy in the pages of a subscriber magazine. The story of Fanny appeared in *The Children's Advocate* for 1875. Stephenson's colleague, J Pendlebury, wrote two articles on the subject, with a photograph of Fanny appearing in the November edition. Pendlebury recounted how he was appalled to discover that a twelve year old girl had led a group of children who had posed as orphans, and visited all the homes they could find to see what they could acquire by deception, presenting themselves as applicants for charity. He described the group as 'equally fond of locomotion and charity' and Fanny herself as 'an audacious, artful, and most successful imposter'.[49]

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regularly on the walls of the Royal Academy, particularly in the work of A J Elsley.
[49] *The Children's Advocate and Christian at Work*, November 1875, p123.

Pendlebury made a point of commenting on Fanny's *'coiffure'*, carried out on the children's visit to P--- workhouse. A drawing *(image 3.11)* taken from a photograph of Fanny, with Tom and Patty, her confederates, appeared on the same page as Pendlebury's article and revealed that her hair had been cut very short, while Patty's has not. It also shows Fanny as the dominant individual, although whether this was by studio arrangement or by her own intent is not clear. It surely cannot be coincidental that she has been stripped of all girlish appearance, although she holds the hand of Patty and has a protective arm on the shoulder of Tom. This image does not depict her as a little girl deserving salvation, but in need of 'a firm, strong, kind hand, to apply effective discipline ... in order to secure the ultimate salvation of the child.'[50] As an object of rescue, it could be argued that Fanny was portrayed as being saved for her own good rather than for her goodness.

This kind of picturing of girl children at risk was rare in child rescue work. Its rarity is confirmed by what appears to be the loss of Fanny's right to look like any other young girl. A contemporaneous reader might have interpreted this as her punishment for acting as a leader of a group of children who did not accept their allotted, passive role in the work of rescue. While depicting her as an unworthy object of salvation, her portrayal served a function in philanthropy as what might now be called a negative role model, in both visual and moral terms. The censorious representation of Fanny could be said to expose how visual treatment and moral message co-operated in Victorian charity at work.

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[50] Idem.

The constrictive relationship between child rescue and the visual representation of poor female children was, if anything, even more marked in an illustrated article which appeared in the National Children's Homes magazine for May 1891. This article was reproduced from the *Pall Mall Budget* and told the story of an encounter between a young working woman and an artist, C J Lidderdale, who was in search of a 'street model.' The account was given from Lidderdale's point of view and explained that: 'one of the difficulties that artists often experience is getting street models, either girls or arabs, just as they see them - that is, in all their native dishevelment and picturesque rags.'[51] The original article may have been concerned with looks, but its reproduction in Stephenson's magazine clearly linked appearance to the morality of poor female children.[52] The reason was given as follows: '... the sketch gives an insight, rarely to be obtained, into the habits of thought and feeling which largely obtain amongst young girls. How unwholesome is the entire mental and moral atmosphere which they breathe, this sketch shows.'[53]

The artist invited the girl to pose in the studio, assuming that she would arrive in a condition which the image caption described as 'just anyhow'. *(Image 3.12)* The artist described her street appearance as a 'find': 'there was the pallor and the dim sense of suffering in the child's face I wanted, the dingy tone of the torn old clothes ... the

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[51] *Highways and Hedges : The Children's Advocate and Missionary Gazette*, May 1891, p84.
[52] Stephenson linked the appearance of boys and girls, their moral environment and their physical suffering in the February 1894 edition of *Highways and Hedges*. 'The physical sufferings of many neglected children are serious enough. They are puny, white-faced, stunted in size, and sadly too precocious in thought and look. But after all, to the thoughtful and religious mind, their physical sufferings are not the most lamentable element in their lot. The want of restraint and wise guiding is more dangerous still. Educated they are, but educated by the sights and sounds of the street.' (p28)
[53] *Highways and Hedges : The Children's Advocate and Missionary Gazette*, May 1891, p84.

towzled hair all blown by the wind'. 'I wanted rags above all things'[54] He did not get what he wanted.

Instead, the girl made every conceivable effort to look her best for the sitting, in opposition to the artist's wishes but very much with her mother's guidance and approval. She arrived 'titivated', according to the article. *(Image 3.13)* The artist was annoyed with her. One paragraph of this critique of the powerless, by a representative of the powerful, sums up the overall tone: 'I looked at her critically, and noted she had one earring on. She marked my glance and smiled, "I ain't another." If she'd been a boy I think I should have boxed the ear that was ringless.'

The article could be said to present this girl's appearance as a battleground between the visual conventions of a middle class artist and a working class mother. Whoever won the cultural battle, as a child, her appearance remained under the control of adults. Her costume was her uniform. The uniform of the street was requested and working class respectability was substituted, a respectability which was mocked as 'a parody of faded finery.'[55] The reproduction of this article in a child rescue magazine had a more specific purpose, that of promoting the work of Girl's Parlours and Girl's Clubs. Their task was to combat the 'vulgarity, the precocity, the bad taste, the easy and often coarse modes of speech' of poor urban girls.[56] This article was chosen as a textual and visual representation of all these faults, focusing most of all on the girl's appearance. The girl was blamed for the nature of her response to adult request and direction, and held up as

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[54] Idem. The whole question of the artistic desire for 'rags above all things' is discussed in chapter seven of this study, drawing a parallel between artistic and philanthropic approaches to 'the raw material'.
[55] Idem.
[56] Idem.

an negative example. Within the story, she tried to please one adult - unlike Fanny - only to succeed in annoying another.

In summary, neither Fanny nor Mander Fillis could be said to have conformed to expectations about their appearance. Fanny lost her right to be represented like any other girl because she defined and sought to enact her own rescue, or exploit charity for her own purposes. The story of Mander Fillis seems to have been chosen and reproduced for child rescue readers and supporters because she failed to represent the appearance of deprivation, and thus the perceived moral degradation of her class. The stories of both girls could be said to have shared a common purpose in editorial terms. Both were presented as failing to represent the child as a suitable object of rescue. Insofar as their picturing was created by the triggers and checks of philanthropic appeal, it is possible to argue that that the issue of their gender was largely irrelevant. Boys and girls alike could take the pictorial role of the ragged, isolated child, provided they possessed the essential visual features of suitability for salvation.

3.4 Conclusions

This chapter set out to establish what changes, if any, took place in those depictions of childhood which were used by philanthropists when children were the main intended beneficiaries of their work. Certain essential features to the picturing of childhood were sustained and appeared frequently between 1869 and 1908. It has been argued that pictorial treatments of the child in philanthropy did not look significantly different from other public appearances. From the brief thematic context of childhood histories offered, the possibility has emerged that the sight of the child in unexpected places

seemed to be of particular significance to Victorian adults, carrying its own emotive charge. Discreet sets of expectations around the look of childhood have been identified, as it related to class, poverty and the siting of suitable age-related activity. In most cases, it has been claimed that a divergence exists between what history records about childhood and what can be called the preoccupations of images depicting the Victorian child at work, in school and at home. When childhood was pictured in child rescue work, it has been argued that most images belonged to the same generic family found outside philanthropy, but they were limited and focused in their use. The dominant images contained those features which identified the child at risk, shut out from most of the defining adult conventions of acceptable childhood. In the context of child rescue, children were obliged to be portrayed outside, on the edge, on the margins, in order that they could be retrieved by adults and reincorporated into the comfort of adult care and control. The compassion and dedication of their rescuers is beyond question; both Stephenson and Barnardo cared passionately about child welfare. However, the depiction of children as suitable objects of rescue could only serve to restrict perceptions of the child further, through a process which, paradoxically, strove for their salvation. In order to obtain continuing financial support for the work of child rescue, appeals to feeling which framed childhood as a helpless and pathetic state, were unavoidable.

Although some histories of childhood make a division around 1880 between individual child rescue and institutionalised child saving, no such change, or evolution is detectable in the imagery which played an active role in such work. The images which endured longest were those which portrayed children as suitable objects for rescue. Children were most frequently shown as helpless and hopeless and in need of adult

intervention. Whether they were rescued or saved belonged to another stage of, or another player in, the visual drama. It could be said that the prevailing representation of the outcast child in charitable work dedicated to children contributed to, and reinforced adult attitudes of protection and responsibility. Respect for the child's proactive capacities found its way into charitable texts, but seldom made an appearance in pictorial depictions of childhood. In short, philanthropy's pictures that were committed to the cause of the child put greater restraints on the visual representation of children and childhood found in other parts of the public domain outside charitable endeavour. What now needs to be established is whether other types of philanthropic imagery imposed similar limitations, when the intended beneficiaries of charitable activity were not necessarily children. An answer to this question will be attempted in the next chapter, which will discuss the use made of the pictured child in the temperance movement.

CHAPTER FOUR

Under the influence: the picturing of children and childhood in the temperance movement 1869-1902

4 Introduction

This chapter will assess the roles played by the pictured child across the range of campaigns which made up the Victorian temperance movement. In pursuing this goal, it is intended that the pictorial record should shed some light on the dual nature of children's status wrapped up in the following contemporaneous passage.

> While the wise and mighty are planning
> Evil and good to unite
> the youth of the nation is learning
> that Evil and Good must fight :
> the fawning and titles to Mammon
> Are things to be bought and sold,
> But the lives and souls of the children
> Are these not better than gold.[1]

These words conjure up the view that while children were like pupils in a school of morality, with teachers to instruct them in the necessary battle between good and evil, they also represented an priceless treasure for society in general. In presenting childhood as an ideal to which social functions were attached, the passage is reminiscent of Peter Mandler's reference to the child in the theatre of charity as the

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[1] Quoted by Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Crusade against Drink in Victorian England*, (New York:St Martin's Press, 1988), p152. The Jubilee referred to is probably the Queen's sixtieth year on the throne in 1897. The same year saw the fiftieth jubilee of the Band of Hope movement, the juvenile temperance campaign founded in Leeds in 1847. This was celebrated in a lantern slide lecture with accompanying text, which is held in the Livesey Collection of the University of Central Lancashire. The text indicates that the sight of a distressed child was a key influence upon one of the Band of Hope's founders, Mrs Carlisle. Sadly, the lantern slides - beautifully handpainted and coloured - are undated and incomplete.

ultimate, natural dependent. (See 2.4.iv) The quoted stanza is taken from the Jubilee Ode which was officially adopted by the temperance movement in the 1890s. These verses were given the title 'The Might of the Child'.

A certain tension can be detected between the reference in the Ode's title to the 'might' of children, and their essentially passive value as a human asset encapsulated in its lines. These suggest that the temperance movement considered the lives and souls of children as being of more value to society than gold. In this sense, the child's power lay in the social value assigned to them by this group of adults.

Lilian Lewis Shiman quotes this passage in her book on the cultural and social manifestations of the campaign against drink in Victorian England. Shiman discusses how children 'were treated as weapons in the anti-drink fight, active agents of change who could be controlled and manipulated by the organizers of the movement.'[2] The unresolved notion of passive power found in the Ode can be seen reflected again in Shiman's references to children as both 'weapons' - or passive tools - and as 'active agents', even while the child remained under adult control. The duality of the child in the Ode and its potential for internal contradiction can be taken as a backdrop to the pictured child in the drama of temperance.

This chapter will provide an initial thumbnail sketch of temperance history, leading to an assessment of the movement's essential characteristics. Both sketch and assessment are intended as a sufficient framework within which temperance pictures, and their possible meaning for spectators, can be subsequently understood. This is by no means

straightforward to attempt, since temperance was distinguished above all by divisions and fragmentation. For this reason, it makes more sense for scholars approaching the subject from outside the discipline to regard temperance as an umbrella, under which sheltered many different campaigns. Further, temperance was a form of philanthropy of which children were neither the only, nor the main intended beneficiaries. As such, it offers a distinctive opportunity for a pictorial analysis of Victorian age relations which extends beyond the scope of charity work dedicated to the child. This study will take the view that it is possible to extract a more or less constant theme from this variegated good cause. Regardless of the age of those involved, it will be argued that the pictorial record offered the spectator a recurring possibility, namely, that temperance constituted a major attempt to influence adult behaviour and attitudes. Perhaps it is not distorting the sense of the Ode too far to argue that temperance aimed to change the hearts and minds of those seeking to unite evil and good, as well as those who allowed their actions and priorities to be determined by greed. The images of the movement are important because they make clearer whether the child was believed to be on the sidelines, or in the thick of this moral battle.

The historical sketch of the movement will argue that temperance made use of a rhetoric which was inevitably framed in religious terms and took the form of both moral and social stories. The chapter will then set out the particular importance placed on the visual image in temperance campaigning and will focus on the work of Thomas Bywater Smithies. Smithies attributed a key role to the pictorial forms of temperance,

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[2] Ibid., p151.

for both adult and child audiences. Having presented both a historical framework for Victorian temperance and the significance assigned by it to the visual communication of its mission, the next section of the chapter will review those images of children and childhood from child rescue work which reappeared again in the temperance movement, and the ways in which they were modified. Despite the changes, it will be argued that these were familiar roles for the pictured child. The chapter will then discuss those roles which were new, quite distinct from their cousins in child rescue and peculiarly distinctive to what I have described as temperance's continuing theme - the battle to influence and change adult behaviour and attitudes. Finally, some conclusions will be offered on why the pictured child took on more varied and active roles in the philanthropic drama of temperance, when compared to what has been already discussed so far in this thesis. It will be argued that the introduction of Drink into the hierarchical chain of power relationships in society created some significant changes of role for the picturing of Victorian age relations.

4.1 A thumbnail sketch of temperance

4.1.i Moderation, total abstinence and the first Band of Hope

Setting aside its fragmentary nature, the history of Victorian temperance is perhaps most accessible when it is understood as falling into four phases. This study will adopt this approach from Shiman, while drawing on the work of the historian Brian Harrison as essential reading on the movement's history. The first two phases, or nearly half of its history, had already taken place by 1869. As such, these phases fall outside the scope of this study. They will be sketched in all the same, since they help to make

sense of what followed. Where necessary, examples from the later pictorial record will be given.

Temperance began as a campaign against lack of moderation in adult drinking in all classes, and was not anti-Drink *per se*. It did not set out to reclaim drunkards but to prevent drinkers reaching states of intemperance. There is little pictorial evidence of this early notion in temperance imagery from 1872 onwards, although occasional depictions of the impact of unwise drinking on the wealthy do occur. Moderation lost ground to Teetotalism - or total abstinence - in the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s. It is not unreasonable to connect the campaign to stop adults from drinking alcohol altogether with the initiative to prevent children from ever starting. Historians have justified this on geographical, social and religious grounds. One major and significant date during this first phase was 1847, which saw the inauguration of the first temperance campaign run by adults and directed at children, the Leeds Band of Hope.

Children in the newly formed organisation were encouraged to take a life-long pledge of abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, once the organisers had obtained parental consent. Bands of Hope in the same locality would group together to form Unions. Shiman describes how the 'Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union, with its headquarters in Manchester, and Yorkshire Band of Hope Union centred in Leeds, were the strongest organisations in the Band of Hope movement in the provinces.'[3] Their organisers were as prone to division as other parts of the movement, with these two Unions often united in opposing the London Band of Hope Union. A central part of Union activity was the regular Band of Hope meeting, with the content of these social

and educational events themselves providing more bones of contention. Unions would disagree over the use of local dialect and whether the local treatment of recitations which originated elsewhere was acceptable. Shiman argues that a considerable overlap existed between temperance and the work of the Sunday school movement; but at the same time, she observes the extent to which temperance set out to create a cultural setting for the Band of Hope child which put the movement's own history and values in the centre. This meant that child members were encouraged to view the world through a lens of temperance values and traditions. This is not to imply some joyless process of indoctrination, with no scope at all for fun. The Band of Hope social events - parades, picnics, concerts, lantern slide lectures - could hold genuine attraction for those children and parents who could afford little else.

Total abstinence continued to dominate the movement into the 1850s and 1860s. Predominantly Non-conformist, teetotalism was now linked to working class, individual self help and improvement, an ethos which survived strongly into the last three decades of the century. Compared to moderation, this phase of temperance continued to be represented in both visual and textual form after the movement had moved on to other preoccupations. The total abstainers also used religious language to present their work, a practice which Shiman describes as a conscious intention. 'The teetotalers deliberately adopted the style, language and methods of some of the non-conformist denominations in their proselytizing.'[4] More will be said later on the relationship

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[3] Shiman, op cit, p137.
[4] Shiman, ibid., p19.

between temperance and religion, when the movement entered its third phase.

4.1.ii Legislation to curb the sale of alcohol

From the late 1850s to the mid-1870s, the second phase of temperance saw the movement heavily engaged in campaigns to curb the sale of drink by legislation. There were repeated visual references within it to children shivering outside pubs and the acceptable jug of water offered by childish hands to startled and embarrassed men. *(Image 4.1[5])* There are many examples in the pictorial record after 1869 of this type of legislative activity. In 1901, the legislative campaign to prevent the sale of drink to child messengers made specific visual reference to 'The Children's Charter', with the Angel of Temperance carrying the 'Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicants to Children.' *(Image 4.2[6])* Temperance reformers publicised the success of the turn-of-the-century parliamentary campaign as a warning to the licensed trade and to parents, namely, that what had been depicted in the pages of their magazines and in their lantern slide lectures would henceforth be an illegal act. *(Image 4.3)*

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[5] *Band of Hope Review*, 1877, p56. The artist was Robert Barnes, whose work appeared *The British Workman*. The same image reappeared on the title page of the June 1884 edition of the *Band of Hope Treasury*, with the caption 'Drink this, Father!'. The *Review* and the *Treasury* were both magazines of the juvenile temperance movement. The *Review* was published in London and circulated in the south of England, while the *Treasury* was published in Manchester and circulated in the north.

[6] *Onward*, May 1901. In 1900, *Onward* carried a fragment of this image showing the Angel, the Bill and the Child as a full page illustration. In *Onward*'s rendering, the child is connected to the angel by the bill. Instead of a helpless child without a face, in the arms of charity, readers are offered this strong visual linking of child protection and parliamentary legislation. Many of the photographic images circulating as part of this campaign came from NSPCC archives. *Onward* was the organ of the Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union and first appeared in July 1865.

4.1.iii Gospel temperance and dependence on children

The third phase of Victorian temperance - between the mid-1870s and 1895 - was dominated by Gospel Temperance and by an increasing reliance on child involvement in the movement. Gospel Temperance combined evangelical religion with temperance, although the term could be said to refer to any fusion of religious and temperance causes. This claim will be justified shortly. Such religious institutions included the Salvation Army, founded in 1878[7], and the Church of England's absorption of temperance into its own structures from 1861 onwards. The movement also attracted those who held revivalist beliefs that all alcoholic drinking was unchristian.

Gospel Temperance had its origins in the American Women's Whiskey War of 1873 and came to Britain in 1877[8]. Fundraising would take place to stage American temperance mission speakers in the increasing number of temperance halls throughout the country in the 1870s. The meetings would be heavily publicised, both locally and nationally, and were 'a popular technique for rousing public interest'[9]. Gospel Temperance adopted the wearing of blue ribbons, a particular aspect of the movement which burnt itself out by the end of the eighties[10].

Despite its American and evangelical origins, all Christian churches forged a relationship with the temperance movement or took over its methods and structures.[11]

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[7] The Salvation Army was founded by William Booth. He saw temperance as a way of saving souls but the Army remained aloof from the movement. It preached total abstinence but borrowed methods of operation which were not uncommon for the time. William's wife, Catherine Booth, was a teetotaler as a result of her father's slide from pledged abstinence into alcoholism.

[8] Like the original temperance impetus in the early 1800s, which came from America.

[9] Shiman, ibid., p113.

[10] Other parts of the temperance movement took up the wearing of ribbons from the Blue Ribbon movement. Anti-temperance groups wore yellow ribbons.

[11] Charles Booth made a judicious summary of the temperance-religion relationship in 1902 in his *Life and Labour of the people in London* . 'From the religious point of view it is remarked that teetotalism is apt to

It is in this sense that Gospel Temperance could be said to refer to any fusion of religious belief and temperance campaigning. The movement offered chapels and churches the opportunity to address the problems at the heart of communities. Much was made of the connection between alcohol consumption, poverty and moral degradation. All churches were concerned with spiritual salvation, although the work of some, the Church of England for example, took practical, social forms. The Church of England Temperance Societies organized thrift banks, sick and benefit societies, musical bands, funeral guilds, athletic clubs and mutual improvement societies. This particular type of diversity was well represented pictorially in the pages of T*he British Workman* throughout the last three decades of the century. As well as the picturing of resulting themes such as housing, clothing and crime, examples can be found which present moral salvation, the temperance message and the redemptive power of music as part of a single visual story.

4.1.iv The decline of temperance

Harrison considers that the movement began to decline from the end of the battle between free traders and restrictionists in 1872. By this stage, his assessment was that 'the movement had insulated an elite from temptation' but 'it had produced no nation-wide temperance "reformation".[12] Indeed, he points out that the 1870s actually saw a rise in alcohol consumption, and argues that there was no statistical proof to indicate

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become a cult of its own, of a rather narrow kind.' . . 'But "Christian people are nearly all temperate and thrifty" and the better in every way for being so.' p75.

[12] Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians, The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872*, (Keele University Press, 1994), p308.

that 'the temperance movement had deeply affected levels of drinking and drunkenness' since the 1830s.[13]

In contrast, Shiman places the decline of temperance to the 1895 defeat of the Newcastle Programme, which included a local prohibition proposal. In her view, temperance was rejected by both the electorate and the churches and this was the time when the movement turned in upon itself.

One contemporaneous campaigner certainly admitted 'stagnation' at this time. In an assessment of 'The Present Position of the Temperance Movement' which was published in 1898, it was observed that 'for the purposes of the discussion, we will assume that there is a seeming stagnation in the temperance movement. We will admit that appearances lend force to the contention of opponents who say that the agitation is less determined than of yore; that the movement is not advancing, indeed, hardly holding its own; and that the vaunted victories of the Temperance forces are hollow and unreal'[14]. In particular, the writer was concerned about the falling away of attendance at public meetings. However, he then rallied to claim that temperance had still got its message across:

> men have an objection to being told what they know, and by this time the Temperance speaker's familiar quotation about "nine-tenths of crime, insanity, and pauperism being directly due to drink", must be the possession of nine-tenths of the population. They may not believe it; they may not need it; but, at least, they know it.[15]

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[13] Ibid., p306.
[14] *United Temperance Gazette*, December 1898, Vol III - No 4, article on 'The Present Position of the Temperance Movement', p183.
[15] Idem.

This contemporaneous view from within the movement confirmed unease that temperance was no longer making progress, while claiming that most of the population had heard and understood what it was trying to tell them. This suggests a movement which no longer knew which direction to take, despite believing that most of the population were informed about the evils of alcohol as a result of its work.

The juvenile wing of the movement was far from stagnant, however. In 1891, the *United Temperance Gazette* was still enthusiastically describing the collection of pledges under a picture captioned "A Million More!". Band of Hope members had worked with the Sunday school movement and adult visitors to ensure that 'something like 600,000 pledges were taken.'[16]

This account hints at the numerical importance of children to the movement as they contributed to its publicly notable successes at a time when it was otherwise faltering. However, children sustained the movement in deeper ways, as symbols of goodness and hope for the future. This is one possible reason why many child rescue images made their way into the temperance domain and why child rescue campaigners and temperance reformers talked in nearly identical terms. The following passage is from a temperance publication, but used the language of child rescue. 'We can never hope effectively to grapple with poverty, pauperism, and crime save by the rescue of children'. ... 'Let us give up talking about the "liberty of the subject," and consider the *rights of the child* till every little one has at last a *chance* of becoming an honest, industrious, God-fearing man or woman.' ... 'The S.P.C.C. does a noble work in protecting the *bodies* of children from cruelty - should we not also strive to protect their

souls from danger ?' There are echoes of the Jubilee Ode again here, although this temperance writer talks in terms of bodies and souls, rather than the value of the lives and souls of children as a treasure for society.

The passage just quoted appeared in the *United Temperance Gazette* for 1897 and came from the concluding paragraphs of an article on 'Legislation' and subtitled 'The sale of intoxicants to children'.[17] In summary, there is evidence to suggest that juvenile membership and the irresistible, irreproachable cause of childhood helped to sustain the temperance movement when Gospel Temperance started to falter and to keep temperance issues before the public eye.

4.1.v The essential characteristics of temperance

It has already been suggested that temperance was not one movement but several. Harrison describes four campaigns against drunkenness: free licensing, total abstinence from spirits, prohibition and teetotalism. It is perhaps fair to say that Victorian temperance was characterised not so much by what it did, but the manner in which its activities were carried out. Harrison has already been quoted on the movement's failure to reduce the nation's alcohol consumption, even if one temperance commentator did think the general population was now informed about the potential of drink to wreck lives. This suggests that people did not necessarily act on the information they had, which conveys the idea that temperance had something to do with attitudes and beliefs.

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[16] *United Temperance Gazette*, October 1891.

[17] *United Temperance Gazette*, December 1897, p171. 'Legislation. The sale of intoxicants to children', article by Harriet M Johnson. The article concludes with a verse : "We herald a day that is coming, / As fair as when Eden first smiled : / As the hope of the earth is the springtime, / So the hope of the race is the child."

Indeed, it could be said that the essential characteristic of temperance as a set of beliefs was that it addressed not one aspect of life, but all of them. Temperance campaigners lectured and told stories on a multitude of themes, including the medical, moral, religious, cultural, intellectual, and emotional implications of alcohol consumption. Many believed that drink alone could tip life's balance between security and disintegration. With drink as the central issue in the temperance world picture, it is hardly surprising that alcohol was held to be responsible for poverty, family breakdown and a threat to child welfare. The fight against drink was pursued in all life's aspects, and it could be argued that war on so many fronts produced the fragmentation and division which was so characteristic of the Victorian temperance movement.

