

The Universe of Children Through the Vision of J.M.Barrie's *Peter Pan*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the birth of mankind literature has been an inevitable component of the six sense creature. Throughout the history mankind has tumbled with a lot of evolution. The life and world of children were captured very early in the beginning since literature was quiet busy in teaching moralities to mankind. But the need to capture the world of child was ruminated over the years. It gave the birth of Children's Literature. Works written for children include stories, books, magazines, and poems. This category is known as juvenile literature or children's literature. Both genre and reader age are used to categorize contemporary children's literature, which ranges from young adult novels to picture books for the very young. Fairy tales, which were first recognized as children's literature in the seventeenth century, and songs, which are a part of a larger oral tradition that adults shared with children before publication existed, are examples of traditional stories that can be linked to children's literature. It is challenging to track the evolution of early children's literature prior to the invention of printing. As John F.Kennedy forthwith "Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see." Life has never been hard but it was seen as. Life of child is always been an inspiration to the entire adult life. According to Joyce Whalley in *The International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, "an illustrated book differs from a book with illustrations in that a good illustrated book is one where the pictures enhance or add depth to the text." (Hunt) This paper is a specific study of J.M.Barrie's *Peter Pan* as a proto-world of children. '*Peter Pan* is a fable of modernity, anxiously negotiating industrial technologies that produced a middle class predicated on instability and which encoded impossible roles for men and women' (Wilson 8).

Peter Pan's Universe

J.M. Barrie, well-known for penning *Peter Pan*, is one example. The academy has long ignored Peter Pan, but in recent times, this has changed, and it is now the subject of increased scholarly interest. But there are "two co-existent stories" concerning Peter Pan, as Peter Hollindale points out, "each with the capacity to distort or confuse our understanding of the other." Indeed, Richard Morrison has tagged the popular association of Barrie and his most famous text with paedophilia as 'Peter Panic'. Not only is this fetishization of Barrie the author mostly founded on unproven rumors and moral panic, but it also creates a deluge of author-based critique that obscures rather than clarifies the author's work it highlights his uniqueness as a writer. When a researcher separate the text from the life - in contradistinction to the many critics who read *Peter Pan* psycho-biographically - and situate it at the moment of its production, it becomes apparent that Barrie's most famous work ought to be considered in the light of early Modernism. The contrast between Barrie's extraordinarily lucrative public career and his peculiar personal life is the source of the mythology around him, rivaling that of his most well-known invention. Barrie's career trajectory was unrelentingly upward in public. James Mathew Barrie was born in 1860 in rural Scotland, the ninth child of a poor handloom weaver. He was accepted to Edinburgh University and earned a B.A. there. After that, he relocated to the south of England, where he established a successful journalism career before rising to fame as one of the most renowned writers of the fin de siècle, penning critically acclaimed and commercially successful plays and books, including, of course, *Peter Pan*. "Of all the men I have ever known, Barrie was the wittiest, and the best company. He was also the least interested in sex. He was a darling man. He was an innocent; which is why he could write *Peter Pan*."(Hollindale)

Peter Pan, is a story about youth and innocence. Set in the 19th century, in London City, the story begins with Wendy Angela Moira Darling and her mother, Mrs. Darling. Wendy is loved by her mother and father, and likewise are her brothers, John and Michael Darling. They are a traditional family that live in an ordinary, middle-class home. The children are well cared for by their nurse Nana, who happens to be a Newfoundland dog. The Darling children live happy days in their nursery, being able to let their imagination run free in their play and games. One night, Wendy's sleep is disturbed by a strange boy, a boy that did not want to grow up, who has the ability to fly and speak with fairies. The boy, named Peter Pan, searches for his shadow. This is not the first time Peter visits the nursery to the Darling children. He has, on several occasions, hid behind the nursery window listening to Wendy's stories. Wendy is good at telling stories, and she looks after her brothers and parents. She has every quality of a future mother. The first meeting between Wendy and Peter consists of Wendy helping Peter with attaching his shadow to its rightful place, as Peter's shadow – mimicking his every move. Wendy is fascinated by Peter Pan, so fascinated that she is persuaded to leave the nursery along with her brothers to Neverland, Peter's home. By a little help from the fairy Tinker Bell, the children are able to fly and begin their travel to the magical land of Neverland.

Peter is the leader of the Lost Boys. On the island along Peter Pan and the boys lives a group of adult men, the pirates, that has one aim – to kill Peter Pan. The leader of the pirates is Captain James Hook. The feud between Hook and Pan is caused by Peter once feeding a crocodile the captain's right hand, and since then, the crocodile is longing for the rest of Hook's remains. Wendy and her brothers witness this feud on several occasions during their stay in Neverland. They are even captured by the pirates and must be saved by Peter Pan before they are ready to travel home to their parents in London.

In the end, Wendy and her brothers return home. Their parents, especially Mrs. Darling, are thrilled to have their children home again. Peter visits their nursery occasionally after the adventure in Neverland. However, as the years go by, Peter's visits begin to fade. It is not until Wendy herself has grown up and mothered her daughter that Peter once again visit the nursery. This time it is not Wendy that will

experience an adventure; it is instead her descendants who travels with Peter Pan to Neverland.

The idea of childhood is according to Lerer present in Barrie's narrative: "*Peter Pan* opens in the nostalgic Victorian world: the house, the room, the clock, the toys – all evoke that comfortable clutter that scores of surviving photographs have revealed as the safe space of domestic childhood," (Lerer 259). Another common strategy used by Victorian and Edwardian authors was to separate the child characters and the adult characters, allowing the children to be free of influence (Gubar). According to Sánchez-Eppler these creation of magical lands devoted for children displayed the Edwardian society's perception of childhood. It was recognized a separate sphere, where children naturally inhabited the accommodations of an isolated island, such as Neverland in *Peter Pan* (Sorby). The nostalgia and innocent influenced by the Romantic perspective of children were, however, not only evident in Barrie's work. This seems to be a common aspect in several Golden Age authors' narratives.

The Romantic idea of childhood is depicted in different authors' portrayals of children in their literary work. Given that there are only a distinctive amount of children's books from the Edwardian society that is the foundation for these statements, it is important to note that this is only a selection of children's books and that there may have been other portrayals of children that do not concur with perception of childhood.

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