If it is accepted that the movement concerned itself with beliefs and attitudes towards alcohol consumption, then the position of children within its ranks becomes intriguing. It was not an established fact that children were tempted by alcohol. Indeed, in his London studies of poverty, Charles Booth pointed to evidence that suggested that children either did not like the taste of alcohol, or came to little harm from sipping from the jug of parental beer.[18] Children were not encouraged to take the pledge because they were susceptible or at immediate risk from its dangers. As such, their positioning in the movement was quite distinct from that of adults at risk. As Harrison says, in the early days of the Band of Hope, ' ... the children were encouraged to sing temperance songs and if possible to influence their parents'.[19] As well as participating in harmless,

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[18] Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the people in London*, (London: Macmillan & Co, 1902), quotes an East End parish nurse, speaking in 1898. "It was to her a sad thing to see children going into the public-house, but she could not honestly say that it did them any harm. She had never seen a child the worse for drink. They sip the beer, but only on the general principle that they take a little of everything they are sent to fetch; and if it were milk they would take a great deal more of it." (Final volume : Notes on Social Influences and Conclusion, Part II Habits of the People (4) Drink. p65).
[19] Harrison, ibid., p179.

perhaps uplifting recreation, it was hoped that children might have an effect on their parents through drawing them into temperance activities. It therefore becomes possible to argue that campaigners believed children were a key factor in influencing adult behaviour towards drink. It was often the sight, as well as the sound of children that was believed to contribute to this effect. As will be seen, some campaigners believed the image to exercise the more powerful influence.

4.2 Temperance, the image and the movement's journals

4.2.i The power of the image

In 1892, *The British Workman* reproduced an article from *The Methodist Times* under the title 'A Picture Mission', which argued that images had a greater influence on viewers than music on listeners. 'Deeper it may be, and more abiding in their influences on the nation, are the *pictures of the people*. Songs do kindle feeling, yet the imagination does move to shape the character'.[20] It was T B Smithies (1817-1883), editor of *The British Workman* from 1855 and *The Band of Hope Review* from 1851 until his death, who sent large, well-produced pictures into the homes of working people. These images were surrounded with large type and called 'wall-papers'.[21]

An article in *The British Workman* for 1894 - after the death of Smithies - recalled how workmen of earlier times had valued and understood the pictures while not being able to read the text. The writer than observed how illiteracy was largely a thing of the past while insisting on the continued value of the image in the following terms:

> when the working man has not time nor place to read much, a picture will catch his eye and reach his heart. For beneath that rough coat of his there lies as tender a *feeling* as in the breast of any man, and many a big fellow has turned away from a *touching picture, especially if there has been a child in it*, with a sort of lump in his throat and a mist before his eyes.[22] (My emphases)

Whether this appeal to the finer feelings through the image actually justified the faith placed in it by campaigners, extensive use was made of visual material, much of it involving the pictured child, for both adult and juvenile audiences. The movement's journals formed a large part of this historical record.

4.2.ii The function of the journals

The temperance publications covered by the present study were chosen for their wealth of pictorial material. Most of the images discussed in this chapter appeared in the movement's many journals. These appeared either weekly or monthly, and usually had a regional circulation. For example, The Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union had its own publication called *Onward,* which was printed in, and distributed from, Manchester between 1865 and 1900. *The Band of Hope Treasury* was another magazine of the juvenile temperance movement, which was produced and circulated in the north of the country between 1868 and 1916. The London-based *Band of Hope Review* was published in the capital and circulated in the south between 1851 and 1900.

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[20] *The British Workman*, 1892, p20. For a fuller discussion of late nineteenth century efforts to bring fine art to the people, see Giles Waterfield (ed.), *Art for the People, Culture in the Slums of Late Victorian Britain*, (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1994).
[21] Idem.
[22] *The British Workman*, 1894, p39, 'Preaching by Pictures. A wonderful opportunity. Who will help?'.

There were many periodicals for the adult rather than the juvenile campaigning organisations, including *The United Temperance Gazette* and *The British Workman.* The production and distribution of publications for both adult and child audiences were often characterised by the tendency to put spreading the temperance message above the profit motive. Shiman observes that 'it was not uncommon for Band of Hope papers to be distributed free to members as an inducement to attend the weekly meetings'.[23]

Such activity was considered vital, since the function of the periodical was to take the message beyond the meeting hall and, if possible, into the homes of people outside the movement. *The British Workman* called upon its wealthy supporters in similar ways, both in defraying distribution costs and in getting the press re-established after a major fire on its premises. This publication, as well as many books and journals, did have a nationwide circulation. They were priced so that they would reach the maximum number of people, although *The British Workman* did encourage re-circulation of existing sales amongst its readers for the same reason.

4.3 Familiar roles for the pictured child from child rescue work

It has already been suggested that children were considered unlikely topers by some commentators. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children offered evidence, as part of the 1902 Children's Charter campaign, that some children did become intoxicated. Among temperance and child rescue campaigners alike, the view was far more widely expressed that many more children suffered from family breakdown rather than intoxication as a result of drink. When children were depicted as the indirect

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[23] Shiman, op cit, p147.

victims of adult drunken behaviour, most, if not all, of their picturing bore marked similarity to images of the child as the object of rescue.

The image *(4.4)* called *Death of the Drunkard's Child* appeared twice in the juvenile temperance publication *Onward* during the 1880s.[24] A barefoot, matchseller huddles alone against a snowy pillar on a forbidding doorstep. She stares directly out of the image at the viewer. Her form is displaced from the vertical centre of the image by the pillar and the eye is drawn to the deep shadow that runs between the masonry and her body. The scene is lit by an unknown source of light from the right, although there is a street lamp round the corner and beyond the pillar. Here again are the familiar features of many a child rescue image.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that it appeared originally in the pages of *Night and Day* - a Barnardo periodical - accompanying a story entitled 'Story of the Snow'[25]. In this case, the image was intended to depict a child that was still alive and attempting to earn a living. Its manifestation in the cause of temperance was intended to represent the grim precursor to predicted death due to violent causes. According to the poem, this child was bruised and bloodstained, although the temperance spectator was not presented with its pictorial equivalent. The same image was used to depict two different scenarios of need, one matching its accompanying text more than the other. It was entirely in keeping with the visual conventions of both child rescue and temperance that

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[24] *Onward*, 1880, p29. Also reproduced in the same periodical in 1885.
[25] *Night and Day*, December 1879, accompanying article 'The Story of the Snow'. The image is signed by 'MEE', the work of the artist Mary Ellen Edwards (1839-c1910). She drew for most of the Victorian illustrated magazines in the 1860s-1880s and for many children's books of the same period. Her work was prominent in the pages of *The Children's Advocate* in particular. Her first Royal Academy picture was *The Last Kiss* in 1865 and she was represented there by oil paintings in most years through until 1908. Many of these were reproduced as art engravings.

physical violence was restricted to the text. In both cases, the representation of the child alone was not intended to shock and repel, but to arouse pity, concern and the impulse to help.

Child rescue work and temperance also shared a predilection for depicting children as the helpless victims of disaster, including shipwreck and fire. The symbol of the National Children's Homes incorporated the visual elements of sea rescue - the lifebelt and the flag - within a biblical context, suggested by the dove (of Noah's Ark)[26]. This symbol reappeared each year on the cover of bound annual volumes of *The Children's Advocate*, the magazine of the Homes. The visual depiction of rescue from disaster was constantly revisited and may be attributable to one compelling feature. Both adult rescuer and child victim could be shown as equally threatened by powerful forces while the composition simultaneously conveyed the impression that they were not at equal risk. This could be said to subtly reinforce the adult's role in structuring and making safe the child's world. 'The Life-Line' *(image 4.5[27])* appeared in the December 1890 edition of *The British Workman* and was the work of the artist Frederic Burton.[28] The power of this image comes from its strong diagonal composition and the extent to which both figures are entirely surrounded by the threatening elements. This is echoed in the way the face and hand of the tiny child are incorporated into the form of the rescuer. Such images could be said to confirm the child as a helpless victim of circumstance and the legitimate object of adult rescue.

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[26] In writing on the signing of the total abstinence pledge in 1832 by Joseph Livesey and six others, Shiman refers to an early temperance association between the movement and sea rescue. 'Teetotalism was, in one widely circulated temperance drawing, the lifeboat that rescued the passengers on the foundering ship of moderation sailing in the Sea of Intemperance.' Shiman, op. cit., p18.

[27] *The British Workman*, No 432, December 1890, frontispiece.

[28] With C J Staniland and W Rainey, Burton's sea rescue images appeared regularly in *The British Workman* and the *Illustrated London News*. *The British Workman* had its own lifeboat, which was

The rescue of children from fire was an equally popular image.[29] 'A gallant rescue' *(image 4.6)* dates from *The British Workman* of 1894.[30] With both sea and fire rescue, the child was never shown alone, about to die in horrible fashion. The moment after rescue, but before final safety was reached, seems to have been preferred. In this typical example, the child is shown arching away from the encroaching flames. It is perhaps not too fanciful to detect the shapes of wild animals in the smoke and flames, which intensify the sense of danger in the image. In particular, the mouth of a giant creature can be made out, clamping its jaws around the length of timber in the fireman's left hand.

Apart from the possible beasts of fantasy, the image shows how light tones were habitually used in the depiction of children. These contrast with the dark tones of the fireman, who seeks to protect the child from the heat. The acute vantage point provided for the viewer and the perspective are unusual. The danger comes from below, rather than behind or above. The fireman gazes down into the flames, while the child makes eye contact with the viewer. It could be said that this confirmed the appeal of the child, pictured in its role of engaging the viewer's sympathies, while the adult was shown concentrating on the assigned task of rescue and bringing the child's situation under control.

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launched in 1870. The January 1880 edition of its parent periodical carried an illustration of the craft at Palling on Sea by the artist C J Staniland.

[29] Dr Barnardo returned to this subject matter repeatedly, both in the Annual Reports of the Home and in the appeals booklets for which he himself wrote the text. Most of these booklets were produced in the early nineties. Two of them, "The Seed of the Righteous" and "Out of an Horrible Pit" addressed the subject of the moral corruption of children and used the fire rescue image on the front cover. As such they

The vast majority of images depicting the point of rescue displayed the male adult in the active role, leaving the pictured child to make a more passive appeal as the object of his efforts. That is to say, the pictured adult acted on behalf on the child in the pictorial drama, while the spectator's concerned attention - the appeal to feeling - was engaged by the child.

It would not be accurate to assume that all such portrayals pursued the same dialogue between helpless child and helpful adult. 'Little Jack finds a friend' *(image 4.7)* was drawn by the artist H K A Robinson for the front page of the *Band of Hope Review* in December 1897. The image shows fashionable London going about its evening business and leisure. The horse and cab in the background lie in direct vertical alignment with Jack's figure, as if they were bearing down on him. Jack is selling matches to a gentleman. Behind him, a police officer protects a rich little girl and her mother from the traffic, as they cross the road in front of the cab. Ostensibly, there appears to be a balance between the protection of the officer for these two female figures and that of the gentleman for Jack. If anything, the caption endorses such a interpretation. Set against this, the advancing carriage wheel looks almost like a blade descending upon the transaction between the boy and the man.

The caption tells the audience that the gentleman is a friend to Jack, implying the image tells a pictorial story of a benefactor bestowing a gift. The text describes Little Jack in the following terms. 'He was a delicate-looking child. Poverty and want were stamped

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indicate how an uncontroversial visual form was used to approach highly contentious and sensitive subjects.

[30] *The British Workman*, 1894, frontispiece.

on every feature of his pale little face, and his large blue eyes wore a look of patiently-endured suffering, infinitely pathetic in one so young.'[31]

The child's neediness was intended to be conveyed through a textual description of his facial expression. However, the description is pictured in a different way from the text. As was the case with 'The Drunkard's Daughter', the detail of the text does not find an exact transcription in the image. Feature for feature, there is very little difference between Jack's face and that of the affluent child behind him. In addition, Jack is fully clothed, including a cap, scarf and boots. He does not personify poverty and want, but at the same time, he was intended to represent need. It is as if pictorial etiquette insisted on compliance with an imposed dissonance on such occasions, resulting in a tranquil, unalarming appeal by the pictured child to spectators.

Instead of pinpointing the dramatic moment between rescue and safety that was seen in A Gallant Rescue', the intended pictorial function of this image was to signal a tragedy to come. It could be said that this was achieved compositionally, by the positioning of the horse-drawn cab directly above the boy's figure. Little Jack is knocked down in the road by the cab and is killed, as he tries to return money to the rich gentleman who he believes has overpaid him for the matches. The depicted benefactor becomes the indirect cause of Jack's death. Any reader turning to the story first would find the title 'A Little Hero'. Jack is an orphan matchseller who supports his grandmother. The text

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[31] *Band of Hope Review*, December 1897, p46. It was common for this type of image, of fashionable urban bustle, to appear in philanthropic magazines closest to the Christmas season. This seasonality of image can be linked with a question raised in *The Children's Advocate* for July 1884 : '[w]hy is it that people are less charitable in summer than in winter ? Is it that the cold weather reminds those who are warmly clad, and have blazing fires at home, of the sufferings and needs of those who have none of these comforts ? Certain it is that by far the larger half of our income reaches us between November and

tells a story of a child helping an adult, putting honesty above his own safety and dying as a result. The image retains the familiar drama of the male adult in the helping role and the child as receiver of his help. In this way, all the potential stress and turbulence of the story was kept away from the spectator, who was instead reassured that the role of the adult was to carry out effective care and control of the child's world.

4.4 Saving the child from him/herself

In discussing those representations of children and childhood common to child rescue and temperance, a number of shared themes have emerged. The child was depicted as being protected by the adult from poverty, cold, lack of a home, family or occupation, and natural disaster. Far more complex and contentious was the manner in which temperance pictured the saving of the child from him or herself. Locked into these pictorial dramas was a preoccupation with the nature of childhood and its relationship to sin. This resulted in images which pictured children as victims of their own natures or casualties of childhood itself. This could equally well have been presented as a new role for the pictured child, but since such images still addressed the salvation of the child, they are discussed next.

Just such an image was 'Tommy's Roar' *(4.8)*, which appeared without a caption in the periodical *Onward* in 1883. A boy is depicted as turning round from a kneeling position to face the viewer, who has surprised him in the middle of some mysterious activity. They boy's face is contorted with distress as he holds some type of equipment

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March.' p122. From this kind of evidence, it is possible to deduce why depictions of impoverished children surrounded by wealthy shoppers occurred at times of heightened awareness of poverty.

before him, with coiled wire and a gauge. It is possible that his crying could be linked to the electrical equipment in both his hands. Nothing prepares the present-day spectator for the Victorian intention behind the use of this image. The contemporaneous response can only be deduced from the absence of any pictured threat or deprivation. Tommy is clearly not impoverished or underfed and he is surrounded by the trappings of a comfortable home, his father's study, perhaps.

Why is this child shown with a face full of suffering, when the anguish of 'The Drunkard's Daughter' or 'Little Jack' barely attains visual expression ? It could be said that the only possible conclusion for viewers to draw would have been that there was, indeed, no external reason for his suffering, that he must have brought it on himself. Where children were portrayed in desperate circumstances, pictorial convention required that the misery of their experience was related in the text and had no pictorial presence, particularly in relation to physical abuse and facial expression. Tommy is portrayed on the facing page to a story from the pen of Uncle Ben under the title 'Tommy's Roar'. Uncle Ben was a typical exponent of moralistic, finger-waving editorial comment on desirable behaviour for the magazine's child readers. He described Tommy's father in the following terms. 'He was a firm and determined man; he maintained he had cured his own children of over-crying by electricity, and he called his battery "the tear-stopper".' [It did] 'frighten the boy into greater control over his foolish habit.' In other words, the pictured child is being administered electric-shock treatment by his own father to prevent him from crying more than his parent believed was desirable. The text suggested that Tommy's siblings may have received similar treatment. This raises the fascinating question of whether the spectator was understood to be a child or an adult, perhaps another parent. Tommy looks straight into the

viewer's eyes, which could have been those of another child. *Onward* was a Band of Hope publication, with young readers, some of whom may have been expected to fear the infliction of pain if they did not control their emotions in the manner demanded by Uncle Ben.

Whether this story is based on a real-life incident is secondary to the significance of such a text and image appearing in temperance literature. That it did so indicated that editorial comment on the adult control of children's feelings, and their expression, was considered entirely appropriate for a temperance publication. It was Uncle Ben's opinion that children could cry too much and should be prevented from doing so. What is even more noteworthy is the total lack of connection with alcohol. Although child rescue journals concerned themselves with children's behaviour to a similar extent, the emphasis was more on how children should strive to be good, not on the picturing of the bad or unacceptable child.

In some respects, the pictured child as the object of rescue and the child who required saving from him or herself, were not so far apart in meaning. In each case, the child was represented as helpless, requiring the intervention of the helpful adult. Temperance images and literature were crowded with references to both desirable and undesirable behaviour in children. A decade earlier, the same publication urged children to '... learn to play in thorough earnest.' This sober little article by W A Eaton acknowledged that play was 'very good for children' but that '[m])ischief is not

amusement: that which gives pain to others, no matter in how small a degree is sinful ; you can enjoy yourself thoroughly without injuring others.'[32]

When contemplating the contrast between the pain-inflicting father and the mischief-making boys and girls, it seems possible to draw one of two conclusions. Either the two *Onward* writers had divergent attitudes to cruelty, or they shared the same approaches while making a distinction between adult and child behaviour. This would have enabled the father's infliction of pain on his children for their own good to have been acceptable, while children were exhorted to treat other children with total restraint.

4.5 New roles for the pictured child in temperance

Having considered how the visual forms of temperance adopted and built upon the predominant image of child rescue - that of the helpless child - the third section of this chapter will now discuss the new roles assigned by the movement to the representation of children and childhood. These roles can be described as the rescuer, the redeemer and the observer, respectively. When pictured as a rescuer, the child often took no action but still stimulated the awakening adult conscience. The pictured child redeemer acted to correct adult behaviour, while the observing child was depicted as a witness to adults who let themselves down, and failed the children for whom they were responsible.

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[32] *Onward*, September 1st., 1875, p161. 'Play' by W A Eaton.

4.5.i The pictured child to the rescue

Most common were representations of children who, by their very presence inside and outside the pub, jolted the adults (usually male) into abandoning intemperance. It seems likely that campaigners were well aware of this effect, judging by written comments on children and topers in real life. For John Stuart in the *United Temperance Gazette*, the impact was felt by all ranks of society.

> It matters not whether boys and girls are well dressed and accompany their parents who vary their hours of enjoyment by a drink in the public bar; or if they are ragged, neglected little ones, sitting on the doorstep of a gin-shop while the mother within is spending her last coppers upon the source of their misery and despair. What unctuous church-goer returning to his dinner and champagne but must have the armour of his indifference pierced as he counts dozens of children hurrying home or loitering and sipping - as the case may be - with jug or can of beer.

This passage reinforces so clearly the distinction that was made by philanthropists between the look of childhood and the appearance of poverty. It was the conjunction of the child and alcohol, when it was perceived as a threat to childhood, which gave the lock of childhood its power for temperance campaigners. When images of the child are considered, it is possible to make an initial division between the girl child in her father's arms and the boy without boots of his own.

4.5.ii The girl child in her father's arms

The British Workman of 1886 carried just such an image of daughter and father. *(Image 4.9)* This girl is represented as completely passive, curled into her father's shoulder. Her gaze seems inward, while her father looks out beyond her, his free arm

lifted in an involuntary but indeterminate gesture. Without a caption (and certainly without the pub signs), there is little detectable temperance message. It is not even certain where the figures are placed in relation to the pub entrance. The caption contributes heavily as a guide to an understanding of the image's meaning. This image is ambiguous when studied in isolation. Even if the man is outside the pub, how would the spectator know he had ever been in? Maybe he has just found the child wandering on the pavement. This image alone cannot explain how the little girl is responsible for her father's presence outside the pub. It is the poem which articulates the role of the child as her father's rescuer.

"Why even a little child", said he,
"Hath might in its fragile hand
To draw some foot from perdition back,
Some soul toward a better land."

"Ay, sir, that's so, true as Bible words.
If you please sir, I'd like to tell
How a drunken fellow, like me, gave in
To a bit of a child, like Nell."[33]

Although this particular version depended upon the text for its meaning, it should also be considered alongside many others which did not. If this image had not addressed the threat posed by alcohol to childhood, it would have been the exception to the rule. It could be said that the frequent retelling of the same pictorial story would have prompted the spectator to grasp its meaning. There were many other variations on the same theme.

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[33] *The British Workman*, January 1886, p7.

A more coherent partnership between image and text occurred in the *Band of Hope Review* for 1877. *(Image 4.10)* Here the child looks happily into her father's face as he bears her away, into the rain and away from his astonished fellow drinkers. The compositional detail shows a much clearer balance between the pull of Phoebe's affection, which her father faces, and the temptation upon which the he turns his back. The expressions of relief on their smiling faces could even be said to alter the sense in which the viewer was able to interpret the rain-soaked street. So many other renderings show ragged children and forlorn women, waiting outside the pub in similar bad weather. For them there is no pictured hope and deliverance and the rain adds to an environment of adversity. The rain falling on Phoebe can perhaps be seen as more benign, washing away the fumes of alcohol.

The story surrounds the image and identifies Phoebe's role. 'She was the means of his conversion'. 'Startled and touched by her sudden appearance and disappearance in the arms of her father, the little company of men who had been drinking in the bar-room went out, one after another, and sought their homes.' 'Said one of them ... "our Jenny shall never look for her father in a gin-shop on any night, fair or foul !" ...'[34] Indeed, not only does the text confirm Phoebe's pictured role as her father's rescuer, it argues that the sight of her leads to the conversion of the other drinkers in the bar. The partnership between image and text, on this occasion, works by picturing the child rescuing the parent and confirming the multiple impact of the sight of children in pubs asserted by John Stuart in the passage quoted earlier.

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[34] *The Band of Hope Review*, 1877. The artist is Robert Barnes. This image was reproduced on the title page of the *Band of Hope Treasury* for January 1888, with the caption "I'll have no more drink!"

One classic representation in temperance imagery – usually showing a little girl exerting a passive but powerful influence over adult behaviour in various ways- depicted a small daughter seated on her father's knee. Just such an image *(4.11)* appeared in the *Band of Hope Treasury* for 1885, under the title 'A Child's Influence'.[35] The father, his face in shadow, seems mesmerised by the beseeching face of his daughter. In common with many child rescue images, the form of the child is mostly incorporated into the contours of the adult. In the case of child rescue, this could be said to emphasise the helplessness of the pictured child. As already observed, the rescuing temperance child may have passive, but was actually far from helpless.

There is one highly significant distinguishing feature when comparing the picturing of child rescue and the rescuing temperance child. The relationship between power and control of rescue and pictorial scale has been reversed, so that the rescuer is smaller than the rescued. The rescuer of the child as an object of need was invariably an adult man and was represented as the larger person in the pictorial drama. The child as pictured rescuer in the temperance cause may be smaller, but she has the power of childhood goodness on her side.

The accompanying text articulated the debt owed to children by temperance.

> Those who are called upon to listen to the experiences of men who were once the slaves to drink, but are now delivered from its galling bondage, cannot be struck by the frequent testimony borne to the influence which children have had in their reformation.' ... 'How true the words of Holy Writ - "A little child shall lead them!"[36]

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[35] *The Band of Hope Treasury* No 185, May 1885, title page. This image originally appeared in *The British Workman* in 1883, p180, with the caption "God wants you to be a good man," said Luly.
[36] Ibid., p42-43.

4.5.ii Children's shoes, childhood and conscience

Turning to the issue of children's footwear, it was not always boys who lost their boots as a result of adult intemperance. Girls were also pictured in significant footwear, but the implications could be different for each gender. For the pictured boy and girl alike, it will be argued that shoes had two pictorial functions, to represent childhood itself and as a symbol of the adult conscience.

The magazine *Onward* published a poem in 1877, under the title 'Little Children', that encapsulated the notion that not only would the sight of children's shoes stimulate thoughts of childish innocence and purity, they might even have been considered an art form for the poorer classes.

> Ah ! what picture is so fair
> As the homeliest cabin wall,
> That is garnished with a pair
> Of bright shoes and stockings small ?[37]

This poem painted a picture of poor but respectability domesticity. that was best represented by children's belongings. These shoes and stockings could be said to represent the value placed upon childhood by the writer. The notion that drink could threaten this is made much clearer when a pair of 'bright red shoes', on the feet of the landlady's five year old daughter, became the 'road to Damascus' experience for Bill Brown in a story from *The British Workman* for 1896. Bill sees '[t]hose two little red

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[37] *Onward*, February 1877, p29. By this year the title page carried an extended title ; *Onward A Magazine for Family Reading and Organ of the Band of Hope Movement.*

shoes dancing up and down' which 'took firm hold of his thoughts. They and the empty glasses seemed to have some connecting link between them.'[38]

Bill Brown resolved to leave The Fox and Grapes for ever, and to ensure that 'that part of the money which had once gone towards buying Rosy's red shoes was now to be seen in strong little boots on his own child'.[39] The image *(4.12)* with the story shows a beautifully-dressed little girl, complete with golden ringlets, who stares out at the viewer.[40] Everyone else in the bar looks at her. She is surrounded by the accoutrements of iniquity, the matches, smoke, tankards and beer taps. The light tones of her form tends to isolate her from her surroundings, even her fond mother. Being placed upon the bar puts her on a higher level than anyone else, so that she rises above her surroundings in a formal and a moral sense.

For boys or girls, to be without footwear signified a life of dangerous and reduced circumstances. This was why so many depictions of children at risk portrayed them in bare feet. The image called 'The little bairnies' feet' appeared in both child rescue and temperance periodicals and lantern slides during the nineties[41]. It was included in *The British Workman* for 1894 accompanying a poem called 'To save the little bairnies' feet'. The poem, by Joseph Malins, describes how a police constable approaches an street woman who picks up something bright on the ground. Thinking she has found money or jewellery, the officer challenges her. He finds out she has been picking up

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[38] *The British Workman*, 1896, p19.
[39] Idem.
[40] Idem.
[41] It also appeared in Dr Barnardo's 27th Anniversary Programme for 1894. On different versions, a figure of the police officer dominates the right hand side. His presence suggests these children are about to be saved, arrested, or perhaps both.

pieces of glass to prevent the street children lacerating their feet. The poem concludes with an exhortation to adults.

> Now think we of the solemn truth that, everywhere- today -
> The footsteps of the children are beset with snares alway.
> They tread life's path unconscious of ills that lie in wait,
> But we may clear their pathway and avert an evil fate.

The picturing of boys in bare feet implied a variation in the pictorial story. It is even fair to say that boys who were represented without boots would have been understood to have no worthwhile occupation, while boys in sturdy boots implied an industrious youth. Rehabilitation through training as a shoeblack has already been commented on in this study.[42] Taking up such an occupation meant that cleaning other peoples' shoes gave boys the means by which they could put boots on their own bare feet.

One of the distinctive forms of pictured temperance dealt with the stage in the story before rehabilitation for fathers, which occurred through the agency of their sons' footwear. *(Image 4.13[43])* Seated on the bar, eating a biscuit, is a small boy. On his feet is a pair of scruffy, over-sized boots. The sight of these boots has proved highly amusing to four of the men in the bar. In a corner, a huddled figure hides behind a newspaper with a dismayed expression on what can be seen of his face. The boy's footwear is in the centre of the composition. The child's right foot is being held out by one of the smiling men. The expression on the boy's face implies that the child does not share the joke and this links him with the man behind the paper. Perhaps the

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[42] See 6.2.ii for a discussion of this and other child street trading occupations.
[43] *The British Workman*, No 312, 1880, p45. The artist was W Rainey. A smaller, slightly amended version of this image appeared in the same publication in 1904 with the caption "Look, mates, here's a pair of best Sunday boots for you!". It accompanied a story titled 'In his father's shoes. How Simon escaped the "Black List".'

amusement is at their expense. The text reveals that this boy is starving and the workmen give him something to eat. The only boots this boy can find are his father's , which the child claims are his Sunday best. The man behind the newspaper is his father, who is so ashamed that his son has no footwear of his own to protect his feet, that he reforms.

The 1904 version of this story emphasises the mute appeal of the boy and his forlorn footwear.

> It was a little child, a boy with a wan face that spoke volumes. ... [h]is little feet were thrust into a pair of battered dingy boots big enough for a man. It was the boots the painters were laughing at, and at first sight the appearance of the child was undoubtedly ludicrous. But their laughter soon ceased. The boots might be absurd, but the little limbs almost lost in the huge proportions of the battered coverings to his feet were touching to look upon, and when the men lifted their eyes to the sad face they became silent. The child was mute too. He simply stood there with *his eyes* asking for bread.[44]

The pictorial story relies in part on the difference in scale between the scruffy boots and the small child; while the text tells the spectator that this impact was intended Although thought to be effective, the image also confirms the essentially passive appeal of this type of intervention by children, which was believed to alter adult behaviour in relation to drink.

This image also picks up on the theme of the adult's awakening conscience by including the father figure in the background. He is hiding from the results of his actions which are encapsulated in the pictured child. Not only is his son obliged to wear boots that do not fit, he has also lied to the child in calling them his Sunday-best

footwear. Any adult, either represented within the image or looking at it, would surely have doubted the truth of such a statement. This moral point would have been effective because the trusting child would have taken the words of an adult, in particular those of a parent, at face value. Further, yet another moral dimension can be uncovered by extending the implications of the pictured story. Victorian sons were encouraged to emulate their fathers, so that, one day in the future, they would step into their shoes. Both the image and the text point out that intemperance would prevent this future ever taking place, with drink destroying the livelihood of the father and the well-being of the child. The over-large dilapidated boots could also be said to represent alcohol-induced adult failure while the child symbolises hope for a reformed future.

4.5.iii The pictured child as active redeemer

The chapter now turns to the new role of redeemer assigned to children and childhood in the pictorial forms of temperance. This role was essentially active and was carried out by children who set out to change adult behaviour. 'The Children's Plea' *(image 4.14)* depicts a man surrounded by his children.[45] They are preventing him from entering the pub. Their success in so doing has attracted other drinkers outside, one of whom is remonstrating with either the father or his children. There are two distinct groups in this composition, with a gap between them. Each group signifies a separate camp. The children could be said represent the pull of the family; while the drinkers represent the attractions of alcohol and tobacco. The father is the battleground for their opposing attractions. The text confirms the children's intention.

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[44] *The British Workman and Home Monthly*, 1904, p55.

They [the children] had seen many a homeless, ragged child of the drunkard, with pinched face and hungry wolfish eyes, and perhaps they would soon be like them; and their comfortable warm bed would be taken from under them, and perhaps mother would die, for mother had told them how all these things often came in the train of drink. What could they do to prevent all this ? They were only children, and their father was a strong man; still they determined they would think and think whether they could not help to save poor father, and mother, and the house, and everything from ruin.[46]

The writer created a story which made the children responsible for the welfare of the entire household. However, his style of writing mocked the children's meeting - at which they decide to persuade their father to walk past the pub - in a fashion that is reminiscent of the *Illustrated London News* coverage of a strike by schoolboys in 1889.[47] In both cases, the mockery was achieved by giving the children language which imitated adult terminology without understanding its meaning. In such a way, it was implied that the children were trespassing beyond the boundaries set for Victorian childhood. In the pictured story of 'The Drunkard's Plea', their actions are presented with approval, even if their language is undermined in the text. This suggests there may have been a delineation between proactive behaviour which was acceptable to adults and that which was not.

The same publication carried an image *(4.15)* a year earlier which could be said to have confined the active intervention of the child safely within acceptable limits. We are shown the same location, outside the pub. Although 'Twixt Drink and Duty' looks much the same as 'The Children's Plea', it enacts a pictorial and moral drama which is subtly different. All the formal elements of composition are linked to each other; the

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[45] *The British Workman*, No 53 New Series, 1896, p33. The artist was F W Burton. The accompanying story was called "Take the children with you", by Rev P B Power MA, p34.

pub, the father, the child and the barrow containing plants (presumably the source of the family livelihood). There is no formal gap between them, so that the child could be said to represent a means by which the father and his earnings might remain connected. By turning his head towards the child, the man indicates he may have already decided to turn away from the pub. Most important of all, the child does not intervene between one group of adults and another in this image. The caption supports the interpretation that the role of the depicted child was to remind the adult of his responsibilities in the face of temptation. Both the last two images discussed came from a periodical aimed at adult audiences, working men in particular.

The periodicals of the juvenile temperance movement displayed concern that boys and girls in the movement should be brave enough to confront hostile adult environments and attitudes. Despite all the talk of demon drink and its temptations, the young crusaders were not to be frightened out of their naming and shaming roles. The October 1875 issue of *Onward* carried a representation of a little girl confronting an elderly man. *(Image 4.16)* This is more likely than a reversal of roles, on the grounds that the child carries no hint of misdemeanour in her portrayal. Both challenger and challenged wear grim, or tight expressions. It is a snowy scene outside the pub. Behind the two protagonists, two adults carry on an animated conversation, which may be a separate drama to the action in the foreground. The little girl stands directly between them and the spectator. Both she and the old man are shown in profile, making eye contact. The caption tells us that the girl has sought out the old man by name to discuss his drinking habits.

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[46] Ibid., p34.
[47] See *ILN.*, October 12, 1889, p458, 'A strike of schoolboys'.

"You know my name!" - you little elf,
"You've seen me rather tipsy !"
Suppose I takes a glass myself,
What's that to you, young gipsy ?"[48]

The poem describes how the child's fear of a rowdy public house is counteracted by the old man's amusement at being accosted by a girl young enough to be his grand-daughter. This amusement softens his irritation at her interference and leads to her success in inducing him to take the pledge. The message being given by temperance to young campaigners here was that adult figures of fear were not always frightening.

Young readers of the *Band of Hope Review* could take comfort from the solidity of the garden gate which separated a young campaigner from his friend's intemperate father in an image *(4.17)* from 1877.[49] The boy's erect, upright stance confirms him as a hero in defence of his friend, who cowers under the bushes. Their contrasting poses aligns moral strength and courage with the temperance cause and fear with the hapless victims of drink. Like the little girl appealing to her father, the boy is much smaller than the man, but has taken charge and plays a principal role in the dramatic action, which pitches good against evil.

My argument so far has been that the pictorial role of redeemer in temperance was assigned to children to show them taking action which would result in a change in adult behaviour. It could be said that since adults created the role, children, at most, were represented as their instruments of change. This would fit very well with Shiman's

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[48] *Onward*, October 1st, 1875, p195. The full poem is on the facing page (194) under the title 'Pray little maid'. It was written by William Hoyle, who was Honorary Secretary of the Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union and editor of *Onward*. Hoyle was a prolific writer of temperance hymns, many of which appeared in temperance periodicals.
[49] The *Band of Hope Review*, 1877, p60.

description of children as weapons in adult hands. There is also a crucial distinction to be made between desirable action for the pictured child and their real-life counterparts. When childhood was pictured as a notion, it could be shaped rather more easily to suit the particular requirements of the philanthropic cause. The ambivalence towards some aspects of children's initiative and self-reliance which tended to emerge in accompanying texts has already been noted. Nonetheless, the role of active redeemer was perhaps the most powerful new option offered to the picturing of children and childhood by the movement. In such images, it could be said that the 'might of the child' in the battle between moral forces came into its own.

4.5.iv The pictured child as observer

One other new role remains to be discussed, that of the child observing the more negative aspects of adult human behaviour. Such representations were neither frequent nor plentiful, but their very existence identified and brought to the fore a very distinctive feature of pictured temperance. Although it seems to be another passive option for images of childhood, it was comparatively radical. There were plenty which depicted the child unaffected by alcohol and gazing with wonder and pity at the drunkard's children. Even in these cases, child readers were encouraged not to condemn. The idea that the child could be pictured in such a way as to suggest that the adult was absurd or ludicrous was rather different. It could be said that this ran the risk of letting the might of the child go too far. It will be argued that the limits of such picturing, like that of the redeemer, were carefully delineated within a moral framework.

One such image *(4.18)* from 1890 shows a dishevelled man, in once-fine clothes, striking a pose with his walking stick in the middle of an industrial street.[50] The battered hat and cane could be said to convey the impression that he wishes to be taken for a gentleman. His mouth is open and his face is contorted. To the left and behind him stand two little girls. It seems reasonable to assume that they are playing on the streets local to their homes, and that this is mainly a district for the families of working men. One ignores him, while the other looks up from her skipping rope and gazes at him. This man is isolated, separate. He attracts attention but he does not command it, as he once did. His pose parodies what he once used to be. The sub-title and the opening sentence of the tract confirms the man as 'a born gentleman'. The children are witnessing a fall from grace, a waste of the advantages with which he started out in life. The caption is not an allusion to the bird, but to the high-born surname of the aristocratic toper. That children were pictured as forming any kind of judgment on their social superiors was unusual, and, arguably, risky.

The nature of the risk becomes more difficult to determine, when the depicted neighbourhood was more affluent and the toper was pictured as 'respectable', but not aristocratic. This later tract image *(4.19)* of 1895 shows a woman slumped against some railings, while two boys study her with some disapproval.[51] None of the boys are related to the woman, although one of the men is her 'intended'. He is shocked by her drunkeness and gets rid of his adult companion as soon as possible, before sending 'one of the gaping boys' for a cab.[52] All the children in this image are detached observers, unconnected in any way with the adults. Like the previous image, the canes, or walking

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[50] *British Temperance League's Pictorial Tract* No 301, November 1890.
[51] *British Temperance League's Pictorial Tract* No 352, February 1895.

sticks, are in evidence again, carried by both boys in the foreground and one of the men in the background. It is perhaps not too fanciful to suggest that such canes represented the power of authority, since most gentleman were pictured carrying them in street scenes. A more prosaic reason may have been for protection, but this is debatable in this image. The two boys have each other for protection, and it is surely an odd co-incidence that the angle of two of the sticks is more-or-less replicated. It could be said that the sticks link the foreground scene, to the sub-plot behind, where two bowler hatted men are in critical conversation with a boy who clings to the railings. One interpretation of this image is that the proper order of things, the superior status of adults to children is being confirmed in the background, while the boys are able to disapprove of the woman because of her drunken behaviour. Their heads are level with hers, while the men in the background tower above the boy.

While the pictorial forms of temperance were full of respectful children gazing raptly at adults as positive role models; it has been argued that the representation of adults as negative role models required more careful handling. This is one possible reason for the paucity of examples. On the evidence, the didactic moral intent behind such representations was not a warning to children not to copy the negative behaviour. That is, they were not the negative mirror image of the sober, honest, thrifty, hard-working artisan who played his harmonium and pasted up his wall-papers from *The British Workman*. Their purpose was not to reinforce acceptable behaviour in adulthood. The role of the pictured child as an observer of negative adult behaviour offered an

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[52] Idem.

opportunity to instruct children in pity, not criticism, and, at the same time, to lecture them on the sin of pride.

An improbable story in *Onward* in 1875 describes how a young Italian boy wishes to enter a competition to design a Band of Hope Pledge card. A visitor admires Giovanni's design,

> ... especially the idea of help to be given by the Band of Hope children to the drunken man. Too often, I think, there is a great deal of pride in these youthful teetotalers and they look with contempt on the poor drunkards; they say in actions, if not in words, "Stand by, I am holier than thou".[53]

Giovanni replies: '... if any Band of Hope boys and girls so far forget themselves as to do that, be sure it is the effect of their own sinful hearts and not the teaching of that God-given grace of Temperance' ... 'the child who becomes a true and conscientious disciple of Temperance will seek to be more noble, more pure, more self-denying, *above all more humble*, because of his discipleship.'[54] (My emphases) The fictional young Band of Hope campaigner was made to say that negative judgment by the child on the behaviour of adults was foreign to Temperance. All the positive influence of childhood was due to children's responsibilities as God's disciples, and not from any innate capacity for better behaviour than adults.

It has been argued that the pictured child as observer offered the temperance movement the opportunity to redress any imbalance that may have been created by the attribution of influence to children over adult behaviour. The habitual responsibility for guidance

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[53] *Onward*, 1876, pp51-60. M A Paull, Chapter III of 'Blossom and Blight', 'How Giovanni Brunelleschi employed his time'.

and moral instruction is thereby taken back from pictured childhood and reassigned to its place in the real world with the adult. More than any other pictured role, the use made by the movement of the child as observer left the movement with dual notions of the child as both priceless social influence and as pupils for their instruction.

[54] Idem.

4.6 Conclusions

When looking at aspects of the fragmented and divided campaigning which made up the Victorian temperance movement, it has seemed fair to accept Shiman's view that temperance created a world picture, with its own cultural history, placing its own activities and characters at its centre. This was done as a matter of intention, to set in place an identifiable position from which the juvenile recruit could interpret the world. This study looks at the child as an *actor* in this world picture, rather than as a recipient of its influence, a perspective which has been largely ignored by scholars. As a set of ideas, temperance addressed all aspects of the world it had created, which led it to instruct adults and children in aspects of behaviour which, at times, had everything to do with morality and little to do with alcohol. The temperance world picture often took the form of a moral battle between good and evil, created with the verbal imagery of the Old and New Testament. There can be little doubt that the pictured child was seen as fighting on the side of the forces of morality, and that temperance saw children, by and large, as symbols of goodness and hope for the future.

Indeed, both adult and juvenile audiences would have been accustomed to images which emphasised the helpless appeal of the child, while confirming the active intervention of the adult male. These could be said to represent the survival of hope in the face of considerable danger and threat. The divergence from such images, of which temperance was capable, can be detected in the picturing of the child's salvation from his or her own character or behaviour. It has been argued that such images had nothing to do with intemperance in either children or adults, rather that temperance promoted two very different codes of conduct in Victorian age relations, which were nonetheless linked by the adult's responsibility for directing the child.

Temperance offered some new roles to the pictured child, which were quite distinctive. It has been suggested that the temperance child as the agent of adult rescue was depicted as passive, but far from helpless. This pictorial shift in the balance of age relations found its formal reflection in the reversal of scale between rescuer and rescued. The might of the child was pictorially enhanced by the power of goodness she had on her side in the moral battle against the evil influence of drink. It has also been claimed that the pictorial record shows that the depiction of children's footwear had two main pictorial functions; these were to represent childhood, or the threat to childhood posed by alcohol, and act as a symbol of the awakening adult conscience.

The pictured role of redeemer has been put forward as offering the most scope for the child to be understood as active in changing adult attitudes and behaviour. Examples have been discussed which indicate that proactive behaviour in children was acceptable to adults in prescribed ways and in other cases was frowned on. When in the redeeming role, the pictured child was meant, in part, to remind the adult of his responsibilities in the face of temptation. Its other main function was to encourage children to be brave enough to confront the hostile environments and attitudes for which alcohol was held responsible in the temperance world picture. Although seeming to empower the child and alter the unequal nature of Victorian age relations, the pictured child redeemer was still a role created by adults, who would, when they believed it to be necessary, find children in real-life guilty of the sin of pride, if they assumed any kind of ownership of it.

The picturing of the child as an observer of intemperate adult behaviour seems, on first sight, to unsettle the balance of power in a similar way. It has been argued that although such images appeared to offer children an opportunity to feel superior to adults, they were conceived as a platform for instruction, not an invitation to condemn. At no point has it been argued that the pictured child was intended to look subversive, although children were represented as powerful weapons of redemption in a safe pair of adult hands. Such hands were meant to be understood as those of the temperance campaigner, with the pictured child as his shield and his hope for the future.

The world picture created by temperance also had some new and unaccustomed roles for adults, particularly men. The evil influence of alcohol drew in the men (and women) from all stations in life, who failed to resist its temptation. This meant that the representation of men as victims, though rare in philanthropic imagery, was common in temperance. Against such a powerful adversary, all had to be recruited to defend God's kingdom, including real-life children and the pictured child. This did not extend to equality in the ranks or to the need to alter the balance of power in age relations. In such a world picture, the might of the child was relative and contained.

It seems likely that given this position of relative power and responsibility, adults might have had particular reasons for picturing themselves in relation to children and childhood. The next chapter of this study will discuss what philanthropic imagery discloses about these reasons and their pictorial characteristics.

CHAPTER FIVE

Significant Adults: the picturing of adults in the child's world

1869 - 1908

5. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the roles that adults assigned themselves in the picturing of childhood which, it has been argued, played an active and complex role in charitable work. Children were often pictured as sharing the philanthropic stage with adults. This study has concentrated on the depicted child until this point, and will now turn its attention to the other partner in Victorian age relations. In showing men and women in the service of a good cause, what reasons might there have been for adults to picture themselves in relation to children and childhood? To demonstrate that philanthropic imagery was largely in step with its cultural companions, some contemporaneous publications exploring both adulthood and childhood will also be discussed. The search for the rationale for the pictured adult in the child's world presents another related question which requires an answer. What does the joint depiction of both parties to Victorian age relations have to impart about the significance of childhood to contemporaneous adults in general, and to men in particular?

Nearly all the images to be discussed in this chapter depict some type of adult intervention in the world of childhood. That adults believed themselves to be responsible for the creation and protection of such a world - increasingly separate from the rest of civil society - has been a constant and ever-present theme throughout this study. It is now time to consider why this world was of such importance to its creators.

This will be done by looking first at the perceived responsibilities and achievements by adults on behalf of children, and by briefly reviewing what progress was believed to have been made during the nineteenth century. The material will then be divided into two main sections, devoted to the picturing of men and women respectively. The depiction of men in charitable imagery will be given close attention, taking first their picturing as fathers and in other familial roles. The special significance assigned to childhood as a notion will be described as an integral part of this pictorial activity. Some of the other male roles - as officers of the law and gentlemen rescuers - will then be covered. The section on men will include an account of how Dr Thomas Barnardo became aware of the need for a juvenile wing for his child rescue work through a dream, the picturing of which was later published.

The next main section of the chapter will address the major roles assigned to women in the philanthropic picturing of the child's world. It will describe and discuss how their pictorial characterization as mothers, carers and nurses contributed to the whole. The chapter will conclude that the picturing of adults in the child's world provided a far from simple, one-dimensional means by which Victorian society addressed some very difficult and contentious issues. In doing so, it will suggest that modern treatments of the Victorian child, which limit images of childhood to the passive object of the erotic adult gaze, fail to acknowledge the full contemporaneous meaning of childhood and the picturing of the child's world for its many audiences. The controversial work of James Kincaid was discussed at the beginning of this study. This chapter on adult pictorial roles will conclude with some arguments put forward by Carolyn Steedman which relate to adult spectatorship and control of the Victorian child.

5.1 Adult responsibility for the child's world

A review of the progress made by adults in making the child's world safer since the Queen's accession appeared in the magazine for the National Children's Homes in 1901. This piece of editorial also served to introduce the latest Christmas collecting box to subscribers. The closed box illustrated the fictional scene when Oliver Twist asked for more food in the workhouse. The box was opened by putting a coin in it and, once open, depicted Christmas dinner at the Home. The editorial explained the contrast between the two pictures.

> The idea is to represent by pictures the difference in the life of children of the poor at the beginning of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century'. 'Oliver Twist was intended by Dickens to represent the appeal of oppressed children of that time, and the story of his wrongs is by no means exaggerated.[1]

This passage suggests that on this occasion Oliver Twist was chosen to personify the misery of childhood at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The salvation of children from the serial horrors of parish apprentices sold into Lancashire and the abuse of child workers in the coal mines, brickfields, factories and chimneys, was attributed to the work of adult reformers. '[T]he representations of men like Thomas Oastler, Michael Thomas Sadler, and greatest of all, Lord Shaftesbury, have won for the children of the poor what Oliver Twist sought in vain.'[2] Dickens's boy character had asked for more and failed to get it. The National Children's Homes magazine

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[1] *Highways and Hedges*, November 1901, p252. 'Our New Christmas Box'. Having remarked on how difficult it was to find innovative ways of raising money, the editorial commented further on the Christmas Dinner Table Box: '... after some years of experiment we find that it one of the very best means of making our work known, as well as securing a substantial contribution to our annual income.'
[2] Idem.

compared the bad 'Old Times' he represented with the plenty offered to the rescued waifs by the work of child rescue. By 1901, the world of childhood was believed to have benefited from the 'New Times' brought in by campaigning adults.[3]

These passages could be said to contain a number of contemporaneous assumptions about Victorian age relations. The most transparent of these was a growing understanding that adults had previously taken advantage of children, as parents, carers and as employers. The picturing of child saving suggests that the perpetrators were also perceived as the rescuers. I have argued that while textual accounts of child rescue work acknowledged the ability of poor children to help each other, its picturing almost invariably assigned the capacity for remedial action to adults. So it is not surprising that the magazine of the National Children's Home concluded that Oliver Twist was unable to right his own wrongs even though '[t]he children's charter has been won'.[4] It had been won on their behalf. By and large, adults had been successful in improving the lot of the poor child, while appealing for continuing help in combating the impact of poverty. It was thought by campaigners that the pictured child represented an overwhelming appeal for aid, one that a Christian society would find difficult to ignore.

This did not mean that palliative intervention in the child's world was confined to the relief of deprivation and the prevention of abuse. Children were often exhorted and encouraged to follow certain codes of behaviour which would preserve notions of an acceptable childhood, free of the taint of bitter experience. Indeed, it has been argued that temperance campaigners extended these exhortations to saving children from

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[3] Idem.
[4] Ibid., p253.

themselves. This study now turn to what pictures tell us about intervention and participation in the child's world by adults, taking each gender in turn.

5.2 The representation of men in pictured philanthropy

The depiction of men necessarily relates, in part, to their picturing in the domestic sphere, a zone of Victorian society which has been more immediately associated with the influence of women.[5]

5.2.i Fathers and families

The home was most frequently represented as somewhere to which the father of the family returned from his place of work, whether this was the factory, the office or the sea. There were innumerable philanthropic depictions of the sailor or fisherman being embraced on the threshold, and the banker or clerk in his fireside chair, surrounded by loving children. The family group, completed by the father's return, was a particularly common image in philanthropic periodicals during the month leading up to Christmas.[6] The title page of *The British Workman* for December 1900 showed just such a scene.

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[5] For an analysis of the separation of public and private life, with the relegation of women to the domestic sphere, service work and women's trades, see *The Culture of Capital : art, power and the nineteenth century middle class*, edited by Janet Wolff and John Seed, 1988, chapter 4. This also describes how women were involved in philanthropic societies as visitors rather than officers, in the service of a good cause rather than directing it.

[6] The December 1871 issue of the juvenile temperance periodical, the *Band of Hope Treasury* carried a typical illustration with the self explanatory caption *"Good Night" - Father's good night kiss.* The accompanying text urged readers to contrast the happy scene drawn for them by the artist with 'those unhappy ones who at this moment may be looking from the miry street with sad hearts and hungry faces at those homes whose household fires light up scenes of domestic bliss ....' 'think of them, abandoned to poverty, filth and vice, to vicious parents ...' '... aid us to rescue these poor little ones from their sin and misery ...'. p112.

(Image 5.1[7]*)* Father has returned home on Christmas Eve, and his bag is already being rifled as a likely source of presents. As he takes off his coat, helped by his adoring wife, his son holds the huge trussed turkey which will be the centrepiece of the family meal on the following day. Assuming all these pictorial characters are related, they form an inner circle in the centre of the composition, with father's head at the top. This could be said to confirm his position as head of the home. Slightly outside the circle, and in the background, sits a smiling grandmother, her widow's status suggested by her cap. She is joined to the family circle by the supper table, with its loaf of bread, jug, cup and saucer, cutlery and cloth. These convey the impression that she is fed and supported in the home. The role of food provider is expressed through another visual element, the passing of the turkey between father to son. The comfort and security of the scene are suggested as an outcome from, and a consequence of, the man's labour outside the family unit.

The significance of the breadwinning father to the family unit was not always conveyed by putting him inside the family circle. In 'Father's Welcome Home' *(image 5.2)* from 1871, the children lead their father back across the threshold of the family cottage.[8] Inside, the mother and two grandparents wait patiently for his entry. The father, his daughters and baby borne aloft are bathed in a light which contrasts with the dark interior. The light area of the doorway encloses them as a separate tableau. While his wife and older family members wait inside to greet him, it could be said that the father inhabits the same sunshine world as his children.

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[7] *The British Workman*, No 108, New Series, Whole No. 552, December 1900, title page. 'Christmas Eve', 'from a drawing by Charles H Finnemore'.

5.2.ii Grandfathers

'Father's Welcome Home' depicts father, son and grandfather standing in a line which leads through the doorway. The boy stands between the two adults. Although this may have been a totally chance configuration in this particular image, it will serve as an introduction to the connection made between aging and memories of childhood which, it will be argued, had a particular resonance in the visual representation of men. It was quite common for grandfathers to be depicted with their little granddaughters sitting on their laps. *The Children's Advocate* for February 1875 shows a sleeping child, curled against the shoulder of an elderly man, who reads from a book which the caption implies is a sacred text. *(Image 5.3[9])* He seems not at all discomfited by her lack of attention. It seems reasonable to argue that spectators might have made three different interpretations of this image, each of which suggested a different relationship. The caption for the illustration - "His precious word" - referred to the word of God. This could have led viewers to believe that this image pictured a devout old man contemplating his relationship with the Almighty. Such an interpretation would explain why the child's inattention to his reading matter is irrelevant. Indeed, there are many other pictorial examples where failure to listen to moral advice from adults was roundly condemned. By sleeping, the child demonstrates her complete trust and confidence in the man's ability to keep her safe. This way of interpreting the image could be said to address the tranquil nature of relationships which leap a generation between grandparent and grandchild. A third relationship could be pictured here. Locked into the centre of its composition are three connected forms - the religious book, the head of

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[8] *Band of Hope Treasury*, No 19, July 1871, title page. This image was used again in the same publication with the caption 'An Evening Welcome'.

the child and that of her grandfather. These elements might have been understood as depicting the mediation of childhood innocence in the relationship between the holy and the human. The picturing of children as closer to God than adults was quite common, to an extent which justifies its discussion at greater length in the next chapter of this study.

Although grandfathers and children were frequently pictured in relationships of mutual affection, it was often the text rather than the image which suggested that young children were one of the consolations of old age. The pictures have something different and separate to say. Where the texts would talk of the comforts of children, the pictures

[9] *The Children's Advocate*, February 1875, back page.

served as a place of contemplation upon the early years from a position of maturity.

5.2.iii The loss of childhood

Although children aged as well as adults, a particular kind of gentle sadness, or melancholy, infused the recorded perception of childhood. In 1881, the *Children's Advocate* carried an article by Alexander Raleigh with the title 'How our children leave us'. He appealed to readers to imagine a photograph album and their responses to the change in the children depicted in its pages.

> "Why, I have lost these children. Surely they have gone from me. Has God taken them ?" No, they are "about" you still. They are beside you now, looking at the pictures, much amused that they should be pictures of themselves. They can see no resemblance to the image they see every day in the glass. *So they vanish from us, even when they live, and we see them no more.* The little girl with the ringlets is a wayfarer, who is tarrying with you only for a night. She will go on again in the morning toward womanhood. An the sunny boy will keep her company on the way to his manhood.[10] (My emphasis)

The language in this passage conveys a sense of abandonment and loss; such was the perceived impact on adult sensibilities of children leaving the state of childhood. The older generation regrets the passage of their offspring to adulthood as children, and this bereavement is expressed in visual terms. Although they still have the photographs - and so can still have sight of their children - these very same images represent the capture and loss of childhood. This bitter-sweetness is heightened when their sons and daughters fail to recognize their former selves. Indeed, the passage suggests they view their own picturing with some amusement.

Why should this tender melancholy have been of greater significance to men than women? A number of contemporary publications provide further evidence for this chapter's assertion that men were considered particularly vulnerable to the impact of the childhood ideal on their sensibilities. An 1882 publication - *Cheerful Homes - How to get and How to keep them* - contains an elegiac poem encased within a series of cameo images. *(Image 5.4*[11]*)* At the top of the page, a circular frame contains a portrayal of a man sitting by the fireside with his grand daughter. The frame links together the poem and a series of tiny images around another fireside scene from his own youth. At the foot of the page is a flower motif, which, not uncommonly, signified the passing of time for Victorians. The tiny images represent the grandfather's many memories from his own childhood. His sadness is for his own aging, his own irretrievable loss of childhood. As well as his grand daughter, he sees himself in his mind's eye, asking his own father for stories of long-ago youth.

Ah, little lips, you
touch the spring
Of sweetest sad remembering,
And hearth and heart
flash all aglow
With ruddy tints of long ago.[12]

Contemporaneous publications lend weight to argument that this sense of 'sweetest sad remembering' may have been greater for men because of the nature of their transition into adulthood. For some Victorians, the gulf between the bliss of unknowing innocence, which was childhood, and the corrosive demands of life in the public

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[10] *The Children's Advocate*, 1881, p96.
[11] J W Kirton, *Cheerful Homes - How to get and How to keep them*, 1882, Illustrated Book Collection, University of Central Lancashire.
[12] Idem., "At the Fireside", second stanza. The poet was John D Long. The artist is unknown.

domain, was acutely felt. To some writers, a child was best left ignorant of both the pain and pleasure of growing up.

> Sleep on, sleep on! Oh, manhood's dreams
> Are all of earthly pain or pleasure,
> Of Glory's toils, Ambition's schemes,
> Of cherished love or hoarded treasure;
> But to the couch where Childhood lies
> A more delicious trance is given,
> Lit up by rays from seraph eyes,
> And glimpses of remembered heaven.[13]

This passage comes from an 1869 collection of views on childhood. It opens with the recorded perception that very young children were the natural companions of angels. A circular image *(5.5)* at the head of the opening page shows a literal interpretation of this theme, one which appeared frequently in philanthropy's pictures.[14] On other occasions, children themselves were pictured as angels, or their faces would be given wings. It could be said that the child depicted in company with, or as, an angel, did not represent children, so much as adult grief over lost and recalled youth.

Compared to this yearning for what, perhaps, never was, the view of Benjamin Disraeli on the transition to adult life was positively brisk. 'Almost everything that is great has been done by youth. ... Pascal wrote a great work at sixteen, the greatest of Frenchmen, and died at thirty-seven. ... It is needless to multiply instances. The history of heroes is the history of youth.'[15]

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[13] *The Nobility of Life. Its Graces and Virtues*, 1869, Illustrated Book Collection, University of Central Lancashire. An anthology on life's different stages, including 'Childhood'. This particular poem is titled 'Childhood', by W Mackworth Praed. The verse quoted is the third of three stanzas.
[14] Ibid., p162.
[15] Ibid., section on 'Youth', p174.

So not all the recorded observations of Victorian men confirmed a sense of loss for an ideal state. To evaluate the recollections of Victorian writers of both genders lies outside the scope of this study. However, it seems reasonable to argue that the male transition from childhood to adulthood also involved a move out into the world, into the public domain. If it is accepted that this was a double transition, then it follows that male writers would record its passing with a greater sense of loss. In this sense, it is arguable that girls were obliged to become women in the Victorian private sphere and therefore never entirely left the general circumstances which constructed childhood. Possibly this made their sense of loss for an ideal childhood less well-defined and sharp.

It has been argued so far that the picturing of men in familial roles had two possible main functions. They were depicted as being responsible for providing a home which constituted the foundations of the child's world. Many such images show the celebration and adoration by both women and children of the male provider role. With increasing age, the visual representation of childhood served as a reminder of what was lost in the adult world. As men left behind both their early years and the securities of the domestic sphere, the contrast between the hazards of public life and the sunshine of remembered childhood made its loss even sharper.

5.2.iv The public father

So far this chapter has discussed the philanthropic picturing of men within the family. Philanthropic imagery reveals that a strong link existed between the role of father in the private domain and rescuer in the public domain. This was certainly true of the most prominent campaigner in the work of child rescue, Dr Barnardo. At the time of his

death in 1905, he was acclaimed as the father of the children he brought from the streets into his homes.[16] When Dr Barnardo gave a public account of how Jim Jarvis, the first waif he encountered, led him to a group of eleven boys sleeping rough, he hoped that the visual portrayal of the scene 'may stimulate to deeds of pity, and awaken kind thoughts of sympathy for my "bairns"'[17]. He used these images many times over, both in lantern slide lectures and in the Home's Annual Reports, subscriber magazines and journals. His recorded language when describing his first rescue was very like that of a parent talking affectionately of biological children. However, when the various visual and textual accounts of the creation of the Young Helpers' League in December 1891 are studied, a relationship of far greater complexity emerges.

According to its own magazine, the League was 'a Union of Boys and Girls, chiefly of the Upper and Middle Classes, in aid of crippled, blind, deaf and dumb, and sick children of the Waif Class'.[18] Dr Barnardo described how a dream helped him found the youth wing of his organization. In his dream, children prompted him to save a child from drowning. The accompanying small image *(5.6)* portrays the moment of rescue,

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[16] An undated photograph in the Barkingside Collection is captioned 'Dr Barnardo and children' and shows him surrounded by four ragged street children. Negative D35, Barnardo photographic archive, Barkingside.

[17] For an account of his speech, see *Night and Day*, 1881, p192. The accompanying image was *Jim Jarvis shows Dr Barnardo waifs asleep*, reproduced on p195. Negative D39, photographic archive, Barkingside Image Collection.

[18] *Young Helpers League Magazine*, First Series Jan 1892-December 1894 volume, inside front cover. All the editorial items in the volume were fictionalised accounts of rescue by Dr Barnardo's Homes or an appeal to children and their friends for money. Barnardo wrote about the treatment of child rescue work in the juvenile magazine in *Night and Day*. 'The necessity for such a periodical has long been felt. Many of the narratives of child rescue that have to be published in the columns of *NIGHT & DAY* exhibit the seamy side of human nature, and they ought to do so. It would be wrong in the extreme to conceal from the public the sad facts which underlie, and what necessitates our work - facts which cry aloud, alike to the public conscience and to the Christian heart, and which constitute the very *raison d'être* of our Institutions. But touch these subjects as delicately as we may, there are yet many aspects of our rescue work which is not desirable that young children, whether boys or girls, should be familiar with.' (*Night and Day*, 1892, p15.) The child members of the League were called Companions, a group of which was a Habitation, each under the charge of an adult committee.

as the tiny child reaches out from the water to the large adult hand. Another, posthumous account of his dream gave more detail.

> He dreamed one night that, just as he was stretching out a hand to a poor drifting boy, being borne away by the river, he heard a child's voice behind him : "We will hold you, Sir, don't be afraid". He felt the children's hands catch his feet, so that he was able to stretch out still further from the river bank, and grasp the drowning lad. That dream embodies the idea of the Barnardo's Helpers' League.[19]

This rendering of the dream strongly suggests that the active intervention of the children enabled him to fulfil his rescuer role, which he would have failed to do without their help. A contrast emerges between the pictorial account provided for juvenile audiences and the textual relationship described to wider adult readerships. One image *(5.7)* does clearly depict Dr Barnardo's reliance on the help of the children. Unfortunately, whether or not this piece of archive material was ever published is unknown. This unusual image shows the dream children holding on to the man, on the bank above a deep river. These children pinion his legs as he leans out over the water to reach the hand of the drowning child. They have been assigned the role of rescuer of the rescuer, a pictorial role in philanthropy almost unknown outside a dream.

It is not possible to firmly establish what perceptions Barnardo had of children in general, although his passionate commitment to their welfare was incontrovertible. There is some pictorial evidence to suggest that he identified with their persecuted state, although this is not substantiated by the text. In January 1892, as editor of the *Young Helpers' League Magazine*, Barnardo began a lengthy, serialised story about a street boy, Waif, a ward Sister in the Home, and a character called Scavenger. Scavenger was

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[19] *Happiness*, 1935, A Dr Barnardo's fundraising publication, p77.

'said to be a Professional Street Sweeper, who kept a Muck Rake to rummage the Slums'[20]. This character was actually Barnardo's fictionalised personification of himself. When this fiction was pictured, *(image 5.8)* Barnardo was represented as a child.[21] Scavenger is shown being dragged into a grim castle by two men, one with a huge club, the other wielding a whip. The castle is the Court of Appeal and the gatekeepers are 'Parental Authority' and 'Parental Rights'. Both image and text conveyed Barnardo's strong sense justice for children, of the need for a protector against children's powerful adversaries. However, Scavenger is depicted as a child, as a victim of adult persecution. While the text makes clear that Barnardo cast himself as Scavenger, the seeker-out of neglected children, the image retains the compelling drama of the pictured child fighting great odds. To summarise, what emerges from this short investigation into the pictorial roles assigned to Barnardo by himself and others, is a multiple cast of father, protector, rescuer, object of rescue and victim.

5.2.v Other male public roles

It will now be assumed that Barnardo was an inspirational maverick and that this could be said to explain his many and varied pictured roles. This section on the representation of men in the child's world will conclude with a consideration of some rather more conventional public roles in pictured philanthropy, the gentleman reformer and the officer of the law. The front page of *Night and Day* for 1 March 1878 is

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[20] *Young Helpers' League Magazine*, Jan 1892 - December 1894 volume, p34.
[21] Idem. The artist's initials, 'A.P.' stand for A Pearse, an artist who worked for Barnardo over a long period, making drawings at the Annual General Meetings, and the free teas provided for hundreds of street children at a time. His drawings have an integrity to them, which combined compassion with a sense of individual identity emerging from the mass.

dominated by a representation of a moment of discovery. *(Image 5.9[22])* A boy acquaintance has led a gentleman to a desolate spot on the docks, and points out a ragged child asleep under a wooden structure. The weather is inclement and the child has no covering. The three characters in this image form a triangle shape, with the inclined back of the gentleman forming its left side. This compositional device was frequently used in both child rescue and temperance imagery. Usually a adult hand would be extended towards the child, in horror or consolation. Sometimes children were depicted fleeing before wrathful pursuers, often officers of the law, but usually the relationship portrayed was benign. A temperance story from 1900 recounted how a street boy was accosted by a policeman, who then softened when the orphan's tragic tale was told. The officer became angry when the boy refused to go to a home for destitute boys. He is persuaded to follow Tommy to the Carriers Arms, where the boy shows him two infants, who he is looking after. The image *(5.10)* depicts the moment when Tommy and the police officer arrive at the back of the cart.[23] Although the two little boys look frightened and cower away from the light, it is more difficult to determine whether Tommy leans towards the officer or has just been released from a firm grip. This ambivalent shifting between safety and danger, official compassion and stern authority can be seen at work in other images. When considered in relation to each other, they suggest that the pictured male outside the family was both a reassuring and a formidable figure in the child's world.

The correct identification was further complicated on occasion by the impact of contemporaneous humour. 'Podgie's Nightmare' *(image 5.11)* depicts a boy shrinking

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[22] *Night and Day*, March 1, 1878, title page. "We discovered ... under some heavy timbers ... an outcast boy". The artist's initials 'H.J.R.' stand for H J Rhodes, whose work appeared in the *Children's*

away from a police officer who stands beside his bed.[24] Pictorially, there is no doubt that the man is threatening the boy. The accompanying verses seem to confirm that the relationship is one of persecutor and victim.

> There was only one man Podgie held
> as a foe -
> A burly policeman, tall, heavy and
> slow;
> Who passed Podgie's house on his
> beat every night,
> And filled the lad's bosom with
> tremors of fright.

Eventually, the text reveals that the crime is Podgie's, which reverses the pictorial dynamic of age relations in this case. A boy of modest means, he over-indulged at the one Christmas party he had ever attended in his life. Too much plum-pudding led to nightmares, which, in turn, produced 'the great burly vision' with the lantern which 'glared, like the eye of a fiend, in his own.' It could be said that the hidden intention in aligning the image with the poem was to ridicule or admonish the child. As an editorial device it would never have worked with its audiences, if they had not accepted the visual convention that uniformed men were usually represented as trustworthy characters. This convention ensured that if the pictured officer was not in the wrong, then the pictured child had to be. The pictorial credibility of 'Podgie's Nightmare', for its audiences, rested on a moral discourse which undermined the child's entitlement to sympathy and comfort, and the perceived necessity of his punishment for lacking in self-control.

Advocate.
[23] *Onward*, 1900, p140. 'Tommy's Charges' by B E Slade.

Even if the multiplicity of Barnardo's pictured roles are set to one side, it has been argued that men, essentially, were depicted as setting the boundaries in the child's world. Sometimes they as shown as the agents of safety, but also as the administrators of correction. Where the image alone might suggest the man, in the public interest, was a threat to the child's world, this impression would usually be counter-acted by the text and by the preponderance of benign picturing of Victorian age-relations.

5.3 The visual representation of women in the child's world

Given the enormous amount of academic literature devoted to the visual representation of women, it seems appropriate to reiterate that this study will strictly confine itself to depictions of women's relationship to the child's world. It is further demarcated by its focus on philanthropy's pictures and their cultural context. It would be deceptively straightforward to select equivalent roles for women in relation to children which corresponded to their male counterparts and to describe their visual representation in this section. If this readily-available method were to be adopted, examples could easily be found of women portrayed as mothers, carers, nurses and, occasionally, teachers.

One objection to adopting this method without question, is that it takes insufficient account of the extent to which the pictorial worlds of womanhood and childhood overlapped. A very large proportion of the women represented in philanthropic imagery shared the passive characteristics of children in child rescue work. This was because their pictorial functions were much the same. Very often, women were pictured responding to male activity, and to its negative impact on their sphere. As an example

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[24] *Onward*, 1900, p23.

of this, to portray a woman in a public house or in a dark street would mean, almost invariably, that male behaviour had jolted her out her proper orbit in the home. Women were perceived as sharing the domestic sphere with children. In the way they were depicted, women did not rule over the domestic kingdom, they carried out a benevolent regency on behalf of the absent male monarch. As long as they remained loyal subjects, their special but conditional status was assured. Perhaps the largest distinction that can be made between the representation of women and of children in philanthropy's pictures is that children were depicted as the victims of either gender, while women were shown as suffering at the hands of men.

5.3.i Nurturing at home

Other grounds for wariness in assigning to pictured women the equivalent of male roles on the charitable stage lie in the origination of such images, and the notions that lay behind them. With men, it was possible to consider the pictorial roles they bestowed upon themselves. In the case of women, roles were attributed to them by artists and writers who were mostly male. It could be said that the picturing of women in Victorian philanthropy becomes most accessible to approaches which proceed from the general towards the particular. Rather than identifying the female equivalent of male roles in the child's world, their picturing engaged with male expectations of women's influence. Women were expected to provide nurture, which translated into the role of mother in the home and nurse or carer in those public arenas where nurture was required. Women were portrayed in this general capacity inside and outside the family.

The Children's Advocate for 1881 showed a mother hearing the prayers of her children at bedtime. *(Image 5.12[25])* The symmetry in this image seems intentional, with identical, blond-headed children, a head on each knee, a parental hand on each back, the mother's head bowed equally between them, a pillow and a bed-hanging either side of her form. There is a pervasive atmosphere of sanctity running through the balance and decorum of this domestic scene. It appears to indicate a careful and precise fusion of the spiritual with the domestic. Within the prescribed sphere of her children's prayers, a mother was permitted to represent the Christian mission. In this tiny kingdom, she is God's intermediary. The accompanying poem explains that as her children pray, she prays for God to hear them and protect them.

The notion that women did not such much carry out roles, but rather, created a conducive atmosphere in the child's world, emerged frequently in charitable imagery. It is detectable in the title page of the same periodical for September 1872. This image *(5.13)* depicts a tranquil river-side, with a cottage in the background. In the foreground, on the bank, sit a young woman and a girl, sharing the book on the woman's lap. The child is in profile, her form is suggestive of quiet attention, while the woman looks down at the book. She may be the girl's governess, although the nature of the cottage home makes this unlikely. It is not actually of any importance what her precise relationship to the child is, since it is her general influence which was held to be significant.

> If the child has the tender, thoughtful considerate nurture of a loving heart (such as the artist has endeavoured to illustrate in our picture), that child will almost certainly

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[25] The *Children's Advocate*, 1881, p73.

> grow up fearing God, loving his parents and friends, and breathing a sweetness and nobility of temper which will cause it to be a blessing in all circles.

This passage tells the spectator that the image depicts a God-fearing child and a nurturing heart. The woman was intended to be understood as representing a human organ symbolising love. The generalised influence praised in the text is pictured as a female adult in the image. In other ways there is very little detectable correlation. The gender of the child was changed between portrayal and word. On the evidence of 'Loving Heart', it would appear that the woman as an influence in the child's world operated on the same level of generality as the functional insignificance of children's gender. This image might convey the impression of a little girl, but the text makes repeated reference to the male gender and to 'it' - that strange neutered pronoun so frequently assigned to childhood.[26]

5.3.iii Nurturing in public

When women in charitable images were pictured outside the home in the company of children, their influence tended to shift from spiritual and emotional nurture to practical care. Victorian philanthropy encouraged women to be patrons, donors, visitors and fundraisers, but they were rarely found on committees and in paid roles. They did fulfil such positions where the work involved practical child care. All these factors contributed to the picturing of women as supportive and subsidiary. In the infirmary attached to the Children's Home, the matron is portrayed giving a beautifully-dressed

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[26] Another examples of this gender shifting occurred in *the Band of Hope Treasury* between an illustration captioned 'Sydney feeding the chicks' in March 1883 and its repeat in November 1901, when the same illustration this time purported to be of a 'little girl who often feeds the fowl.'.

doll to a sick child. *(Image 5.14*[27]*)* The delighted little girl could be said to be receiving not only a toy but a symbol of restorative childhood. The child's gaze is fixed upon it, while the woman watches the child's delight in receiving it. It was quite common for toys to fulfil this dynamic function of representing childhood in charitable imagery. In this sense, the toy is of greater significance than the giver, the matron. She represented the benefits of the philanthropic process - donated gifts through the Parcels Post - as the text makes clear. She was the agent of the gift rather than the giver, the means, not the instigator of how child rescue gave childhood back to children.

On other occasions, the gift of toys was pictured in a manner which dealt with charity's intimate relationship to notions of class and social standing. One could argue that 'Parcels Post' was a classless image, but 'Christmas Holidays' *(5.15)* dealt with it as a central discourse. It is also worth recalling that picturing the gift of childhood was not confined to child rescue work.[28] At the top of this image *(5.15)* is a large Christmas tree at the end of a hospital ward.[29] Bisecting the top third of the pictorial space from the rest is a band of women, mostly nurses in starched caps, but also some well-dressed ladies. The purported focus of their attention is the boys in rows of beds. Bemused, the children stare out at the armful of toys being brought to them. In every case, the relationship between woman and boy is mediated by a toy. In the bed in the bottom right-hand corner, one could go so far as to say that the parti-coloured ball represents the unseen boy in his cot. This image was very unusual in its depiction of boys in the passive, receiving role. The two wealthy girls in the front and centre of the image bring social order to the forefront of pictorial activity. They may be far shorter than the

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[27] The *Children's Advocate*, 1884, p86.
[28] See chapter 1 of this study.

nurses, but their position in the central foreground could be said to confirm their superior rank. The girl on the right seems to be practicing her ministering angel smile of concern. The boy, the object of her attention, appears to accept her right to do so, while his hand reaches out to receive the presents she is about to give him. In this case, the gift of restored childhood is bestowed by one child to another. Two of the nurses look on in approval at this reiteration of the rights and responsibilities of the rich for the poor. Essentially, this picture could be said to show age and gender giving way to social standing endorsed by wealth.

So far, the nurturing influence of women and their picturing as providers of practical child care has been discussed, particularly their support for reclaiming threatened childhood. Did they assume more commanding roles when they were pictured as initiators of a charitable act? Women were often depicted as almsgivers in the street, responding to the mute appeal of childhood. 'Collecting Pennies' from 1880 is typical.[30] This image *(5.16)* adopts a pictorial convention invariably found in philanthropy's pictures, which ensured a distinct gap between the mendicant and the donor. When the donor was female, she would nearly always be fashionably dressed, and the object of her attention was habitually represented as a girl.[31] Boys were more frequently portrayed holding out their hands - or caps - to gentlemen in the street. The girl in this image has a rigid stance and seems to retreat from the hat she holds as much as from the rich woman about to drop a coin in it. The hat belongs to the man who is forcing her to

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[29] The *Band of Hope Review*, No 457, January 1899, title page. *Christmas Holidays in the London Hospital*, drawn by Lucien Davis.
[30] *The Children's Advocate*, 1880, p121. 'Collecting pennies from the crowd with Matteo's hat'.
[31] Such portrayals of street children would have drawn on Mayhew's illustrated accounts of his interviews with watercress and flower sellers as well as the imported Italian children who begged on behalf of unscrupulous Fagin-type characters.

beg and who is abusing her. Matteo's hat is positioned squarely between the child and help from the adult world.

The accompanying story attributes only one pleasure to Felicia in the misery of enforced beggary and brutalisation. She is given a baby to carry in the streets to arouse even greater sympathy in would-be donors. This was a common practice among urban mendicants. Some parents were so impoverished, they were prepared to sell their babies to beggars for this purpose.[32] Although the baby, which had been tied into a basket, is not shown in 'Collecting Pennies', the story described how '[s]trangers looked admiringly at the little girl, and Felicia felt proud as if she were indeed her own'.[33] This represented a divergence between visual and textual accounts, as yet another moral paradigm was injected into the story for its readers, the need for little girls to rehearse their adult roles as mothers. By contrast, it is possible to argue that the image concentrated on the issue of female benevolence and child mendicity. In his proximity to the begging child, the man is an unsettling factor. He stands behind her and owns the means by which she collects money. The hat links the man to the child and, in turn, to the gift from the woman. It could even be argued that although the woman inhabits the foreground and makes the donation, it is the man in the background who determines the outcome of her charity.

To summarise the analysis of pictured women in relation to the child's world so far, they tended to represent giving as an act of benevolence, rather than initiate change in a child's circumstances. They were depicted as bringing practical nurture of the child

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[32] A Barnardo appeals booklet for the 1890s denounced this trade. It was titled 'The 1/- Baby'.
[33] Op cit, p121.

and support to charitable work involving children, while exerting a benign influence in the maintenance of stability in the child's world. This section on charity's picturing of women in relation to childhood will conclude with an image which tells what happened when women could no longer keep the family afloat.

This image *(5.17)* appeared originally in *The British Workman* for 1895 and was repeated in *Onward* in 1899.[34] The original caption was not re-used, but the image accompanied a typical temperance tale of a family waiting outside a pub, in the dark, while the father drank away their means of subsistence inside. The light from the pub window and the lantern falls on the faces of the mother and the baby she carries wrapped up in a shawl. Almost invisible in the gloom, a boy sits behind his mother on some stone steps leading to the pub entrance. He is cast into darkness, a tonal treatment which carried echoes of the moral drama affecting the whole family. The boy is almost invisible and could be said to represent the disappearance of childhood in the face of male, adult neglect.

The mother is condemned to wait in a cold inhospitable street, and with her children has had to leave her proper sphere. As the story opens, her influence is quite useless to prevent her husband humiliating himself, and diminishing the memory of their early relationship, in the public bar. Even with the culminating impact of this pictorial and verbal tale of woe, the writer of the later story - under the title of 'Mother's Bonnet' - cannot help inserting an additional exhortation on the subject of women's responsibilities towards their husbands. In this case, the reason why mother and

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[34] *Onward*, 1899, p180. 'Mother's Bonnet', by B E Slade. First appeared in *The British Workman* No 38 New Series, 1895. 'Weary Waiting'. Drawn by Ralph Hedley.

children are condemned to many hours of weary waiting is because the way home would be beyond a drunkard's capacity to negotiate. 'So the two waited, as they had waited many weary nights; for the road home lay over a narrow bridge, that was none too safe for unsteady feet.'[35] In the second story, the woman's duty to support her drunken husband is given as much emphasis as the threat his drink represents for the family.

There are two possible interpretations of this story of the woman's familial role. Either the woman was sacrificing her comfort and that of her children out of a genuine concern for her husband, or she was terrified what the loss of his bread-winning role would mean for the family. In either case, such an image can be said to confirm the contention that women were perceived as sustainers of family life only insofar as they were able to ensure the father maintained his financial underpinning of the domestic sphere. In very different ways, therefore, the picture and the text arrive at the same notion of female dependence upon male control over family circumstances. The picture is prophetic in its rendering of the destruction of childhood. Although secure, benign women were depicted maintaining the emotional growth of the child within a happy home, the neglected woman was often pictured as powerless to retrieve the child's world without male co-operation. Indeed, in 'Weary Waiting' the woman's gaze is locked on the window obscuring her husband's form. Other women were pictured as more assertive. They marched into the public house and shamed the father with the sight of his children. Even in such cases, the children exerted the decisive influence over patriarchal behaviour, rather than the mother.

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[35] Idem.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter began with a contemporaneous review of the progress made by Victorian adults in preserving the special world of childhood. It concluded that children were less likely to be abused in 1901 than in the grim circumstances fictionalised by Dickens and personified in the character of Oliver Twist. This account took it for granted that Oliver was powerless to help himself, and that adult reformers had achieved the change in children's circumstances on their behalf. This could be seen at work in charitable imagery, where children were seldom depicted helping each other, even though philanthropists relied upon the capacity of the pictured child to influence adult emotions.

It has been argued that when charity pictured men in relation to the child's world, the man was pictorially confirmed as the provider of family security, which was considered synonymous with stability in the early years of life. At the same time, I have argued that childhood was pictured as stimulating a sharper sense of loss, and of melancholy, for men than women, as they left the domestic sphere to take up public roles in adulthood. Men were pictured as actively controlling the child's world in different public roles, either by salvaging the threatened child or as the face of official authority. Even though textual accounts revealed cases where both men and women had persecuted children, philanthropy's pictures rarely showed this, the darker side of Victorian age relations. Even where children were depicted as being frightened of, or by, police officers, there was never any suggestion that spectators would believe the

child's fear was well-founded. Instead, the children were described as at fault in some way, and that they therefore deserved the negative feelings portrayed in the image.

Women were pictured as maintainers of the family home which the male provided. They were given the pictorial role of caretaker in the home, not the owner. They were shown as capable of preserving the child's world once it has been established. They were assigned a nurturing influence which facilitated the child's growth, but their relationship to children was depicted as dependent upon the decisions, actions and initiatives of men. Even when women confronted male behaviour which threatened the family - childhood's nest - temperance imagery, in particular, often showed that the woman's influence was seen as less powerful than the mute appeal of the child. Women were more likely to be pictured carrying out an individual act of personal benevolence which benefited a child, than taking the initiative to change children's circumstances for the better. Such images confirmed women's subsidiary role in the theatre of charity while acknowledging their greater level of practical skill in child care.

Charitable imagery can be said to assert that it was men who could make or break the child's world and that women were confined within this pictorial drama. Women were habitually portrayed as having little control, not only over children's circumstances, but also over their own. Indeed, it has been argued that the picturing of women and children shared many characteristics, particularly in response to breakdown in male familial roles. Despite having a benign and pervasive influence attributed to them, women were shown as relatively powerless if the child's world was threatened. It could even be said that philanthropy turned the pictured woman into a child, since women shared many of children's pictorial roles. Charitable imagery shows that the picturing

of adults recruited women into the other party to Victorian age relations, leaving men as the active and instrumental powerholders over childhood. It would be quite mistaken to assume that this transformed the relationship into one of abuse, given the special significance assigned to childhood by different Victorian writers and artists.

The study of philanthropy's pictures would suggest that any interpretation of Victorian age relations should give greater attention to what childhood meant to men, rather than restricting its study to one paradigm of the domestic sphere. The connection between women, children and the home has been popularly assumed to largely exclude men. At the same time that the words 'Victorian' and 'patriarch' have become inextricably linked, charitable imagery would suggest that childhood was a very powerful notion to those adults who, in truth, exerted the greatest influence over the child's world.

Modern academic attention has recently turned to the significance assigned to childhood through history and in some cases has related this to its visual representation. In particular, Carolyn Steedman has developed particular themes which, she argues, were specific to the nineteenth century. Steedman locates the significance of childhood within the growing Victorian pre-occupation with, and knowledge of, physiology and biology. This presupposes an active adult interest in the child's body. Like the present study, she has pursued those representations which seemed to endure and travel across different parts of the cultural domain. One child figure particularly concerns her - Mignon, a child acrobat and a literary creation of Goethe. In Steedman's assessment, Mignon was '... the most referred-to, re-represented and transmogrified child figure of

the nineteenth century'.[36] As a character she re-surfaced in a number of vaudeville productions and pieces of popular music for example. As Mignon was a child of the theatre, Steedman links her significance to the campaigns for the protection of stage children in the seventies and eighties. In her discussion of the disappearance of children from the public domain, and the consequent perception of the sight of the street child as an aberration, this study is very much agreement. It could be said that her focus on a single representation, a fictional child acrobat, has guided Steedman towards some recorded events and opinions rather than others. This approach involves the discussion of the extent to which children contorted their bodies to please adults or, it was alleged, submitted to torture in their training. There seems, potentially, a very large leap between acknowledging such horrors occurred and arguing that knowledge of such adult behaviour towards children took most Victorians to the theatre to see child performances[37]. 'The legacy of the little acrobat was much to do with a deep and pleasurable uncertainty about what was natural in its contortions, and what was the product of "cruel parenting"'.[38] It is with this point in her argument that this study takes issue, that evidence of adult abuse of children held a dubious fascination for audiences *in general.*

In extending her view of Mignon as the archetypal street child, Steedman draws on the ideas of James Kincaid in arguing that the Victorian street child was feminised through

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[36] Carolyn Steedman, *Strange Dislocations Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority 1780-1930*, (Harvard University Press, 1996), p2.
[37] Steedman implies this view may have been circulating in public awareness at the time of the 1879 Children's Dangerous Performances Act, which prohibited people under fourteen from taking part in performances which were dangerous to life or limb. Lionel Rose comments at some length on the cruelties of the acrobatic child's training in his chapter 'Theatrical & Fairground Children'. On audience response, he makes the following comment: '[i]t was alleged in the late 1880s that such abuses were increasing, because blasé audiences demanded even more daring stunts'. (Rose, op cit., p63)
[38] Steedman, op cit., p132.

the act of adult watching. It seems that Steedman, like Kincaid, views this gaze as primarily erotic, as the following passage reveals.

> Sometimes, on the dark pavements, seen suddenly in momentarily illuminated alleyways the wan street child of the Victorian investigative imagination becomes Mignon : a child turns and dances, utterly self-absorbed. She is then Nora on the Pavement, entrancing the grey hour; the thing you want, the little girl you fancy.[39]

According to this erotic paradigm, the core of the child's sexual attraction to the Victorian adult lay in the unknowingness of the little girl who was not aware she would become a woman. It is not the contention of this study that Victorian street or stage children were not the object of an adult sexualized gaze. Child prostitution was an acknowledged reality brought to public attention by the efforts of William T Stead of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in his 1885 series 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon'.[40] Neither is it contested that children in public places, other than child prostitutes could, on occasions, be viewed as erotic. However, this chapter has attempted to show that the ways in which adults represented themselves in the child's world were heterogeneous not homogeneous.

Steedman's argument that the child acrobat was understood as a metaphor for adult-child relationships by nineteenth-century audiences can only have been based on carefully-researched facts. However, childhood was held in enormous veneration by many commentators and the representation of children in child rescue work and temperance reveals the child as the object of many different types of adult attention, not only the erotic gaze. Both Kincaid and Steedman – although for excellent reasons –

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[39] Ibid., p39.

seem to have imposed a narrow focus concerned with the potential for a sexual element in, or dimension of, Victorian age relations. If this study has proved its case, perhaps the child acrobat is better seen as one metaphor amongst many of the Victorian adult's role in the child's world.

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[40] See *Victorian Studies*, Vol 21, No 3 (1978), 371. Deborah Gorham, 'The "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" Re-examined : Child Prostitution and the Idea of Childhood in Late Victorian England.'

CHAPTER SIX

Child street traders: matters of fact, fiction and faith

6. Introduction

This chapter turns from the fictional figure of Mignon and replaces her as a focus of the reader's attention with a nondescript street trader, earning a living like many others. It will discuss whether philanthropy regarded images of children like these as true to life. More than one historian has drawn attention to the conspicuous presence of child newsvendors on the urban streets at the turn of the century. It was a fact that although the overall numbers of child street traders fell between 1875 and 1900, the number of newspaper sellers dramatically increased during the same period.[1] If there were lots of children earning a living in this way on the streets, what was philanthropy's attitude towards them ? Was this pictured child worker - and other street traders - a representation of a fact or a fiction ?

Perhaps one of the oddest apparent paradoxes is that, despite their numbers, child newsvendors rarely figured in the many hundreds of images devoted to street traders by charities. If newsvendors were the most visible of child street traders, then reality was not being represented by picturing them so seldom. This chapter is concerned with the reasons for this and will argue it can be attributed to attitudes towards fact and fiction which were intimately entwined with notions of childhood. This will also be the only occasion in this study when images are assessed - in part -for their documentary

[1] Both Lionel Rose and Eric Hopkins mention that by 1911, newspaper boys constituted the largest group of child street traders nationally, numbering 23,000 in England and Wales.

qualities; that is, the extent to which they provide *accurate information* about the lives of their subjects.

Perhaps more than any other philanthropist working on children's issues in my period, Thomas Barnardo was an innovative, risk-taking publicist. Even when he had his reservations about the methods he could use to widen support for child rescue, Barnardo would attempt the workable if it was also moral and legal. He believed that some fictional depictions had a tendency 'to create an unreal and therefore a false world; so unreal as to unfit him who habitually moves in it for the stern realities and sober commonplaces of daily life'.[2] Despite these reservations about the lure of an unreal world, he still found the benefits of fiction to the work of child-saving greater than its disadvantages. Barnardo's use of depicted childhood has already been discussed and analysed in some detail in this study.[3] He wrote extensively about the textual representation of childhood, its facts and fictions as he understood them. His recorded perceptions will be dealt with in some detail in this chapter.

This will be divided into three parts. Barnardo's views will be discussed next in the context of his work, his personal life and his Christian commitment. The references he made to contemporaneous cultural practice when defending himself against a charge of artistic fiction will follow, taking as a focus the work of the photographer O G Rejlander. Rejlander's work was used by various charities from the 1860s onwards.

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[2] *Night and Day*, 1881, p59, 'Nobody's Lad'. The first edition of the magazine appeared in 1877 and its editorial pages were much concerned with the Arbitration Case, which will be discussed in this chapter. The publication served as a platform for Barnardo's own hopes and concerns for child rescue work, although its full title was *Night and Day A monthly record of Christian missions and practical philanthropy.*

[3] See this study's sections 3.2.I, 3.2.ii, 3.2.iii, 3.4, 5.2.iv and 5.2.v; and its discussion of images 2.1, 2.5, 2.7, 2.8, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.4, 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10.

Some of these images featured working children, including the newsvendor. Taking these as a springboard, this chapter will then consider what uses they were put to by philanthropy, at a time when selling newspapers became the most prominent occupation for child street workers. It will be argued that the pictured newsvendor did not reflect the realities of the child's life so much as offer charitable campaigners opportunities to construct notions of what it *should* be like.

6.1 Dr Barnardo and childhood representation

In his child rescue work, Barnardo was confronted by the reality of childhood's saddest facts. He routinely encountered the shattering impact of industrialisation and urban decay upon the child. He documented the misery of children in desperate need of protection at the margins of society. To what extent would their misery and his observations lead him to be factual rather than fictional in representing childhood, taking the cultural conventions of his time to their very limits ? Characteristic of his approach was a tendency to represent the general rather than the particular.

6.1.i The generic versus the individual

As Director of Doctor Barnardo's Homes, the 1874-5 *Annual Report* recorded that he took the opportunity to address 'a first great public meeting in London' on his definition of the terms 'Arab' and 'Gutter' children. 'These terms are employed mainly because of the wandering and uncertain life of these little waifs', he said 'and from the fact that

the kennels are the only landed estates they possess'.[4] Barnardo made repeated use of these generic terms to describe the real plight of the children he rescued. The famous 'before' and 'after' photographs were anonymous and were taken for publicity purposes to promote the work of the Home.[5] These images were given a series of fictional histories and were used in the same generic fashion as the terms street arab and gutter child when describing their relief from suffering and rehabilitation. The trouble that Barnardo would encounter over the conflict between all-purpose definitions of street children and their discreet, individual identities was hinted at in an appeals booklet from the same period, which described a family saved from a drunken father and brought into the Home.

> An hour after their admission, we had the group photographed, and the photograph thus obtained records more fully their condition that the foregoing verbal description. We have to remind the reader, however, of one little circumstance, - a few garments were absolutely necessary to make them photographically presentable.[6]

Whatever his reasons may have been on this occasion, this is an early example of how Barnardo would amend the appearance of new entrants to advance the work of the Homes as he saw it. He wanted to record fully the condition in which people entered the Home, but at the same time felt compelled to alter it.

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[4] *"Rescue the Perishing" Being the report for the ninth year of the East End Juvenile Mission and for the fifth year of the Homes for Reclaiming Destitute Children of Both Sexes*, 1874-5, pxi. Barnardo Archive, University of Liverpool, D239/A3/1/1-18. Children were routinely discovered sleeping rough in barrels and baskets, on refuse heaps and roofs.

[5] A photograph of each entrant into the Home would usually be taken and would be kept on each child's individual record sheet. These official records which linked the child to a specific history and identity were kept separately from the material used for publicity purposes. It is possible that when the Rev George Reynolds criticised Barnardo in 1876 - which led to the charge of artistic fiction - he muddled the individual and generic images together.

[6] *Down Newport Market Way*, (probably 1874-5), p8. Barnardo Archive, University of Liverpool, A3/6/2.

In 1877, he was obliged to defend himself against a number of charges relating to his professional conduct, one of which was artistic fiction. This was based upon criticism by a local Baptist minister, the Rev George Reynolds, who argued that "the system of taking and making capital of the children's photographs is not only dishonest, but has a tendency to destroy the better feelings of the children".[7] When the case came to court, the historical record does not reveal any further details about Reynold's claim that the taking of publicity photographs, which would be sold to raise funds for the Home, was emotionally damaging to the children. Barnardo did go into detail about how the photographs were arranged, but Reynold's version is worth quoting in full.

> Barnardo's method is to take the children as they are supposed to enter the Home, and then after they have been in the Home some time. He is not satisfied with taking them as they really are, but he tears their clothes, so as to make them appear worse than they really are. They are also taken in purely fictitious positions. A lad named Fletcher is taken with a shoeblack's box upon his back, although he never was a shoeblack ... .[8]

In this passage, Reynolds claimed that Barnardo fictionalised the photographic images to increase the impression of destitution, and by so doing he sought to make reality more real.[9] Barnardo certainly did have photographs taken of children in inaccurate occupational activities. He did keep ragged clothes for the children to wear when these publicity shots were taken[10]. It was not necessarily accurate for Reynolds to accuse

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[7] Quoted in *The Camera and Doctor Barnardo*, (National Portrait Gallery exhibition catalogue, 1974), p12.
[8] Idem.
[9] In the 1890s a number of cities had charitable Clothing Associations to issue clothing to street children in need. The clothes were specially marked and could not be pawned. It is reported that some child street traders were well aware of the impact of their rags upon the public gaze and were resistant to being adequately clothed. In 1901 Liverpool's Chief Constable spoke before the 1901 Interdepartmental Committee on the Employment of Schoolchildren about the 'positive scandal' of children being 'sent round at all hours of the night, selling papers half-clothed, up to ... ten o'clock ...'. (Quoted by Hopkins, op. cit., p74)
[10] One reason for having a substitute set of rags was that the entrants' original clothing might have been burnt to destroy lice and prevent infection.

Barnardo of making the children appear 'worse than they really are'. As noted earlier, he would put clothes on people for decency's sake, and there was little need to tear the clothes worn by the children in most cases. Reynold's reference to a boy pictured as a shoeblack – not his occupation - may have been random. It could also be a reference to Shoe Black brigades - founded by many different charities, including Barnardo's - which gave boys shelter and an income, drawing their allegiance away from other voices of moral authority. This interpretation is possible because Reynold's criticism of Barnardo may have arisen from inter-denominational rivalries.

Barnardo did use the captioned photograph of a girl in the Home's publicity material who was represented as an unemployed, orphaned matchseller. The girl's indignant mother explained to the court that this description was inaccurate. Not only did the girl have at least one parent, her mother's resentment can also be attributed to the low status accorded by child traders to matchselling in the hierarchy of street occupations. It was also the worst paid and involved very long hours. In selecting such an occupation to depict in this case, Barnardo may have been aiming for the sympathy of potential donors and supporters, but he offended these other constituencies with their own perspectives on the value of a child's work.

In his own defence, Barnardo recorded in the pages of *Night and Day* that 'although this photograph was not literally true as regards the identical child depicted, yet it was strictly true, to the minutest detail, of the CLASS she was photographed to represent.'[11] As well as his assumption that his stated purpose justified the eradication of personal identity, Barnardo also appeared to be presenting the case for the accuracy of detail in

the image for reasons which lay outside it. In his opinion, the depiction of the matchseller was not a portrait but a generalised representation. He went on to repeat his belief that such images represented a class rather than an individual portrait in the following terms.

> We held, and we do so still, that not one single case of portraiture in our published list is without its real representative in hundreds of street children to be found on every hand ... our object is to show the public the evil our work removes, we think it was legitimate, by picture, as well as by pen and word of mouth, to describe facts whose existence is, alas, only too capable of demonstration.[12]

Arguably, the most critical word in this passage is the adjective 'published'. It may have served to distinguish the official portrait records from the material which he regarded as generic and therefore suitable for the public domain. What Barnardo wanted to do was to make an appeal on behalf of all street children - what could be called an image with universal appeal - through the depiction of a representative individual. With his use of photography in appeals material, he risked colliding with the reality of individual identity. This is what happened in the 1877 court case.

6.1.ii Barnardo's reasons

Before turning to the child rescue campaigner's writing on fact and fiction in more detail, the reasons why he took such risks with child representation are worth pursuing. Thomas Barnardo tended to avoid half-measures in a single-minded conviction that all Christians would bring gifts to the waifs of the streets as they would to the Holy Child, if the arguments he used were powerfully presented. He wrote in 1888 that this meant

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[11] *Night and Day*, November 1, 1877, p125.

following up every conceivable legitimate avenue. 'I have always felt it a paramount duty to urge the claims of the work in the most forcible manner I could upon Christian people generally ...' by '... all lawful means by voice, by pen, and by the press, which would diffuse a knowledge of the work accomplished, or a record of its needs'.[13]

What made his commitment even more pronounced was his defensiveness over whether he should be making appeals at all. Dr Barnardo was criticised by some Christians for not trusting in the Lord to provide. He believed his own position be unusual but felt unrepentant nonetheless. 'I am well aware that these views upon the subject of "appeals" for the support of missions are too uncommon to find general acceptance; but I am so strongly persuaded of their truth, that I feel it an honour to be permitted by voice or by pen to plead the cause of the children of our streets ...'.[14]

Above all, Dr Barnardo situated appeals in support of child rescue work within a combative Christian discourse which sought to disturb the apathy of individual conscience. He was as keen to record the moments of revelation provoked by his appeals as he was to ensure continued funding for the Homes. This almost appears to suggest that child saving was secondary to Christian revival among Thomas Barnardo's goals. What is more likely is that the two were indivisible, with the warp of the endangered child woven into the weft of religious complacency.

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[12] Ibid., p126.
[13] *Dr Barnardo's Homes Annual Report*, 1888, p267.

6.1.iii Barnardo on fact and fiction

As has been suggested before, Barnardo mounted a qualified defence of the use of fiction to awaken humanitarian compassion and interest in his work, which he saw as indivisible from a Christian mission. To satisfy his requirements, fiction had to be both pure and appropriate for its audiences; but above all, such works had to address reality. 'First, they must represent the real, the actual, and the true, as opposed to the unreal, the false, and the impossible embodiment of a fancy which merely runs riot, and is beyond control ...'.[15] He introduced a moral dimension to his comparison between the real and the unreal by describing the former as true and the latter as false. In addition, reality and truth were associated with a controllable world, while the unreal world was typified by a lack of control.

As an evangelical Christian, Barnardo possessed a profound sense of purpose in his work. This fiery intent assigned a purpose to fiction by giving it an active role in an essentially moral drama. Despite the many faults of even the best written fiction, Barnardo still trusted its power to influence audiences: '... to evoke the deepest interest for the consideration of the most important themes, and to enlist in aid of Christian teaching the instinctive poetical impulses that lie ... with strong potentiality for good or evil, in every breast'.[16] He refers here to the legitimate application of the imaginative impulse by the campaigner, in order to stimulate the moral instincts of possible supporters. Given his defence against a charge of artistic fiction, there is every reason to suppose that he applied the same argument to images as the written word. As long as they stimulated the impulse to do good, their reality could and should be enhanced.

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[14] Ibid., p270. The mission to save children from moral risk - which also involved making them safe from physical danger - was a Home Mission within British shores.

Barnardo seems to have acknowledged that there were risks attached to harnessing fiction to a good cause but believed them to be justifiable. Despite his insistence on a truthful, controllable, real world, it could be said that he borrowed from the false, riotous world of the imagination if it would convince supporters to see the Christ child in every waif and stray.

6.1.iv Public fiction and personal facts

When Barnardo wrote on how fiction could educate Christians in the realities of life, he based his extensive comments on one fictional representation in particular, which detailed a street waif's experiences. He wanted every household to have a copy of a publication called *Nobody's Lad.* He presented his case in the form of a review of this book, but when his remarks are considered in detail, they suggest that Barnardo felt a strong personal identification with one of the characters in the story. The narrative tells how a gentleman attempts to rescue "Little Tim" as he slides ever closer towards moral disaster and death. The image *(6.1)* that accompanies Barnardo's review shows the moment when the child asks the adult to rescue him.[17] In terms of composition, it is very similar to many others already discussed in this study.[18] It could be said that this image gains its poignancy, its emotional power, from depicting a moment of adult failure in age relations, made even sharper by the public responsibility of the male for the well-being of the child.

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[15] *Night and Day*, 1881, p59. 'Nobody's Lad'.
[16] Idem.
[17] *Night and Day*, 1881, p61. "Oh please, sir, let me go with you !"
[18] In particular, see sections 5.2.iv and 5.2.v, and the discussion of images 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10.

The gentleman is unable to implement a physical rescue because the child's family have a greater claim to responsibility for his welfare. He is obliged to leave the child on the street as a result. Instead he initiates a spiritual rescue which triumphs over and through the child's death. This gentleman is described by Barnardo as 'a ray of light', '... a young Christian student, toiling, living and labouring among the poor'.[19] Such fictional life experiences match those of the doctor's own personal history. The review does not confirm or deny that *Nobody's Lad* was a fictionalised account of Barnardo's own life and work. The extensive adaptation of the book's title in textual and visual reference in Barnardo material has already been discussed in this study. He also recorded his own failures and successes in taking over care and control from the families of street children whom he found on the streets and believed to be at risk.

To infer that Barnardo's intent in reviewing *Nobody's Lad* in such glowing detail was self-congratulatory would be understandable but inaccurate. By his own admission, Barnardo would publicise anything which would engage sympathetic attention for the work of the home, including repeated references to his own role. Insofar as he identified completely with the process of child rescue, he was forgetful of self.[20] In summary so far, Barnardo was a passionate, committed campaigner, whose missionary work in early life brought him into contact with impoverished children. His revelatory moment on the rooftops with Jim Jarvis, the first child to tell him of life without a home

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[19] *Night and Day*, 1881, p59.

[20] Barnardo witnessed child suffering and death frequently, an experience which may have underpinned the passion he brought to his work. When reviewing *Nobody's Lad*, he observed that '[t]he closing scene, when Tim "crosses the river" is full of beauty'. (*Night and Day*, p62) Four years later, he wrote eloquently on the death of his nine year old son. 'As I gazed into the little pinched face, growing cold in death, hundreds of other child-faces appealed to me through his, while other wistful eyes looked out at me by the waning light of his dear eyes'. (*Night and Day*, November 1885, p115) It is surely impossible to doubt the sincerity of these sentiments, as he connected together the deaths of all children, including his own biological child. This shows the extent to which Barnardo identified himself with his work, and, in modern terms, how this influenced him to bring what was intensely private into the public domain.

or family, provided the spiritual direction his mission would take. Once committed, he was a tireless campaigner, prepared to draw on his life experiences, both personal and professional, expressed in both document and story, to facilitate the work of child saving.

So far, this section has argued that Barnardo lost himself in good work, which led him sometimes to appear to blur the distinction between fictional representation and his own personal experience. However, when the experience drawn on was not his own, but those of the street waifs and arabs, he found that not everyone in his audiences was comfortable with his picture of reality. It was Barnardo's habit to dress up his 'recent rescues' in rags and present them on stage to the Annual Meeting of the Home to audiences which numbered in the hundreds. In June 1893, a group of ninety children from London, Liverpool and Leeds were shown in such a way on the stage of the Albert Hall.

They were clearly nervous, an observation which Barnardo shared with his readers in the pages of *Night and Day*. 'One girl clasped her companion's arm and pointed half in fear and half in amazement, at the immense span of the roof, and at the sea of faces surrounding her'.[21] Even though the doctor recorded his awareness of the children's timidity and apprehension in being exhibited as 'the raw material' of rescue, he showed no sign of questioning the acceptability of his actions. For him, the children served as representatives of a class who had been done a great wrong, a crime he was determined to expose. He was convinced that '... this sudden glance "into the depths" went vividly home to the hearts of the audience, and that its memory pointed the contrast of all the

subsequent exhibitions'.[22] He referred here to the rest of the evening, when the rehabilitated children demonstrated the benefits of rescue to the audience.

6.1.v One objection to a picture of reality

In seeking to represent the evil of their suffering - which was the reality with which the work of child rescue was engaged - Barnardo appears to have ignored again their existence as distinct, living individuals.[23] In June 1894, the twenty-eighth Anniversary Annual Meeting again took place in the Royal Albert Hall, with similar proceedings to the previous year. On this occasion, Dr Barnardo's interpretation of the children's reality did not go unchallenged by one speaker from the floor, who met with a sympathetic response from other members of the audience. The Reverend Canon Fleming pointed out that '... these children are not Arabs. They are own dear English, Scotch and Irish children. (Cheers). I never like to hear them called "Street Arabs", - no, nor even "Waifs and Strays". They are like our own children, the children of our Father in Heaven'.[24]

The words of the Canon - recorded by Barnardo - did not challenge the tendency of adults to group children in a universal category.[25] Rather, he sought to reconstitute their

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[21] *Night and Day*, Vol XVII, 1893, p74.
[22] Idem.
[23] There is a post modern irony in the contrast between Barnardo's willingness to exhibit the children before a sympathetic audience and his condemnation of one girl's use and abuse as an "object lesson" for begging purposes. 'For several years she had served a beggar tramp as an "object lesson" being dragged with her about the country, and exhibited as a means of drawing from the thoughtless but sympathetic passers-by many a shilling'. (*Night and Day*, 1893, p65) Clear and right though Barnardo was, he did not acknowledge that while exhibiting children to arouse sympathy could be used for very different ends, the method remained the same.
[24] *Night and Day*, June 1894, p46.
[25] Were these children actors in an adult fiction by appearing on stage in front of an audience ? They were only assigned individual identity and meaning in so far as the recorded account of their rescue contributed

significance as an included and important element in a Christian society. He took exception to the first part of Barnardo's staged *tableau*, which was meant to represent the grim reality with which the work of child rescue engaged. It is possible to detect a note of reproof in the Canon's words, as he emphasised that street children should not be viewed as arabs, waifs and strays, but as members of God's family.

6.1 vi Depicting the haves and have-nots

Barnardo argued that street children were a threatened group in society. He believed that picturing them as members of this class - in the sense of a generic group to which they belonged - was more persuasive than depicting their individual histories. Perhaps Barnardo's approach could best be summed up as a belief in the powers of fictionalised fact. This could have been because, with minor variations, he found that those children who came into the care of his Homes, and others like them, shared more through the misery of their experience than they were differentiated by personal history. Barnardo seems to have chosen to picture what they shared in order to draw attention to the scale of their suffering. In this special sense it could be argued that he did not so much engage with fiction, but rather submerged singular realities into a composite picture, with the pictured representative of the group augmenting the individualised histories given in the text.

While stopping short of the horrific aspects of their neediness, these children were depicted as lacking parental care, shelter, decent clothes, shoes and toys, as well as

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to the narrative of rescue and rehabilitation. What they represented was truthful, but the nature of their appearance was deliberate and contrived.

access to religious instruction, schooling and occupational training. This is a both significant omission and a use of what could be called pictorial transference. Barnardo used visual images to convey a sense of what street children did not have – the benefits of an acceptable childhood - rather than the extremes of their experience. It could be said that this picturing of their diminished childhood presented him with particular problems of visual representation. He solved it - in common with other charitable campaigners who used imagery - by also showing the representation of complete and fulfilled childhood. It is ironic that in discussing the picturing of the street child, the meanings assigned by philanthropy to images of the middle class child find their true significance for charitable purposes. This depicted child had all the material comforts of home as well as the emotional and spiritual security of family life, all the entitlements to acceptable childhood which street children were thought to lack.

There is little evidence to suggest that Victorian philanthropy pictured the realities of the street child's world by depicting cuts and bruises, head lice, emaciation, and acts of violence perpetrated by adults on children. Instead, depictions of both the needy child and the middle-class child partnered each other in a pictorial discourse cleansed of the realities of horror and filth and articulated in images which addressed notions of acceptable and unacceptable childhood.

6.2 A cultural defence against artistic fiction

During the 1877 court case, Barnardo defended his generic portraits of street children against the charge of artistic fiction by reference to contemporaneous cultural practice. He remarked that

> if further justification were necessary for the publication of photographs of this latter class, we would instance the well-known photographs of the German artist, Rejlander, and the paintings of B S Marks, Esq, and other celebrated artists, all of which are designed to draw public attention to *classes* rather than to serve as truthful portraits of *individuals*.[26]

In effect, Barnardo was claiming a cultural precedent for his use of generic photography of social groups in the work of Oscar Gustave Rejlander (1813-1875). It is to aspects of this photographer's work that this chapter now turns. At first sight, Barnardo's use of Rejlander to establish that his images were factual does not strengthen his case. Not only was Barnardo wrong in minor detail, he also selected a photographer whose work was controversial, perhaps notorious, for using photographic imagery to depict either what did not exist or to construct composite scenes in imitation of fine art's handling of grand painterly themes.[27]

Rejlander was not German; he was a Swedish portrait and genre painter, and an artist photographer. He came to London from the provinces *circa* 1860, when already celebrated for a composite photographic work called *The Two Ways of Life* in 1857. Composed in the grand manner, this work contrasted industry with dissipation. The photograph was made up from over thirty different negatives, and the half of the image depicting dissipation required the help of twenty five models from Madame Wharton's Pose Plastique Troupe. When *The Two Ways of Life* was exhibited in Scotland, standards of public decency required that this section be draped.[28] Rejlander was disappointed in his attempt to win fame and fortune by combining photographs from the

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[26] *Night and Day*, 1877, p143.

[27] Perhaps the photograph which most often figures in modern histories of photography in this respect is Rejlander's *Head of John the Baptist*, which was not a picture of the head of a decapitated man. It offended audiences with its appearance of horrific reality, but it was not a record, but a construction.

life and elements of neo-classical painterly style. He wrote to Henry Peach Robinson in 1859 "I am tired of photography for the public ... particularly composite photographs, for there can be no gain and no honour, only cavil and misrepresentation !".[29]

Although this study is not concerned with photography as such, it has discussed important examples of original photographs which evolved into representations of the generic child. Rejlander's contemporaneous reputation was founded on an image which borrowed visual elements from painterly tradition and employed entertainers to represent allegorical subject matter. As such, it was an uncomfortable *pot pourri* of fancy and artist convention. This seems an unfortunate cultural antecedent to form part of a defence against a charge of artistic fiction.

It is possible, however, that reference was being made to Rejlander's *genre* works. These have received little attention from modern scholars, but the evidence - scanty though it is - points to some intriguing links between this part of his *oeuvre* and the pictorial relationship between fact and fiction in the life of the child street trader. Although Rejlander's contribution to Charles Darwin's *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals* in 1872 is well-known, and that he gave advice to Lewis Carroll on photographing children, little is known about his *genre* methods. Disturbingly, one reference has been made to part of his livelihood coming from the sale of nude studies of women and children to artists. If it is accurate, then such photographs of children were not taken to document their reality, but as an aid to the preoccupations of fine art. It is difficult to make judgements of an impartial nature with

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[28] Despite this, Queen Victoria bought the work for Prince Albert to hang in his study.

so little information on how these photographic sittings were conducted without risking prejudgment from a present day perspective.

It is believed that Rejlander's photographs of clothed street children were taken in the 1860s, apparently as a reaction against the 'art photography' which had failed to make his reputation with the public.[30] His studio was in Malden Road, in north west London. His models for these photographs were residents from the local boy's home in Chalk Farm. They represented crossing sweepers, shoeblacks and street children with no apparent occupation. The most famous is the photograph which has come to be known as *Poor Jo (6.2)*, although it has also been documented as *Homeless*, from 1863.[31] It is possible that the same image was given both titles, although philanthropy made more use of the former than the latter.

6.2.i The pictured child without occupation

The question of titles for this image is more than one of semantic difference. It was reproduced many times over by both child rescue campaigners and the temperance movement. In all cases except one, a seated boy slumps on a step with his face averted, his head resting on his hands and knees. The exception occurred when one engraver gave the boy a face, by turning his head towards the spectator. The most critical pictorial issue in relation to this image of Rejlander's - and its titles - is that there is no visual evidence of the pictured boy having an occupation. If the title of *Poor Jo* was assigned - and it was understood as a reference to Dickens's crossing sweeper from

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[29] Quoted in Gus Macdonald, *Camera A Victorian eyewitness*, (London: B T Batsford Ltd., 1979), p163.

Bleak House - then the title implies a street child with an occupation. The content of the image and its title were thereby at variance with each other. The title of *Homeless* would have been more likely to be taken as referring to the hopelessness induced by such a state, an interpretation more in keeping with the atmosphere of the image.[32]

6.2.ii The pictured street trader

As indicated above, Rejlander took photographic portraits of crossing sweepers and shoe-blacks, using boys from a local Home as models. It is likely that the engraving *(6.3)* which appeared in the *Band of Hope Review* of 1870 was based on one such photograph.[33] Although he seems to have posed one shoe-black with two crossing sweepers, this image does not depict the shoe-black at work. In the near background, one of the crossing sweepers seems to be imitating a sweeping movement with his brush, but the shoe-black cannot apply his brushes to bare feet. The second crossing-sweeper points to his foot and looks at the shoe-black. Underlying the possibility that this could have been intended as some kind of joke, is a reference to widely divergent attitudes to child street trading. The shoe-black brigades were created and largely controlled by adults. The poster in the left hand top corner directly refers to the rehabilitative function of the brigades, formed as an offshoot of the ragged schools, founded by the seventh earl of Shaftesbury. By contrast, crossing sweepers would organise themselves - often doubling as a tumbling troupe for evening theatre crowds -

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[30] According to National Portrait Gallery exhibition catalogue, op. cit., p12.
[31] *Poor Jo*, O G Rejlander, from about 1860.
[32] Similar treatments of this theme were made by many artists, including Luke Fildes's engraving for *The Graphic* of 1869, called *Houseless and Hungry* and Thomas Faed's painting, *Homeless*, shown at the Royal Academy in the same year.
[33] *Band of Hope Review*, May 2nd, 1870, p452. 'Shoe-black and crossing-sweeper. From a photograph by Mr Rejlander'.

and this occupation was widely regarded as a cover for begging. One occupation represented in this image was regarded as containing the child street trader within the dependency of age relations, while the other carried with it the taint of suspicion that adult authority was being subverted.

Although the reality was that street children had their own hierarchy, or pecking order, of occupations, this image could be said to reassert the dominant responsibility of the adult for the child's world. If the interpretation of adult preference for dependency is accepted, then it becomes possible to see how the picturing of the child with no occupation - which left the child as the raw material for and rehabilitation - was favoured by philanthropy over those occupations which left street children to their own devices and out of adult control. Depictions of the waif easily outnumbered charity's use of both the crossing sweeper and the shoeblack. Rejlander's posed boys are unusual in their pictorial isolation. More usually, a child street trader would be pictured carrying out his work for an adult. This, in itself, can be seen as reinforcing adult concern for, and wish to take charge of, child workers.

6.3 The Newsvendor

Rejlander's version of the newsboy *(6.4)* appeared as an engraving in the *Band of Hope Review* for 1872.[34] It has something of the studio shot about it, and the model may have been from the same Home for boys in Chalk Farm. Like the other images discussed, the background is bare of detail, except for the fragment of poster in the top right hand corner, the banner headlines and the newspapers. Although barefoot, this boy looks

'over-neat', to use the phrase adopted by the *Illustrated London News* when discussing Thomas Kennington's *The Toy Shop* in 1891. In other words, might this boy not be expected to be able to afford boots, given reasonable condition of the rest of his clothing ?

This is perhaps an appropriate point to give more details about the realities of newsvending as an occupation for children, including their earnings. Newspaper selling could bring in five to six shillings per week as a standard income in 1902, with full-time vendors making between ten and eighteen shillings per week. Newsvendor brigade workers would pay two pence each night for their supervised lodgings. At this time, between thirty and forty shillings a week was considered a very good wage for an adult worker. Street traders who were children with families did not always come from homes where parents made a poor wage. At this time, child traders would have to be over eleven years old, and working with a license. The under-tens were banned from street trading in 1889, the under-elevens in 1894. Very young children were not pictured selling newspapers, although they may have worked for other child entrepreneurs.

These details about the facts of this occupation convey the impression that newsvending was reasonably well remunerated and compared attractively with other street trades for poor families and child workers. According to the historian Lionel Rose, it was viewed as a social problem and he summarised it in these terms:

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[34] *Band of Hope Review*, November 1872, "Second Edition", from a photograph by Mr Rejlander'.

> suburban schoolboys earning pocket money by delivering papers were not seen as a social problem; the 'Arab' types of the city centres, who made a living at it, were a different proposition. Newsvending was a dead-end job, seen as exposing its practitioners to a seedy life of common lodging-houses, drinking and petty gambling.[35]

Not all adults shared this concern that newsvending was the road to ruin for child street traders. Newspaper proprietors, in particular, were vociferous in their defence of their child employees. Concerned with their own profits, they took a very different view from social campaigners. Philanthropists did indeed regard the idea of street children making a living out of an occupation, however dead-end, as a problem. As will soon become apparent from the description which follows of its use of pictures and accompanying texts, newsvending represented a moral threat to children who could otherwise be reclaimed.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in a child rescue image *(6.5)* which depicts a girl newsvendor in 1874.[36] This is extremely rare; I did not come across another picture of a child newsvendor who was female. Although girls became crossing sweepers and flower sellers, they are seldom referred to by historians, who tend to use the terms 'newsboy' and 'newsvendor' interchangeably[37]. It is also difficult to see how charities who ran brigades would have looked favourably on providing hostel accommodation for both sexes, since propinquity with the opposite gender tended to fill campaigners with alarm. What seems most likely is that girl traders in this occupation worked independently, or for other child entrepreneurs. It seems reasonable to speculate that some of the hundreds, if not thousands, of child newspaper sellers in my period were

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[35] Rose, op. cit., p70.
[36] *The Children's Advocate*, April 1874, title page, "Echo, sir?"
[37] See Rose, op cit., p70, pp77-78, and Hopkins, op cit., p201.

female. This child looks like a girl in her early teens. There is really very little which distinguishes this image pictorially from many others apart from the alignment of gender and occupation.

The use of this image was intended to represent the absolute *nadir* of moral urban decline. For the editor of the National Children's Homes magazine who put it on the front page, nothing conveyed the true horror caused by the urban corrosion of childhood as picturing a girl doing this kind of work. This probably explains the rarity of such an image in philanthropic archives. For the writer of the accompanying article, the Rev E Jenkins, '...[t]here is no sight upon earth so appalling as the dark, the *Belial* side, of a city.' Of all the impressions it can make upon the spectator, he writes '...that which lingers last, because it touches the tenderest chords of his heart, is ... the young life of the city'.[38] Without protection, particularly of a Christian nature, the urban child is described as horribly vulnerable. Set squarely in the centre of this torrent of concern is the girl newsvendor, her picture carrying the caption "Echo, sir ?". By surrounding her image with such a text, the implication is that she is the most vulnerable of city children. Perhaps Henry Mayhew's belief that girl street traders could only sell, not work, and that could include selling themselves, contributed to the choice of image which accompanied this article.

The reality of girls who were trained and placed into employment by charities was rather different. Many worked as domestic servants in appalling conditions, and at some physical and moral risk from their employers. Perhaps the most critical issue was that this work was hidden behind the doors of the upper and middle classes, while the

philanthropic preoccupations of this social strata turned towards the children who worked on the streets.

It would be unfair and inaccurate to assume that philanthropists were only concerned with the moral and material welfare of the girl newspaper seller. A newsboy is pictured *(6.6)* by the same magazine in 1892.[39] This boy looks about twelve, he seems adequately clothed and he is wearing boots. His headlines concern the shipwreck of the SS Ulysses. For the writer of the accompanying article, this boy is in trouble. 'This is the kind of lad for who we are anxious to do more' he says. The sale of newspapers, apparently is not a trade, and for children selling them '...their lives are utterly irregular; there is no order, no steadiness in their employment. The habit of restlessness becomes ingrain.' This leads to them becoming '... confirmed in mental and social vagabondage.' Such boys join 'the submerged mass'.[40]

The facts were that a good income could be made from this occupation and the newspaper brigades were blossoming in the 1900s, at a time when other occupations promoted by charities - shoeblacks for example - were experiencing decline. Shoeblacking was also considered to be a dead-end occupation for children by some commentators, although it was supported and run by child saving charities. It was also the case that boys could go into apprenticeships in mainstream trades only to lose their jobs when they grew old enough to expect an adult wage. In short, there were many threats and uncertainties in the working lives of pre-teenage and teenage boys. Some charities objected to the lack of regularity in newsvending, which they believed, would

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[38] Idem., 'The Children of the City'.
[39] *Highways & Hedges*, March 1892, p45.

produce unreliable and shiftless workers. This did not fit with their notions of a disciplined training which would produce the model future citizen. The newsboy did not belong in their picture of a desirable, working-class childhood.

This is graphically confirmed in the final three images to be considered in this chapter. The newsboy portrayed next *(6.7)* - with his headlines of parliamentary affairs, mysteries, Bow street proceedings and child death - calls out his wares on the 1894 twenty-eighth anniversary programme of Dr Barnardo's Homes.[41] The same boy was pictured without any alterations at all on two further occasions in temperance literature. On first of these, the writer of the accompanying article created a story out of one of the newsvendor's headlines, calling it "Sad death of a little girl".[42] This writer wanted to emphasise that this pictured boy was not representative of his occupation. He suggested to his readers that

> could you have looked at him you would have noticed that his dress, though old, was well patched and perfectly clean, and his boots, though thin, showed signs of having been well blacked and polished in the morning. He was certainly very different to the other newsvendors, for they were mostly dirty, neglected, and rude.

The Victorian reader was being invited here to distinguish between the care given to this boy's appearance, and the lack of care given to most newsboys, who, in the main, lacked courtesy towards their customers. This pictured child is, of course, exactly the same boy as the one appearing on Doctor Barnardo's anniversary programme, referred to earlier. The textual context of celebration has simply been swopped for one of

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[40] Idem.
[41] *Dr Barnardo's Homes for Waif Children 28th Anniversary Programme*, 1894. Barnardo Collection, University of Liverpool social work archive.

disapproval. The function of the newsboy in the programme is to announce the musical entertainment, and the spectator's visual attention could be distracted from the inappropriate nature of his headlines by the head and shoulders portrait of a pretty little girl on the same page.

The same boy - but with significantly different headlines - appeared again *(6.8)* in the pages of the *Band of Hope Review* for 1899.[43] His headlines now talk of the overthrow of alcohol, of the last drunkard, of every home a happy Band of Hope, and of something extra special. For the writer of this accompanying article - calling himself Observer - the next century could not come soon enough, because it would bring temperance for all. Observer tells his readers that no newsboy is likely to have come from the happy teetotal home and drink will have driven him into the gutter. His words imply the view that newsvending was tantamount to destitution. As we have seen from other uses of this image before it was amended, philanthopists wanted their readers to think that most newsboys were uncared for and disrespectful. Most of all, Observer claims to know that the other newsboy pictured in his article *(6.9)* is not a real vendor at all, '... he was only "pretending" to be a newsboy'.[44]

Both the impostor and Observer know he is a fraud for the following reasons:'[h]is clothes were not ragged, and his voice was not hoarse; his cheeks were round and ruddy, and, though his feet were bare, they were clean - so I knew for certain then, even

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[42] *Onward*, 1895, p6, "Sad death of a little girl" by Alfred J Glasspool. On its second reappearance in *Onward* in 1900, this version of the newsboy accompanied a story called 'Gregory's success: or the struggles of a street lad'.
[43] *Band of Hope Review*, June 1899, p23.
[44] Idem. "Hextry speshul, sir!", by Observer.

if I had not known before, that he was not a boy who got his living by selling newspapers in the dirty streets.'[45]

The boy in this image is not ragged, his cheeks are round, he looks well nourished, his feet are clean, and so it appears, is the rest of him. As such, he does not look so dissimilar from the newsboy with whom he shares a page *(6.8)* - or even many of the pictured children who have already been discussed in this study - and who were described as being in dreadful circumstances. The contrast may not look startling, but it was *intended* to be so. Observer wants the reader to understand that this boy is not at risk *because* he does *not* sell newspapers in the streets for a living. Conversely, if he had been a real vendor, he would have been at risk. He must be a fraud, because the Victorian spectator was expected to agree that he did not look ragged, malnourished and dirty. Although difficult for the modern viewer to grasp in the same way, these two boys were presented as a pictorial contrast between safety and risk. The fraudulent newsvendor is intended to be understood as a school boy earning pocket money, which conveyed an acceptable picture of childhood for temperance. By definition, philanthropists generally considered newsvending to be part of an unacceptable childhood. Children who sold sporting papers were thought to be at particular risk by social commentators in general, since this was seen as an entry point to gambling.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter began by detailing Barnardo's applications of fiction to the facts of child rescue, how he created the composite truths of the suffering of children at risk as a

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[45] Idem.

class. The pictured child was assigned the role of representing this group. Barnardo took the notion of a composite truth and applied it to reality, but he adopted it from the art photography of Rejlander. This chapter has argued that Rejlander's little known *genre* works can also be regarded as a fictionalisation of the facts, although there is no evidence to suggest that this was done intentionally. His posed studio shots of boy street traders have been assessed for the extent to which they make reference to the relative values placed by philanthropists on different occupations for working children. It has been argued that this depended on the degree to which they came under charitable control. When viewed in this context, newsvending represented two very different notions of the working child in Victorian age relations.

To the families of a child newsvendor, the child could bring a useful additional income into the household, while the newspaper proprietors gained a flexible and economic member of their workforce. This could have been the reality, alongside the potential for exploitation both at home and by unscrupulous employers. The suffering of children and young people at the hands of their parents and in the workplace was not confined to newsvending, or even other street occupations, but could also occur in mainstream employment.

For philanthropists, newsvending could act as an impediment to the rescue and rehabilitation of the street child by taking the child out of their sphere of influence. In contrast to the many hundreds of images depicting the street waif without occupation - the suitable and accessible object of rescue - the number of pictured newsvendors used by charities was tiny. When newsboys were depicted, it would be pointed out that such boys were regarded as being at risk, rather than in employment. Selling newspapers

was not regarded as an acceptable part of working class childhood by philanthropy. Indeed, the single image of a girl newsvendor was chosen to represent the ultimate child at risk in the ungodly, predatory world of the city. This choice of image was crafted to match other attitudes toward acceptable and non-acceptable occupations for poor children. It had little to do with the reality of street-selling by girls, and with the established relationship between flower-selling and prostitution. The number of pictured child flower-sellers used by philanthropy numbered in their dozens, but they were intended to arouse sympathy and not to draw attention to the realities of moral corruption. In short, images of childhood used by philanthropy could have a selective relationship to reality, and this is nowhere more apparent than in the pictured newsvendor.

Pictured girl traders were expected to appeal through their gentle sweetness, while boys endeared through their perky optimism. The Edwardian boy street trader was summed up by a sympathetic observer in the following terms below:

> [h]e is full of amazing resource, the London boy. Let him lose a job in the morning and he turns light-heartedly to selling matches or newspapers in the afternoon. He will hawk for a coster, mind a low shop, keep watch at a corner of a street where a bookmaker takes bets ... and think nothing of beginning the next week by riding an advertising tricycle through the streets for twopence an hour. If all else fails and he happens to be full grown, he will try the Army.[46]

Lionel Rose is right to point out that such a picture is far too jaunty to represent the realities of life for such a boy. For reasons yet to be explored, this popular preference for the chirpy little street sparrow, capable of mischief, but not yet gone to the bad, was an enduring one. This chapter has argued that images of the working street child were

used by philanthropy to draw attention to those realities which best represented their notions of acceptable and unacceptable working class childhood. Just how happy the pictured street child could or should have been - and the reasons for this - will be discussed in the next chapter of this study.

[46] Rose, op cit., p76.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Ideal Ragamuffin: merriment and misery in the pictured street child

7 Introduction

Barnardo's waifs and strays were street children who, all too often, lacked an occupation. This chapter will explore the implications for the pictured child in this role, combining as it did a selective view of reality with notions of childhood's inspirational influence. It will ask whether the distances between this, and some of the street child's other depicted roles were too great.

Earlier chapters have suggested that the dependent helplessness of depicted childhood enabled child rescue charities to assert the value of their work to society, while the energy and resourcefulness of children to help themselves and each other played little part in this adult-controlled visual drama. Temperance campaigners used the visual representation of children both as a beacon of social value and as an opportunity to save the child from himself. Could the pictured child perform all these roles without difficulty? Was it possible for the child to represent an ideal, as well as an object of rescue, a beacon of social value and an object lesson? The pictorial corollary to all these roles also included the demand that the pictured child continued to appeal to adults as graceful, amusing and innocent, perceived at times as a pet, as a small animal, as not quite human.

An attempt will now be made provide answers to these questions and so get even closer to the nature of the contemporaneous relationship between the child as a visual

embodiment of the ideal and attitudes towards children in real life. This will be based around the work and attitudes of a painter of street children in the eighteen nineties who seems to have had a foot in both camps. While her paintings were received with favourable critical acclaim, Dorothy Tennant was also credited with great truth to life in philanthropic circles. She left a record of her view that the life of street children was best represented by depicting the child as an ideal ragamuffin.

This chapter will first consider how Dorothy Tennant's pictures of street children were put to philanthropic use by Dr Barnardo. They will be set against other philanthropic images which pictured the waif and an explanation offered of their particular suitability for charitable purposes. Dorothy Tennant's working methods and her recorded attitudes to her child models are then discussed, in order to establish the extent to which she regarded them as raw material for her work in much the same way as the philanthropic campaigners who used her pictures. A brief description will follow of how Tennant imitated the Spanish artist, Murillo, in his idealistic treatment of genre subjects and the implications this had for the pictured street child. No attempt will be made to situate the whole of her work, or the work of the artist who influenced her most, in a traditional art historical context. Instead, the chapter is concerned to show the parallels between artistic and philanthropic attitudes towards the waif in real life and in representation.

7.1 Dorothy Tennant and Doctor Barnardo

Dorothy Tennant's work made one of its first appearances in the child saving cause in the pages of the *Young Helper's League Magazine* for January 1894. This was the recently-founded magazine for Doctor Barnardo's youth movement, an organisation set

up to encourage upper and middle class children to help ill and disabled children of what was called the 'Waif Class.'[1] The image to be discussed is undoubtedly her work - although it is unsigned - for in March of the same year, Doctor Barnardo explained how some of her sketches had indeed fallen into his hands. One of these *(7.1)* shows four boys in ragged clothes who clasp hands and dance merrily. No background or foreground details give any further clues to its nature, and it appears to have no connection to the texts that surround it. This lack of detail may have been due to Tennant's working methods, which will be dealt with shortly. It is worth observing at this stage that both Dorothy Tennant and Kate Greenaway undertook their studies of children separately from the scenes they purportedly inhabited. In other words, the child's world was created apart from the child's figure. It will be argued that to divorce the child from the context which largely defined its existence was to diminish the pictorial reality of the resulting image.

There is no apparent connection between Tennant's dancing boys and the serialised episode of a moral story above it. This pathetic tale - maudlin to many present day readers - tells of the physical decline and spiritual salvation of a rescued street child.[2] The text above describes the vigil kept by Nellie at the deathbed of Waif. Given its young readership, perhaps the merry image was intended to divert the more sensitive of child readers from the story's sadness. It is also possible that the required response to the text was joy at Waif's conversion to Christianity, of which he was originally ignorant. The readers of the magazine - Barnardo's young Companions - were not generally encouraged to fear the next world, while goodness and an occupied mind

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[1] *Young Helper's League Magazine*, January 1892-December 1894, inside front cover.

were recommended for their temporal happiness.[3] If some sort of relationship between this text and the image was intended, it appears to be one that linked happiness - however fleetingly represented in dance - in this world, with joy in Heaven at a soul saved. The dancing figures were meant to suggest temporal rather than spiritual merriment. It is likely that Barnardo gave the pictured emotion a spiritual dimension. This image was intended by Tennant to hint at the joy which could be a part of a child's life on the streets, rather than after death.

7.2 The modest joy of the pictured waif

Given Barnardo's commitment to representing the misery of the Waif class in terms of their lack of an acceptable childhood, it seems at first sight an odd partnership between artist and campaigner. One seemed preoccupied with suffering, the other with happiness. Tennant's own working goals and methods will be discussed shortly. Barnardo's use of Tennant's images makes better sense when it is compared with other visual material to be found in his own, and other, philanthropic publications aimed at children. Barnardo included other images in his magazines and books for child readers which do indeed portray the lighter dimension of street life. These would typically depict street children playing with modest toys, such as a simple cart or a ball. Both boys and girls were shown proudly holding a potted plant, usually a geranium. This might be the only cheerful touch in otherwise bare surroundings. The negative

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[2] This is part of the Scavenger narrative, a figure representing Barnardo himself, mentioned in chapter five. In the story, Scavenger and Christ work together to save children from parental cruelty and provide them with spiritual salvation.

[3] The following passage from Alice King in *Night and Day* in March 1892 takes an even tougher line than Barnardo. 'It is intended that the heads of our young helpers may be filled in play-hours with something besides mere idle, selfish amusement' ... 'The Companions of the League will be the brightest, happiest young people in the world, because they will be always occupied, and occupied in doing good.'

portrayal of the plant as a symbol of simple happiness would show it as withered and dead on the windowsill of a room in which people grieved, or abandoned outside a tenement home from which a family has been evicted. Children might also be shown enjoying street entertainers or acting out the good manners required of their elders and betters. So a cheerful urchin would be pictured offering his apple, or umbrella, to a flower girl in need.

Many of the images that appeared to show street children at play were not what they seemed, particularly those that depicted boys turning cartwheels or performing headstands. Such boys were earning a precarious living from the evening theatre crowds or by attracting attention to themselves by acrobatics in the street. One such boy is depicted *(7.2)* as he stands on his head six times for payment of a halfpenny.[4] There was always the danger of getting caught for begging, or of being assaulted, and the risk of injury. Such children were barefoot in order to perform for their passing customers. In these cases, what might seem to be a portrayal of play was actually a representation of a street child at work.

When so many of these images intended for a child readership are considered together, they could be said to provide a visual lesson by gentle reinforcement. The overall message conveyed was that the owners of small and empty pockets either had to be, or should be, content with small pleasures. The girls and boys of the Young Helpers League - and other young supporters of child rescue work - would have been able to tell from the modesty of both toys and activities that street children lacked what they

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[4] *Band of Hope Review*, March 1870. This is probably the work of the photographer O G Rejlander, whose work appeared extensively in philanthropic publications during the period. Doctor Barnardo

possessed. This would be confirmed for them by the text of most charitable magazines in the weeks leading up to Christmas, should they have chosen to read it. In addition to the sense that modest toys were all the poor child could expect, this group of images also could be said to imply that their dreams and aspirations should only be raised and satisfied by adult intervention. Poor children were rarely depicted as playing with rich children's toys and the many portrayals of delighted children receiving presents are confined to after they have left the streets and entered the Home, the school or the hospital, and during institutional outings to the seaside or the countryside.

7.2.i The useful street child

Another of the artist's sketches acquired by Barnardo was one of the rare occasions in pictured philanthropy when one child was depicted helping another.[5] A boy is shown against an indeterminate ground, with a baby on each hip *(image 7.3[6])*. His feet are firmly planted in a wide stance. Although his trousers might have been made for a larger child, his form below the waist seem slightly too large for the rest of him. In addition, there is some uncertainty about the rendering of his left hand, which does not clasp the baby so convincingly on this side of his body. In short, it is as if the parts of this drawing were either done at different times or based on different originals. This nurse of the slums was used by Barnardo to represent every older child who cared for younger siblings. Weighed down with his double burden, this ten year old was much

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referred to Rejlander's work in court and in print to defend himself against a charge of artistic fiction in 1878. (See 6.2.i)

[5] Barnardo comments that artists have often depicted 'the usefulness which distinguishes the children of the poor at a very early age', elaborating that the boy portrayed cannot be more than nine or ten years old and is 'the unwearied and careful guardian of these twins'. For some undisclosed reason, he does not want readers to think that the boy portrayed is one of the children rescued and brought into his Homes.

[6] *Night and Day*, March 1894, p11.

closer to Barnardo's idea of the representative of a waif class that Tennant's dancing boys. There is little visual suggestion that the boy nurse was expressing joy in his responsibilities.

More commonly, the nursemaid would have been a girl *(as can be seen in images 7.4 & 7.5[7])*. Arguably the most obvious difference between Tennant's version of the older sibling caring for younger brothers or sisters and these renderings, lies in the immobility of Tennant's babies. The babies in renderings by other artists tend to yell, contort their faces and do not appear to be reassured by the care they are getting. Indeed, if Barnardo did use this image as one of a series to show the plight of babies, it does not particularly support his case. With their muslin frocks and lolling heads, they look quite content, perhaps asleep. It seems more likely that on this occasion he wanted to picture what he called the usefulness which distinguishes the children of the poor.'[8] He went on to claim that this usefulness had often been depicted by artists. It is a pity that he did not refer to these by name, since his remarks are not supported by the findings of this study. Even if he is referring to artists like B S Marks, A E Mulready or works like W P Frith's beggar girl exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1891, these are portrayals of children reduced to activities born of necessity or dire need. It could be said that they were not intended to be understood as depictions of how resourceful children could be in helping manage the family's poverty. Indeed, it has been argued that they were used to arouse compassion in spectators, based on a concern that children should be obliged to step out

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[7] The 1893 *28th Anniversary Programme*, p11. A similar representation (without the hat) appeared on the front cover of an appeals booklet from the nineties entitled *The 1/- Baby*. Its earliest appearance was in *Night and Day*, captioned "Shadwell Moggy and her nurse" accompanying an article on 'Babies in Squalid London', 1887, p152. These images appeared before Barnardo acquired Dorothy Tennant's drawings and would therefore suggest that he presented her drawing as one in a generic sequence dealing with the representation of babies, not withstanding the change of gender in the older child.
[8] *Night and Day*, March 1894, p11.

of childhood, out of their dependency on adults, in order to perform adult roles. Philanthropy usually pictured the useful street child as a variation on the theme of their suitability for rescue. Usefulness was another face of helplessness in this sense, since both invited adult intervention to re-establish the dependency of childhood.

In Barnardo's opinion, Dorothy Tennant's drawings were grounded in gritty reality. With her pencil, he said, she has '... rescued many highly realistic scenes of slum life from oblivion.' Perhaps what made Dorothy Tennant's representations of street children so suitable for philanthropic use was not so much their pictorial realism, but the extent to which different meanings could be attached to the demeanour of the pictured child. Other babies might rage in the care of the nurse of the slums, but hers are placid. Another image *(7.6)* from the nineties shows a boy and a girl lying on the pavement, intent on some activity that involves reaching through the bars of a drain.[9] Tennant often obscured the faces of her street children, or used unusual perspectives which made it difficult for the spectator to make a straightforward assessment of the child's expression. Neither of their faces is visible, leaving the viewer to guess at their emotions, and, as a result, leaving greater scope for editorial interpretation. It is not possible to be sure whether these children are happy or sad, tense or content. They may be pretending to fish and so their activity could be construed as play. Perhaps they are trying frantically, and in vain, to recover the family's housekeeping money, which has fallen out of a pocket. Either interpretation is possible, allowing the pictured children to be offered up as an object lesson of harmless play or the desperate plight surrounding

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[9] *Onward*, 1897, p77. Accompanied a moral tale called 'The Lost Farthing', encouraging children to give rather than receive. This image originally appeared in Dorothy Tennant's collection of drawings called *London Street Arabs*, published in 1890.

an object of rescue. It would seem from this that gritty reality was a moveable editorial feast, with joy and despair assigned to the pictured child at will. [10]

It has been argued so far that the street children pictured by Dorothy Tennant were either adaptable in their emotional neutrality or were used as an antidote to more sombre messages carried within the philanthropic text. Not all representations of the street child at play could be taken at face value, since some actually portrayed them earning a living. At the same time, picturing their assumption of adult roles was not an acknowledgement of their resourcefulness and autonomy but was another way of depicting them as objects of rescue.

[10] Dr Barnardo was to make further use of Dorothy Tennant's sketches in the pages of Night and Day in 1895. Her work was reproduced and given the following captions by Barnardo : 'Gutter Gymnastics', 'The Living Pyramid', 'Balancing', for her 'Studies of Street Life', (p68). One of river scenes later appeared with the caption 'A well-filled corner : the street children's nursery and playground', p83).

7.3 Dorothy Tennant and the picturing of London street life

In 1890 Dorothy Tennant showed the painting which made her name at the New Gallery and produced a book of her drawings of street life, which were, she said, '...illustrations done at different times for different stories ...'.[11] The painting was called *Street Arabs at Play (image 7.7)* and seemed to please and amuse critics from both the *Times* and the *Art Journal*.[12] Having commented at length on the engaging antics of the well-modelled figures, the *Art Journal* found the background less than convincing. "The background of bridge and river rendered in a grey evening light is ... scenic and unreal, and might easily have been improved" was the verdict.[13] It certainly does look as if the artist had some difficulties which suggest she was not sitting in front of the scene she was painting. The Thames fails to recede back into the far distance of the opposite bank and the whole of the background is infused with a shade of turquoise blue. In resembling a stage backdrop, the background to the figures does indeed look 'scenic and unreal'.

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[11] *London Street Arabs*, Mrs H M Stanley (Dorothy Tennant), (Cassell and Company Ltd, 1890). A more cynical view of the success of her picture at the New Gallery would connect the attention paid to it with her presence in the public eye for domestic rather than professional reasons. *The Illustrated London News* for July 12, 1890 described how she was marrying the famous explorer in an item titled 'Mr H M Stanley'. 'The nuptials of the famous African traveller and discover, who has been the leading figure of the season, with a lady whose accomplishments as an artist, employed with kindly humour in delineating the quaint aspects and gestures of those provoking but engaging creatures the London street boys ....Miss Dorothy Tennant's pictures, and her literary contributions, with clever drawings, to the illustrated magazines have won her public favour. To the Exhibition for this summer at the New Gallery, in Regent-Street, she sent two pictures, "Street Arabs at Play" and one called "An Allegory", which many of our readers have seen.' (p43)

[12] This painting is now shown as one of a group of 'Soap Pictures' in a separate room in the Lever Collection at Port Sunlight. Included in the same room are works by artists such as Elsley and Frith. For some reason, John Collier's 1890 painting *A Water Baby*, is situated with the main Lever Collection, though it also was bought by Pears for advertising purposes when it was shown at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1890. It is, perhaps, still significant to exhibition policy that Tennant's was a modern *genre* picture, while Collier's could be connected to a well-known piece of fiction and seems open to more allegorical readings.

[13] Quoted by Edward Morris, *Victorian & Edwardian Paintings in the Lady Lever Art Gallery*, (NMGM/HMSO, n.d. probably mid-1990s).

This probably was a direct result of Tennant's working methods, which did not involve working with urban landscape in front of her. She would wander round potential sites for subject matter, relying on her memories each evening to recreate what she had seen during the day. Such an approach could easily create a representative, or summative portrayal of the street life - in this case the Embankment - which Barnardo claimed for her work.

Of course, it is unreasonable to criticise the finished painting for being a considered studio piece rather than employing the fresh immediacy of an impressionist technique. What is most relevant here - in relation to images perceived as representing the everyday or the ideal - is the contrast between the lifelike quality of the figures and the artificiality of the background. This creates the impression of two approaches at work within the image. Could this simply be explained by the impossibility of bringing the Embankment indoors to work from in the studio, as well as the children she chose to represent street arabs ? Dorothy Tennant's book of illustrations for stories contains both images of figures alone and those with fully worked out foregrounds and backgrounds. This suggests that it was not simply an issue of studio painting versus *plein air* atmosphere. Dorothy Tennant wanted to redress the balance in the way London street children and their lives were portrayed. This took her in search of the ideal ragamuffin, a notion which will be called a contradiction in terms. Far from being directly observed in the street, this pictured child was created in her studio.

7.3.i Dorothy Tennant and the Ideal Ragamuffin[14]

Dorothy Tennant expressed great affection for the children she observed in the street and who became her models in the studio. She loved them, she wrote, but she loved her drawing more. Her attitude towards them was influenced by most by her working relationship with them. Ultimately, she regarded the ragamuffin as her own creation. This led her to say that 'no ragamuffin is ever vulgar or common' on the grounds that the artist was responsible for all aspects of his own work.[15] Perhaps this explains why her affection was also accompanied by a reserve, a distance in the way she described them. On one occasion she presented children as possible compositional elements; should 'the necessary ingredients of your picture [be] a red-headed boy, and a fair curly-headed boy, a small girl and a big baby, and an old hamper.'[16] Children are here almost equated with stage properties, best kept at the studio, with '... a good supply of rags ... (carefully fumigated, camphored, and peppered[17]) ...'. In such a way, she recommended how you can 'then dress up your too respectable ragamuffin till he looks as disreputable as you can wish.'

The artistic ideal for a street child was pictured scruffiness, turning the desirable appearance of real-life children upside down. Of course the child would be as free from lice, bruises, disfigurement and filth as possible. What was required, to produce the desired artistic effect, were 'old "cords"(corduroy trousers) and a very ragged shirt, a

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[14] The *New Collins Precise English Dictionary* defines a ragamuffin as a ragged unkempt person, especially a child. It also refers to the fourteenth century use of the word *ragamoffyn* to describe a demon in the poem *Piers Plowman* (1393).

[15] Tennant, op. cit., p6.
[16] Tennant, op. cit., p7.
[17] Idem. Luke Fildes used similar methods when preparing his *Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward* in 1874.

length of worn or "chewed" string for braces, and an old boot'[18]. To this created *ensemble* would be added a tear-stained, dirty face and an unruly mop of hair. Her description of the Ideal Ragamuffin evokes Nobody's Children, the Orphan Boy, most of the boy waifs who populated philanthropic imagery.

The artist wrote that she was prompted by what she had seen on her wanderings, but she was selective about letting observed reality back into her studio. She visited some very rough areas - Seven Dials for example - those which so shocked the child rescue campaigners. She must have seen children at risk, but this did not prevent her from following her own dictates as a professional artist. She took little account of her sitters' beliefs that the studio required different dress codes. She became irritated with children who turned up to be painted in their Sunday best, with brushed hair and clean faces. Like many other artists, Dorothy Tennant arranged her models to suit the requirements of her work.[19]

In addition to picturesque ideas on how the poor should be depicted, she could rely also upon one unique factor about child models; this was their desire to please, even when they objected to their treatment. She was never cruel, by her own account, but referred to the children as 'specimens' and 'little animal[s]'[20]. Their apartness was stressed by the impossibility for 'us to understand them or to be understood by them'. It is

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[18] Ibid., p8.

[19] The painting called *The Doctor*, by Luke Fildes, was shown at the Academy in the same year as Tennant's *Street Arabs* and was far better known. Fildes used a combination of professional model and photographs of himself to paint the doctor. He was far more cavalier in his creation of the sick child, aspects of which were taken from studying his own children. The head came from his daughter and the outflung arm from his son. "I thought it [the arm] exquisite- so pleading and pitiful" the artist explained to a journalist. Quoted by Treuherz, op cit, p29.

[20] Tennant, op. cit, pp 7 & 10. Perhaps this can be attributed to her husband's influence as a famous African explorer. The evangelical child rescue movement referred to the London slums as an Inner Mission and to street children as 'the little savages of Nodlon'.

conceivable that the wide gap between the relative social station of artist and sitters could have contributed to mutual problems of communication and comprehension. It could be said that these problems also arose out of the nature of Victorian age relations, and that the distance referred to lay between children and adults, as well as the relative poverty of the sitter and the comfort of the artist.

Dorothy Tennant pictured the street waif by mixing elements of recalled observation with studio work from live models in order to make paintings worthy of a modern Murillo. It will be argued that in becoming arranged models, these children ceased to be street waifs for the duration of the sitting. It could even be argued that the children made the same distinction, since they were paid to meet the artist's requirements. This was not portraiture, rather it was closer to Barnardo's idea of representing children as a class. The individual identities given to her live models do not survive into her work.

As her child models left their identity at her studio door, so their lives on the street were crafted by her into a representation of a notional existence which would have been more accessible to adults than to her intended child readers. This is apparent from the inclusion of the Mer-baby into her published illustrations depicting London street arabs. The artist included this image *(7.8)* in her book because it was popular with friends and admirers. Two naked children lean over a child lying on a beach. The child's eyes are closed, either in death or sleep. The bottom half of the supine child is formed into a tail, indicating he or she is non-human. The illustration must have supported a fictional narrative in one of the many children's stories using the artist's work. And yet, Dorothy

Tennant insisted, that Mer-babies '... *are* ragamuffin, though unclothed.'[21] Waterbabies and ragamuffins could, and did share an existence in a fabricated world of fantasy created for children by adults. It would seem that Tennant's street child was also a pictorial traveller, or even, to continue the analogy, a fairy changeling in the case of the Mer-baby. It was somehow possible for Barnardo's praise of Tennant as a painter who represented the truth of life for children on the London streets, to culturally co-exist with the pictured child as half-fish, only part human. This would suggest that pictured childhood could be regarded as infinitely malleable. It could be pulled and modified, to suit cultural and philanthropic requirements. This chapter has already offered reasons why Barnardo, and other charitable workers, might have talked about the pictured waif in such terms and how such representations benefited philanthropic work. The cultural precedents claimed by Dorothy Tennant for her picturing of street children offer some alternative explanations.

7.4 Murillo's Orphan Boys

In Tennant's view, most pictures of 'ragged life' were 'false and made up'.[22] They were artificial because they showed only the misery of the street child's life. All the miserable flower sellers and dying match girls were to her 'deplorably piteous'[23]. Where, she wanted to know, were 'the merry, reckless, happy-go-lucky urchin; the tomboy girl, the plump, untidy mother dancing and tossing her ragged baby ...' ?[24] For her, these sights were there to be seen on the streets and it was an artistic failure not to represent them. What she called love of truth would be detectable in the drawing if the

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[21]Ibid., p12.
[22]Ibid., p5.

artist had integrity. She reserved particular praise for Hogarth in his love for London and the ragamuffin. Tennant wrote that she was concerned to balance the negatives and positives of the pictured waif. Not all her street children are depicted playing happily outside. One of her illustrations shows two children slumped on some blankets *(image 7.9)*. The background might be an attic or a sheltered place on the docks. The boy on the left seems pensive and downcast. His pose is highly reminiscent of Nobody's Children, the evocative Barnardo image which evolved through many permutations and represented perceptions of the child at risk and in need of rescue. Indeed, it is not impossible for the artist to have seen either the original image or one of its descendants. This is not the only instance when Dorothy Tennant allowed more sorrow than merriment to permeate her picturing of the lives of poor children.[25] Her criticism of modern painters was that they all failed to depict the joy as well as the misery of street life. She mourned the absence of a modern Murillo, citing his "Beggar Boys" as the ideal which artists should emulate in this respect.

The work of Bartolome Esteban Murillo (1617-1682) was extremely popular with English audiences during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with his reputation fading here after 1852. Murillo was increasingly compared unfavourably with Velasquez, an issue taken up by Charles B Curtis in 1883. Curtis wrote the only known contemporaneous substantial work on the Spanish artist and the proximity of the publication date suggests his views might have been accessible to Dorothy Tennant. Curtis commented on the then current fashion for decrying Murillo, saying that the work of both Spanish artists had merits as well as defects. For the purposes of this

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[23] Idem.
[24] Ibid., pp5-6.

study, Curtis's most pertinent observations relate to Murillo's audiences and subject matter. For Murillo was said to paint for mankind and to appeal to 'the sympathetic and spiritual', compared to Velasquez, who painted for artists and critics, appealing to 'the critical and intellectual'. Curtis here shared the view of those other Victorian writers who divided audiences for fine art into two main camps, responding to work which either '...fires the brain' or which 'touches the heart'.[26] What he was trying to convey was not simply that the art of feeling spoke to the heart rather than the intellect, but that it did so in order to address spiritual truths. This was articulated by Curtis when he described Velasquez as representing 'things of earth', even if they were kings, compared to Murillo, who painted 'things of heaven'[27]. Such subjects included virgins, saints and angels. Even though Curtis doesn't mention them, it will be argued that the Beggar Boys joined the heavenly ranks, not through death, but by the manner in which they were pictured.

One such work showed how he brought together religious and *genre* subject matter. *St Isabel of Hungary tending the sick (image 7.10)* depicts a beggar boy with a suppurating head wound being cared for in monumental palace surroundings. This painting was intended as decoration for the upper walls of a church attached to a hospital in Seville[28]. Put another way, this painting can be understood as providing the visual link between divine intervention and good works.

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[25] By her own account, as a child herself Dorothy Tennant wanted to become a champion of the poor as a painter.
[26] Quoted by Jonathan Brown, *Murillo and his drawings*, The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1977, p18.
[27] Idem.
[28] Murillo was asked to depict instances of charitable work from the Bible.

Murillo's boys were more often portrayed in the *genre* tradition. It will be argued that Tennant can be seen following her Spanish inspiration in combining *genre* with the ideal in her studies of street children. In two further examples, pose and activity tell the spectator more than an indeterminate background *(images7.11 & 7.12)*. Both his religious and secular work share a tendency towards the smooth, the rounded, the engaging, the non-threatening, the characteristics which could be said to typify the visual representation of Victorian childhood. It is entirely plausible to argue that the undoubted sentimentality of such work resulted from a lack of vision and poor artistic technique, which produced an unconvincing and inauthentic visual representation of the human condition.

This study is more concerned with the Victorian meaning assigned to the pictured child beyond the admittedly sentimental surface of this Spanish artist. When such images are approached as Dorothy Tennant's template for the representation of street life, a new paradigm presents itself. She may have written in terms of balancing misery with merriment, but her children share the mellow softness, the non-challenging sweetness and the lack of emotional contrast which can be found in Murillo's child subjects. Given their pictorial similarities, it seems reasonable to wonder whether Tennant could also be said to have shared Murillo's approach to representing the ideal. Did their work distinguish between 'things of earth' and 'things of heaven' - to use Curtis's terms - in the same way? When artists have depicted the mortal and the divine together in the same image, they have often been obliged to find some pictorial device which distinguishes between the two. It could be said that such a distinction is not apparent in Murillo's work, which idealised everyone without discrimination, so that his peasants and street boys took on the looks of saints and angels. Tennant claimed that there was

no modern Murillo, that contemporaneous artists were only concerned with the piteousness of the street child's life. It could be said that she compensated by emphasising the pictured waif as a thing of heaven, a notion which would have struck a sympathetic chord with artists and writers who assigned divine characteristics to childhood.

It has been argued so far that as well as being fond of the street waifs who became her models, Dorothy Tennant superimposed her expectations of what a street child should look like upon the realities she must have observed in the street. She selected those features which she believed would enable her to picture the joy as well as the misery of the waif's life. She held that the artists of her time had concentrated on sadness and pathos, and argued that the Spanish artist Murillo had rightly emphasised happiness in his studies of beggar boys. It could be said that there was a strong similarity between Murillo's tendency represent urchins and saints in the same way and the frequent picturing of the Victorian child as an angel. Most important of all, the pictorial features of the Ideal Ragamuffin selected by Dorothy Tennant bring to mind philanthropy's most frequently repeated representation of the street child.

7.5 From the raw material to the finished product

Like other artists of her time, Dorothy Tennant combined initial observation, studio sittings and adherence to some guiding principles to arrive at her pictured ragamuffin. She made decisions about which pictorial features to retain and which should be removed from her finished pictures. She controlled the representation of the street child in a way that was reminiscent of Barnardo on many occasions. He also had a finished

product in mind when he clothed a destitute family before photographing them for decency's sake, when he redressed his saved children in their rags on the stage of the Albert Hall and when he changed the individual history and identity of street children for publicity purposes. The charitable analogy does not end there and was not confined to Barnardo's working methods. In short, it could be said that there was a marked similarity between the way both art and philanthropy moved from the raw material to the finished product in their treatment of street children.

7.6 Conclusions

Again and again, references were made to the children of poverty and ignorance, that they constituted a class, and that this class provided the raw material for the work of philanthropy. Ragged boys, pictured as idling away their time on the dock side, were referred to as flotsam and jetsam. The Reverend T B Stephenson was still writing in 1899 that 'of all waste products none are more valuable than the children of our streets'.[29] Philanthropic campaigners described their role as fashioning this raw material, or waste, into the reformed and useful young citizen. The pictured waif was one of the means by which they hoped to gain support for this controlled transformation, whereby "these little ones" show that they still bear the image of the Divine Father in which they were created.'[30] Stephenson was not alone in using such terms. Again, it would seem his reference to the street child bearing God's image suggests a parallel with this study when it traced the pictorial links between Murillo's saintly beggar boys and Tennant's ideal ragamuffin. The same sort of connection is

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[29] *Highways and Hedges: The Children's Advocate*, July 1899, title page. The article was called 'Raw Material'.

made between street life, the divine and the pictured child. The philanthropist and the artist looked into the faces of the waif and saw something retrievable in the midst of squalor that was holy in origin. The process was nearly identical in each case, to strip away the filth and reveal purity underneath in the form of the pictured street child. Both artist and campaigner searched for what they believed was there to be found, discarding those features which resubmerged the child back into the waste and raw material of poverty and desperation. It could be said that their removal of most of the 'things of earth' from the pictured waif indicated how the image could buckle and diminish under the burden of too many conflicting roles.

The expectation that the child should represent perfection, or a pattern or model of moral behaviour, placed a heavy burden on children in reality. One of Tennant's models climbed her chimney intending to cover himself in soot, because she could not find a model sweep. Others risked their mother's wrath if they failed to present themselves at the artist's door having washed and dressed in their best clothes. They would then face more adult criticism for not looking 'raggety' enough.[31] One of the children seeking admission into the National Children's Homes was pictured with her hair cut off, a rare occurrence for girls. She took the initiative by visiting more than one Home and was considered beyond the control of her mother as a result. Her behaviour not only failed to meet adult expectations, it confronted them. It has been argued that

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[30] Idem.

[31] Tennant, op. cit, p7. Tennant explained how she would pay one child to locate and bring to her studio another child more ragged than the one in front of her. The process would be repeated until she found one 'raggety' enough to depict as her ideal ragamuffin.

her punishment was recorded in the image by the removal of the physical feature which most obviously indicated she was a girl.[32]

This study sees the pictured street child as a place of tension, where theory was applied to living, feeling, thinking subject matter. For childhood to be manifest as an ideal for adults it had to be lived out by children. At times, it was inevitable that children should fall short of the notion, required as they were to represent both the metaphorical lesson worth learning, as well as the schoolroom, while adults retained the pedagogic role. It seems reasonable to conclude that while children would fail under the burden of the ideal in reality, the pictured child could be adapted to carry whatever expectations and aspirations that its creators placed upon it. All those undesirable characteristics of the ragamuffin could be stripped away, leaving, as Tennant said, only the desired level of disreputability. The undoubted price for expecting the pictured child to look merry, as well as graceful, amusing and innocent, was the virtual exclusion of miserable reality. The pictured street child was not a cultural place where two such extremes could co-exist, and philanthropy found there was more to be gained for the real child at risk from picturing innocent merriment than corrupted misery.

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[32] Although this study has been primarily concerned with the picturing of age relations rather than gender, it is worth noting that the pictured boy in philanthropy rarely was depicted with the same flowing locks that artists like J Sant gave to their portrayal of fictional figures like Little Lord Fauntleroy (Royal Academy summer exhibition 1891) and W F Yeames to his child cavaliers.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusions: inside the hierarchies of pictured childhood

8. Introduction

Tennant's ideal ragamuffin was called upon to play much the same part in philanthropy's visual drama as the National Children's Homes's Orphan Boy and Barnardo's Nobody's Children. As the plot unfolded, the raw material of the child's purity was extracted from the filth of social waste and converted into the finished product, the child as a thing of heaven. This, the final chapter, will review the *dramatis personae* that were assembled on the pictorial stage of Victorian age relations and discussed in this study.

The findings of previous chapters will be retraced first in order to determine what kind of conclusions have been reached about the pictured child in Victorian philanthropy and its wider social and cultural context. This will also serve the purpose of demonstrating that the study has justified its initial premise, which was that the historical record can substantiate the relationship between the visual representation of childhood and the child's perceived status in society. The chapter will then evaluate the conclusions reached in relation to the study's main sites of enquiry in relation to each other. These have been Victorian charity, society's age relations, and the real and ideal pictured child. Over all these sites, it is hoped to confirm that this study's approach to the pictured child as a puzzle about the child's social standing, through which original solutions might still be retrieved from the historical record, has proved its worth as a scholastic tool.

8.1 Summary of chapter conclusions

The pictured child in Victorian philanthropy was not a member of a visual race apart. Images of childhood tended towards a constancy of theme and content that is discernible in early Victorian painting and which continued unbroken into the twentieth century. My period differed little in the artistic nature and treatment of childhood themes from what had gone before. The appeal of the pictured child outside philanthropy was perceived as soothing rather than sublime in nature, and had the effect of distancing both the visual representation of childhood as well as its audiences from aesthetic judgements. The powerlessness of the child emerges as a dominant, but not exclusive theme in the picturing of children from all classes. Two types of neediness were at work in images of Victorian childhood, one attributable to poverty, the other to the dependency of age relations. Images of the needy child and the middle class child collaborated in disclosing attitudes towards children in the complexities of age relations based on different aspects of need. These were articulated through a preoccupation with the notion of an entitlement to childhood, and with preferred behaviour in children. However, as well as manifesting adult concerns about real children, pictured childhood offered its audiences the opportunity for contemplation of higher things - or what was called at the time, the things of heaven - through an appeal to the gentler feelings. The extent to which this typified child representation marked it out from the depiction of other stages in life.

It is likely that there was considerable overlap between audiences for the pictured child, and potential subscribers to, and supporters of, the period's many charitable

organisations. Many, but by no means all, such charities engaged in work which was closely concerned with the place and future of the child in society. Public concern grew from the 1860s onwards that individual acts of charity were proving an inadequate response to large scale and on-going need. There were also efforts to exert higher levels of co-ordination and control over philanthropic activity. Victorian charity came to be seen as belonging in the political mainstream and more as a matter for state intervention rather than private almsgiving. As this process unfolded, the philanthropic image fulfilled an active, campaigning role in bringing the work of competing charities before the public.

Philanthropic images were not confined to representations of poverty, and the sequential, distinguishable stages of philanthropic work were frequently depicted. The nature of charity's unequal and imposed relationships underscores how well suited the pictured child would have been for philanthropic use. This can be attributed as much to the child's dependent status in society, as to charity's anticipation of adult responses to the sight of the child in dire poverty. It was the selection, rather than its nature, which marked out the visual representation of childhood in Victorian child rescue work from previous fine art treatments. From shared generic characteristics, a distinctive emphasis and focus can be identified in the images used by charities dedicated to child saving. The image that appeared most frequently, and was sustained over the longest period of time, was that of the solitary, ragged child. This study has argued that picturing the child in this way was used to define him or her as a suitable object of rescue from society's margins. This child was depicted as inhabiting the hostile outdoors, or Outside, in a manner that suggested the environment of unacceptable childhood for the image's users and audiences. The child was typically depicted in this way to emphasise

the requirement for subsequent adult intervention, whether this was defined as an act of rescue or salvation. Children's capacity to help themselves found its way into charitable texts, but did not form part of any sustained visual narrative. Thus the recorded usefulness of the street child was transformed into the helplessness of the pictured object of rescue.

Temperance campaigners believed and wrote that childhood represented a symbol of great social value. They saw children as beacons of purity in times of social upheaval. At the same time, campaigners argued that children needed saving from themselves. The pictorial record of the movement is full of pictured childhood as the stage on which scenes of both desirable and undesirable child behaviour were acted out. In some cases the child was depicted as passive but far from helpless in rescuing adults, in others as the active redeemer of family fortunes. The picturing of children as observers of adult intoxication, and its ruinous effect, offered campaigners the opportunity to instruct, and was not an invitation to child spectators to condemn. Although extending the range of roles open to the pictured child in the many, divisive campaigns which made up the movement, the pictorial record of temperance does not suggest any perception of change in the subtle inequalities of Victorian age relations.

Adults were often pictured with children in philanthropic imagery. Women were depicted as sharing most of the characteristics of children. Put another way, women shared the less powerful pictorial roles assigned to the child. They were believed to exert a benign but limited influence over the child's development, while the adult male was more often pictured as making and breaking the child's world. To this extent, the visual representation of men in philanthropy's pictures showed them to be the sole

power-holders in Victorian age relations. This power and responsibility over the child sometimes included, but could not be reduced to, abuse. Indeed, an analysis of male pictorial roles reveals the importance of childhood to men, and with related texts conveys a sharp sense of grief and loss on reaching adulthood. This may have been due to the double transition to male maturity, involving as it did the exchange of domestic security for the dangers of public life. Philanthropic imagery tells us that the nature of Victorian age relations went far beyond the limitations of the adult erotic gaze.

It also tells us that the use made of pictured childhood by charities tended towards a selective - rather than a reflective - relationship to reality. Thomas Barnardo used pictorial fiction to enhance the facts of children's sufferings and encountered particular problems with photographic images of child street traders and spectator response. When philanthropy made use of images which depicted children who worked on the street, it was not guided primarily by whether they were representations of reality. This is particularly apparent in its very limited use of the pictured newsvendor, at a time when this was the most prominent occupation for child street traders. The use made of images depicting working children was concerned with the relative values placed by philanthropy on different occupations, only some of which were regarded as an acceptable part of working class childhood. The function of pictured middle-class childhood in charitable imagery was not to portray its own comfortable reality, but to emphasise that the needy child was being denied the entitlement of all children to a protected, secure initial stage in life. Images of poor and affluent children were used in a pictorial partnership to address philanthropic preoccupations around notions of childhood, with the pictured waif providing the most malleable material for scenes of protection and control.

Other contemporaneous commentators believed that the depiction of woe had gone too far, that the reality of street life was not well served by the picturing of despair. Dorothy Tennant wrote that Victorian artists concentrated on the misery of life on the streets to the exclusion of joy in depicting the waif. In her own work, she set out to imitate Murillo in redressing this imbalance. Her picturing of the street child extracted all the most unpleasant features, making the visual representation of childhood a thing of heaven rather than a thing of earth. The most frequently used portrayals of childhood used by philanthropy did exactly the same. Both artist and philanthropist proceeded from the raw material to the finished product in working with both the real and the pictured child. The removal of misery showed the extent to which the pictured waif was a place of irreconcilable tension, where the real and the ideal could not easily co-exist.

The pictured street child could be described as a particularly pronounced example of how the visual representation of Victorian childhood played its part in shaping attitudes towards children in real life and in providing adults with a stage to rehearse what childhood as a notion meant to them. This is perhaps most apparent in the way in which temperance allowed the pictured child to be both a significant influence in changing adult behaviour, and a means of exposing faulty behaviour in children. In showing how the uses for, and the responses to, the visual representation of childhood were an integral part of philanthropic and cultural activity, this study has justified its premise. The historical record, particularly its visual dimension, can be said to confirm a relationship between pictured childhood and Victorian age relations.

This set of conclusions brings the study to its first point of closure, in making the claim that it has substantiated its premise. This might have had the effect of giving all its findings equal weight in order to arrive smoothly at its initial destination. Some of the study's results were, however, more central than others, and it is to those sites of activity that we now turn.

8.2 The significance of childhood to charity

Even before the different pictorial roles played by the pictured child in the theatre of charity were set out in this thesis, the nature of Victorian charitable relationships was described in terms of opening up new perspectives on society's age relations. It also questioned whether charitable appeal had as much, if not more, to do with the pictured child that it did with depictions of poverty. These points are central to the underpinning of the study and will now be given the emphasis they deserve.

Whether Victorian philanthropy was a matter of individual almsgiving or institutional intervention, the relationship between the needy and those who responded to their needs was unequal and controlled by one party only. Peter Mandler and other writers have described how the poor met with limited success in seeking to use charity as an income supplement in hard times. The desperation shown by the applicant was likely to have been a product of the expectations of the other party to the charitable relationship. This could also be described as the necessity for the recipients of charity to enter into a dependent relationship with the donors, who set in place their own methods of care and control over the applicant's future. When this is set against the recorded relationships between adults and children that make up children's history, then the similarity is

startling. The Victorian child was written about as entirely dependent upon adults for his or her welfare and sense of well-being. In the same way as the breaking up of poor neighbourhoods reduced their ability to help each other in preference to the dependent charitable relationship, poor children lost their capacity as wage earners and family providers to occupational and educational legislation, leaving them as the helpless dependents in Victorian age relations.

It has been argued that pictorial analysis of the historical record makes this similarity particularly apparent. Many times over, the helplessness of the pictured child has invited the intervention of the caring adult. The appeal was often intensified by picturing the child alone and in hostile surroundings. This type of image was used by temperance as well as child rescue campaigners. In other words, the helpless child in the image took precedence over the useful child in the text. In all types of philanthropic settings, this pattern was repeated. Poor children were not usually depicted as helping themselves and each other, while their capacity to do so was repeatedly written about.

The poor child's pictorial partner, the middle-class child, faired little better in getting his or her usefulness recognised. Occasionally, the youth sections of charitable organisations were depicted with collecting boxes, or donating alms in the company of their parents. Middle class children were pictured overwhelmingly as the passive recipients of the benefits that resulted from adult affluence, care and control. Their dependency was as apparent at that of the pictured poor child, but it was rooted in the neediness of age relations.

In both cases, the pictured child performed a role which was separate from the textual story in the theatre of charity. Perhaps the main purpose of the philanthropic image was to alert spectators to a condition of dependency which required their support of charitable intervention. It has been argued that the picturing of childhood was ideally suited to such a function. If this point is accepted, it sets the question of how poverty was depicted into a different context. There was no need to picture poverty if dependency worked just as well. To varying degrees, this included the dependency of children of all classes within Victorian age relations. The picturing of poverty was a contentious issue which charities resolved by partnering it with images of acceptable childhood. There were powerful cultural injunctions in place which made the portrayal of filth, disease, and abuse of little benefit to philanthropy. The reality of street life, of deprivation and misery was advisedly confined to the text. The dependency of childhood was a separate but equally powerful notion at work in philanthropy's use of the pictured child.

8.3 The hierarchies of childhood

When philanthropic images rehearsed relationships between adults and children, attitudes towards social station frequently played a supporting role. This ensured that the pictured poor child was at the foot of at least two human hierarchies, one generational and the other social. The scope of the pictured affluent child to subvert the age hierarchy was, as we have seen, very limited. If a moral hierarchy is applied to the picturing of Victorian childhood, even the poorest child was believed capable of representing a beacon of purity, an everyday representation of divine influence.

The picturing of childhood in Victorian philanthropy can be understood to take its meaning from attitudes towards different sets of relationships working together in society. Depictions of the imposed and unequal charitable relationship were highly compatible with the dependency of pictured childhood, both woven into a Christian cultural framework. To this extent, a single image could address the inequalities of age as well as social station, and draw its strength from moral discourse. The pictures show how these perceptions shifted in relation to each other and provide a plausible explanation for an absence of depth in pictured poverty.

Spectators may have felt comfortable with the correspondence between charitable relations and age relations and uncomfortable with the unease created by the picturing of the absolute disparities of wealth. The historian Gareth Stedman Jones has called the second half of the century a time of fear, when the affluent were frightened by the threat they believed was posed by those on society's margins, to the extent that campaigners were reluctant to house respectable artisans near the desperately poor, in case they were contaminated by their corruptive influence.[1] There was a general sense of repugnance expressed for depictions of desperate destitution, an aversion which the pictured child was obliged to accommodate.[2] Children increasingly came to be identified with the

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[1] Stedman Jones argued this was more to do with attitudes than reality. Before Booth's statistical surveys of the late eighties and nineties, the problem of the casual poor for the well-to-do was not based upon knowledge, but opinion. The threat they posed was 'not so much in the form in which they actually existed as in the form in which the middle and upper classes conceived them to exist.' The resulting picture was not flattering. 'They were generally pictured as coarse, brutish, drunken,and immoral; through years of neglect and complacency they had become an ominous threat to civilization'. Stedman Jones, op. cit, p240 & p285. His comments relate to the picturing of adults, particularly the male casual working population.

[2]When the art critic, John Ruskin saw Murillo's paintings exhibited at Dulwich, he attacked two depictions of beggar boys as 'ragged and vicious vagrants', as 'repulsive and wicked', as 'mere delight in foulness'. He observed that the artist had wasted his time on such work and that such images were unlikely to stimulate a charitable response. According to Ruskin, Murillo should have made 'the face wasted' and 'the eye wistful' and that 'a beggar's bare foot' should never 'thrust its degradation into the light'. Quoted on p126 of *Murillo scenes of childhood*, Dulwich Picture Gallery exhibition catalogue, (Merrell Publishers Ltd, 2001).

nation's future. Any image which was seen as showing the full extent of children's corruption and degradation by poverty proved deeply unsettling to those in society who left a record of their cultural awareness and social conscience.

As the pictured child adjusted to the shifts of cultural and social preoccupation at work in attitudes to philanthropy, poverty and age, one special relationship between childhood and the divine ensured that even the poorest could be depicted near the top a moral hierarchy. To the extent this was portrayed, the pictured child was believed to represent the ideal as well as the real. It is to these competing expectations placed on the visual representation of children and childhood that I now turn.

8.4 Things of earth and things of heaven

It has already been argued that the pictured street waif was a place of tension, where the waste material of the child's deprivation and despair was stripped away by both philanthropy and cultural practice, leaving the purity of childhood, the finished product of child saving and the beacon of great social value to temperance campaigners. What about the children who were pictured as untouched by poverty, who enjoyed the benefits of what was regarded as an acceptable childhood? Was their world as torn between the real and the imaginary as pictured life on the street?

Reference has been made before to the representation of sleeping children and the visits of angels to their beds. Sometimes the divine would be given the pictorial form of an adult, or the children might be referred to as angels in the accompanying text. Such images were particularly associated with the spiritual safety of the child once admitted

into institutional care. In other words, philanthropic imagery tended to show children asleep in the Home rather than at home, thus emphasising the charity's work in association with the child's close relationship to the divine. A few images gave the child divine pictorial characteristics - such as wings and haloes - but it was even rarer for the angel child and human child to be pictured together. Just such an image will be discussed next, to amplify this point.

This unusual picture *(8.1)* is not distinguished by anatomical accuracy or technical excellence.[3] The handling of the human children's forms in relation to each other is uncertain and the head of the bed is out of alignment with its foot. The features of the human children differentiate them from each other as individuals, while the angel children have the same curls, ears and eyebrows. They hover in an indeterminate manner, without bodies, in light from an unknown source. It is possible that as there are two angels, they represent the souls of the sleeping children. This did not necessarily mean that the human children were dead, although if they had been depicted asleep in the dark outside, this would have been more likely. The child was often described as being close to heaven while dreaming, with artists and writers often taking the connection between childhood and paradise to mourn the loss of their own early years, or state of innocence. Here childhood is pictured as a means of access to the ideal, where even children only reach perfection in sleep, and in their dreams. In so doing, they provided adults with a bridge to the divine which they could no longer cross

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[3] *Band of Hope Treasury*, November 1873, title page. Captioned as 'The Sleep of Innocence'. Originally produced as artwork for an illustrated poem published as *The trial of Sir Jaspar*, edited by S C Hall in 1873. Page six of the poem referred to 'art-aids' and how art was involved in the temperance campaign. 'We ask - and have - the aid of ART, to show / The height and depth of this - the Country's curse: / To tell, with emphasis, what all should know: / For ART can give a living force to VERSE.'

on reaching maturity. This image was rare in depicting the real and the ideal child within one picture.

What was not clear in the last image was the location of the children. It was possible to situate only its general significance and meaning for Victorian age relations. It could be said that location and meaning in the pictured child were not unrelated, a dual discourse which will be outlined by discussing one further image *(8.2)*. This encloses a circular shape within one that is rectangular.[4] The formal significance of the circle will be dealt with shortly. The inner picture shows a child praying at his mother's knee. Possibly a widow, she sits in a comfortable armchair, near what might be a box for the fire-irons or possibly a box of toys. There is a carpet, or rug, on the floor. These features make up a comfortable domestic scene, a picture of the sanctity of the home, where women nurtured spiritual development. It is a completely enclosed world, and could be called perfect, except for the hint of sadness conveyed by the plain black dress of mourning.

Below and to the right of this inner picture, a prisoner lies on a gaol floor in manacles. An uniformed officer and another man - possibly some kind of preacher - stand between him and the light from the portcullis doorway. This could be called a representation of the threats of mature adulthood, for the man who has fallen to the bottom of the adult world. It cannot be without significance that he adopts the passive, supine pose of Nobody's Children, the predominant image of child rescue work. In the power relationships of the adult world, the form of the reduced man evokes the pose of the child.

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[4] *British Temperance League's Pictorial Tract* No 260, June 1887, title page. Above an article titled 'Tragedies' by the Rev. G W M'Cree.

As a representation of age relations, men, women and children are all included in this image, but it is surely the manner of their pictorial segregation which gives the image its meaning. The male, ungodly, outside world surrounds but leaves intact the inner world of the home, inhabited by woman and child, in tranquil prayer. The child is pictorially located in the notional bubble of childhood, that precious but vulnerable state of seclusion. It is likely that the inner picture was intended to be seen as a representation of the prisoner's own childhood, since the theme of the tract was the human tragedy created by alcohol abuse. Here the innocence of childhood is contrasted with the sins of adulthood. In other pictures, adult tragedy would be causally linked to the child. One of temperance's most enduring images *(8.3)* was known as the Five Steps, showed another prisoner in his cell, this time contemplating his criminal journey which started with disobedience to his parents and led to the gallows.

8.5 In conclusion

The penultimate image *(8.2)* discussed in this study dealt with the belief that alcohol could cause human tragedy. It also echoed Victorian philanthropy's concerns about the real and perceived threats to childhood and the ways in which this notional world could and should be protected against intrusion, re-established if lost, maintained under the control of adults, and sustained for their inspiration. The final image - the Five Steps - implicates childhood, however mildly, in causing tragic consequences. One rehearses the moral superiority of the ideal child, while the other presents a notion that children's failure to conform to the strict requirements of age relations could, ultimately, prove

fatal. Both of these images *(8.2, 8.3)* were used in the temperance cause, revealing the breadth of meaning which was assigned to childhood under its banner. This study has argued throughout that this uneasy combination of exhortation and glorification extended beyond the temperance movement, and had an established history well beyond the cultural boundaries of charitable endeavour.

Both inside and outside philanthropy, the historical record shows the pictured child as an adult space for amusement, instruction, reproval, compassion and inspiration. Right at the heart of this space was a site of irreconcilable tension between adult preferences and judgements about childhood.

Burdened with adult expectations to act as both a thing of earth and a thing of heaven, the pictured child risked appearing in the kind of visual drama which few spectators would have associated with childhood. It could be said that such conflicting roles - from among the *dramatis personae* of age relations - were too extreme in their demands on childhood, converting drama into a tragedy. Society's perception of the child as helpless, innocent and vulnerable, as both the dependent partner in Victorian age relations as well as the source of adult inspiration, helped create cultural circumstances which not only rendered the pictured child as incredible, but which also risked embroiling real children in a battle between adult notions of the real and the ideal. In such a scenario, the tragedy was not waiting to happen to the adult, far ahead in the future, but would occur in the years before adulthood was believed to begin. The price for placing the ideal child at the top of the moral hierarchy would be exacted from flesh and blood children in their everyday lives.

This study can finally conclude that the disparate roles of pictured childhood, both in the theatre of charity and on the larger cultural stage, carried implications which went well beyond the metaphoric. Its close adherence to the historical record has enabled me to show how the contemporaneous meanings assigned to the pictured child helped in the creation of a complex, shifting web of attitudes towards Victorian children. In doing so, it has found that the pictorial representation of children and childhood was instrumental in its influence on the child's social reality. In the light of such findings, the study's sustained attempt to interpret visual meaning as a key to the puzzle of the Victorian adult's regard for children as a group is held to have proved its worth.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Nearly all of the primary source material in this study was held in the archives in published form. This made it difficult to decide whether some items should be listed as primary or secondary source material. The decision was made on the basis of present-day availability to scholars, including as primary sources those items which were accessed through special collections or private ownership. Other more freely-available items are listed as secondary sources (see pp280-288). The primary sources are set out as books, pamphlets, reports and newspapers, grouped under their collection headings.

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